

BUSA sees the Competition Tribunal's decision on the Walmart/Massmart acquisition today as a pragmatic one.

The announcement that the acquisition has been approved with conditions on local procurement, recognition of unions and on retrenchments represents an outcome most of the parties involved should be able to accept. This appears to be a realistic solution to what has been a very complex scenario. At the same time, the limits of the acquisition authorities' mandate as set out in the announcement should be respected by all parties.

The acquisition will increase competition in the retail sector and is thus in line with the provisions of the new Growth Path seeking to raise levels of competition in the SA economy. It must be remembered that the competition authorities must also be seen to be acting in the interests of consumers.

BUSA still needs to emphasize that the laws and regulations governing foreign investment of any type should as far as possible be clear, predictable and transparent. The timelines involved should also be as short and predictable as possible. In this regard the latest process was less than ideal. South Africa must become the most favoured destination for foreign investment to facilitate economic growth.