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**From:** Navin Joneja  
**To:** Competition Policy Watchers  
**Re:** ALIGNING COMPETITION ENFORCEMENT WITH THE PRODUCTIVITY IMPERATIVE

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Across major economies, competition policy is being recalibrated to support broader economic objectives, most notably: Productivity growth, investment attraction, increases in scale and national competitiveness.

In the European Union, policymakers are increasingly focused on **enabling** European champions capable of competing globally. Commission President Ursula von der Leyen has championed a new approach on **competition** that is “more supportive of companies scaling up in global markets.”

Recent UK reforms have emphasized reducing regulatory burden and accelerating pro-growth decision-making. A **policy paper** last year made this shift clear:

“The primary mission of [the UK] government is economic growth. Free and fair competition and effective consumer protection support growth by driving forward innovation, increasing productivity, and encouraging investment – including international direct investment – into the U.K.” Constructive and cooperative engagement with businesses is also a renewed priority.

While recent US enforcement has emphasized structural concerns in certain sectors, there are also indications – particularly in policy and political discourse – of renewed attention to the role of scale, industrial policy and national competitiveness in shaping enforcement priorities.

Though specific approaches differ, the direction of travel by these major economies is clear: Competition policy is being integrated into a broader economic strategy aimed at lowering costs, but also increasing scale, driving productivity and encouraging investment.

Canada has been similarly clear about the need to focus on growth. Since April 2025, the federal government has increasingly emphasized the need to reduce regulatory friction, prioritize nationally significant projects and sectors, attract and diversify foreign direct investment, and strengthen Canada’s global economic positioning in a rapidly changing world.

Cost of living and affordability remain key government priorities. However, there is also a clear recognition that growth, productivity and cost competitiveness are foundations to a sustainable economy capable of driving desirable outcomes for consumers.

The spring economic update made this clear by emphasizing that productivity and affordability are complementary competition policy objectives, expressly positioning competition policy as part of Canada’s productivity and affordability agenda while removing inefficient government policies that impede competition through regulation, procurement and industrial support.

This is a welcome recognition that competition policy cannot be viewed in isolation from Canada’s broader productivity, investment and scale challenges.

The next step is to focus on how those objectives can be achieved.

Canada’s competition policy is at an inflection point. Reforms enacted in 2022 and 2024 focused on bringing Canadian and US competition law agencies into greater alignment. At that time, commentators **cautioned** that against a US-styled makeover and that Canadian competition policy should instead be tailored to unique facets of the Canadian economy.

Ultimately, these reforms placed onerous burdens on Canadian businesses and set enforcement standards based on market shares rather than increased productivity. In recent **remarks**, interim Commissioner of Competition advocated for a continued, indeed expanded, use of those enforcement tools. However, those reforms were enacted when reliance on trading partners was not in question and before the global shift focusing on productivity and growth.

A fresh competition policy approach is needed to remove regulatory burdens, allowing scale efficiencies to be achieved and facilitating Canadian capital formation to deliver longer-term lower prices and improved consumer welfare.

Without removing red tape and barriers to scale, efforts to enhance Canada’s economic position in the new world order will fall short.

Canada now faces a strategic choice. The Competition Bureau needs to be aligned with the rest of the government (and indeed global trends) to focus squarely on an agenda centred on productivity, investment, scale and red-tape reduction, consistent with the policy approach taken by our major trading partners. Indeed, purpose clause of the *Competition Act* embodies this type of integrated approach by highlighting the “efficiency and adaptability of the Canadian economy,” “opportunities for Canadian participation in world markets,” and “provid[ing] consumers with competitive prices and product choices” as mutually inclusive objectives.

For Canadian and international businesses, the current environment presents both uncertainty and opportunity.

Global competition policy is evolving to reflect a central economic reality: productivity, investment and scale are prerequisites to sustainable competition and lower prices. Ensuring that competition policy and enforcement evolves in tandem with these objectives will be critical to maintaining Canada’s competitiveness in an increasingly strategic global economy.

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