

BIZNET NEWSLETTER

Newsletter of the COMESA Business Council

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Who we Are!!

CBC is the recognized Business Member Organization, established as a private sector institution of COMESA. We represent the interests of businesses sectors at a regional level. The services provided go beyond advocacy, to actively promote business participation in regional integration, investment and global trade. This is done by facilitating the growth of strong business synergies, the development of business opportunities, business alliances, legislative and strategic advocacy. We provide custom tailored services that are driven by both industry and enterprise interests.

CBC HOSTS AFRICANENDA



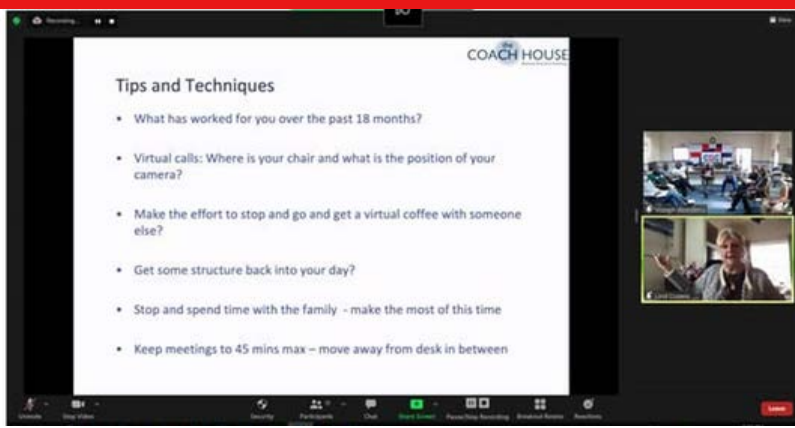
The COMESA Business Council had the pleasure of hosting the Chief Executive Officer of AfricaNenda, Dr. Robert Ochola, last week on the 3rd September, 2021 .

We discussed the areas of collaboration in matters of mutual interest and agreed on the signing of an MOU to formalise our relationship. The scope of our cooperation will include the Digital and financial literacy programs for MSMEs and payments stakeholders , stakeholder engagements through public-private sector platforms similar to the recently convened CBC-AfricaNenda Digital Financial Inclusion Public-Private Dialogue, among others . We look forward a strong working relationship with Africa Nenda.

During his visit to Zambia Dr. Ochola had an opportunity to have meetings with Bankers Association of Zambia, Bank of Zambia, Airtel, UBA bank and many other institutions.



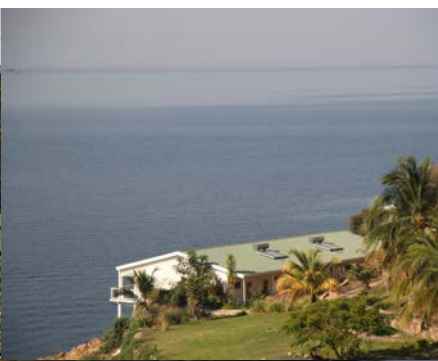
CBC TEAM BUILDING - STAFF RETREAT 2021



The COMESA Business Council organised a staff retreat to continue building up and strengthening the team for the current and future tasks. These include utilizing the developed capacity at the secretariat to increase membership, offer robust Advocacy and Business services to Members, as well as expand member services.

The staff retreat was a platform that was used to carry out the mid - year review of the institution's performance. This retreat delivered on the team building spirit where staff gauged and planned activities that effectively contribute to the implementation of the strategy considering their different roles. The retreat was held at Lake Kariba Inns from 31st August to 2nd September 2021.

The team was exposed to great coaching sessions and fellowship with each other. As a way of appreciating nature and great engineering skills, the team visited the Kariba Dam Wall which is a source of the power in most parts of Zambia and Zimbabwe. With all this great planning refreshing activities the team is set to accomplish the remaining tasks, for the year.



SOUTH AFRICA RETAIL STORE GAME TO EXIT EAST AFRICAN MARKET



South African retail giant Massmart that operates the Game Stores has revealed its plan to sell its stores in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, marking the latest of a string of retreats from East Africa by a southern African firm. The Johannesburg Stock Exchange-listed retailer announced on Friday it had put up 14 Game stores in East and West Africa for sale, citing a need to focus on its “core strengths” as the group’s losses narrowed during the half-year ended June 2021. Massmart chief executive Mitchell Slape said the chain had begun a formal sales process to divest in five Game stores in Nigeria, four in Ghana, three in Kenya, one in Uganda, and one in Tanzania.

“We have reached the conclusion that the performance and complexity in running the 14 stores in five markets in the East and West Africa is something frankly that we needed to address,” said Mr. Slape during the group’s virtual financial results presentation on Friday. The exit plan ends a five-year stint for the Sandton-headquartered retailer in Kenya and further extends the poor run by South African retailers and companies who have faced headwinds trying to crack the local market. Mr Slape said the company was in advanced discussions with potential purchasers to take over its Game stores in Kenya, adding that the country alongside other regional markets remain a difficult business environment. He did not disclose the details, including the value of the transactions and the identity of the potential buyers, which he noted are still subject to negotiations. Massmart senior vice-president in charge of corporate affairs, Brian Leroni, told Business Daily that the interest of workers and suppliers would be safeguarded in the exit plan.

“We are still in the early stages of this process and are therefore not in a position to comment definitively about a specific way forward,” he said. “Please be assured though that we will act with integrity and in a responsible manner that is respectful of our commitments to our staff, business partners and customers.” Local Massmart representatives said they were unaware of the expected transition. “Please reach out to them. When we have the information locally it will be published,” said a representative at the Games Stores in Nairobi via telephone on Tuesday afternoon.

Massmart, majority-owned by American super chain Walmart, made its debut in Kenya with Game Stores in 2015 with its first store at the Garden City Mall, to cash in on the growing demand for retail outlets in the country. It subsequently opened two other stores at the Waterfront in Karen and the Mega City Mall in Kisumu. Game stores are fashioned as discount shops that sell fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) and non-perishable groceries through over 100 outlets in over a dozen African countries.

In March last year, Massmart said it would close non-performing Game stores, as consumers battle high unemployment and falling disposable incomes amid the Covid-19 pandemic. But Massmart said it would not divest from its Massbuild, the Ksh500 million (\$4.5 million) building material store it opened at the Waterfront Mall in Karen, Nairobi last August. “We can confirm that Builder’s is not included in this process,” said Mr Leroni in response to Business Daily queries. Companies from South Africa have found it difficult to crack the Kenyan market, prompting the exit of big brands like cinema company Nu Metro, fast foods giant Nandos, household goods outlet Supreme Furniture, and magazines publisher Media24, a subsidiary of the JSE-listed Naspers. Massmart opted to set up its branded stores in Kenya in 2015 after the collapse of its bid to acquire a majority stake in Naivas Supermarkets.

The retail giant had been angling to set up shop in Kenya through acquiring Naivas but ran into headwinds when one of the family members moved to court to oppose the impending sale. Massmart’s planned exit follows previous similar exits of South African retailers Shoprite and their Southern Africa peer Botswana-based Choppies, which had entered the market by acquiring a majority stake in a struggling local retailer in 2016.

BUILD BACK BETTER, FOR BUSINESS- ADDRESSING INDUSTRY CONSTRAINTS TOWARDS RECOVERY



The COMESA Business Council (CBC) in partnership with COMESA Secretariat, Government of Egypt and CBC membership associations in Egypt, will host the 15th COMESA Business Dialogue, themed, BUILD BACK BETTER, FOR BUSINESS- Addressing Industry Constraints Towards Recovery.

The objective of the 15th COMESA Business Forum, is to discuss key areas that will support industry recovery during the COVID 19 impact, and further promote inclusion of industry players along various ecosystems and value chains through digital transformation. The meeting will also engage on key regulatory interventions needed to addressing manufacturing competitiveness in the region. The meeting is expected to extensively engage on Industry requirements towards recovery , with a keen interest on- Digital Financial Inclusion for Micro Small and Medium Enterprises in COMESA , Industrial competitiveness and Illicit Trade, harmonization of standards regulations in COMESA and Promoting regional business linkages.

The key dialogue agendas will consider the following outputs;

- Measures to promote digital financial inclusion of MSMEs in COMESA region;
- Measures towards development of Anti Illicit Trade Policy Framework and its implementation framework for the COMESA region;
- Key actions towards harmonisation of standard regulations in the COMESA region;
- Business linkages- driving intra-trade partnerships in COMESA.

The report of the COMESA Business Forum is expected to feed into COMESA Heads of State Summit to be held on 18th November 2021. Participants for the Forum will be drawn from the private sector, business associations, regulators in trade, industry, agriculture and financial services, COMESA officials and cooperating partners.

Thematic Areas for Discussion at the Forum

- a) Digital financial inclusion for Trade;
- b) Industrial competitiveness and illicit trade ;
- c) Harmonisation of SPS measures to facilitate trade;
- d) Promoting Business Linkages in COMESA

ICC ANNOUNCES MAJOR VIRTUAL FORUM FOR BUSINESS AT COP 26



International Chamber of Commerce has announced plans to convene a major virtual conference on the margins of the upcoming UN Climate Change Conference (COP26). The conference aims to identify structural changes, regulatory frameworks and financial incentives needed to enable the business community to go faster and further in its contributions to the achievement of the Paris Agreement.

The ICC Make Climate Action Everyone's Business Forum – which will be held from 1-13 November 2021 – will bring together a diverse network of over 10,000 participants from the public and private sectors to align their climate ambitions and actions for the next decade. Accenture and Deutsche Bank join ICC in this endeavour as supporting partners.

Featuring partner-hosted sessions from leading businesses, industry associations and non-governmental organisations, including the International Trade Centre and UNICEF, the forum will also help to catalyse coherent policy dialogue on critical climate, energy and environment related issues. Discussion themes include enabling sustainable supply chains, scaling climate finance, leveraging sustainable innovation and developing effective carbon pricing mechanisms.

“Acting on climate goals means breaking down silos between business and policy and bridging global and local engagement,” said Gerald Podobnik, Head of Sustainability at Deutsche Bank Corporate Bank. “The Make Climate Action Everyone's Business Forum is the ideal venue to unify stakeholders and establish common ground to a more sustainable path”

ICC's Environment and Energy Lead, Sandra Hanni said: “Following the grim outlook set out by the IPCC with its latest report, there has never been a greater need for responsible actors to cut through the noise to align climate intentions with real action. By providing a platform for diverse partners to showcase their ideas, our aim is to identify climate policies and operational strategies that have been successful as well as new and scalable initiatives which will enable the business community to play an even greater transformational role in addressing the global climate crisis.”

To complement live and pre-recorded conference content, ICC will be facilitating virtual networking experiences on the event platform, ensuring that connections made during the conference extend well beyond COP 26.

Prospective participants are welcome to indicate their interest in receiving an invitation to the event visits - (iccwbo.org Partnership and sponsorship enquiries can be directed to ICC External Affairs Advisor Sabrina Klayman on email- Sabrina.KLAYMAN@iccwbo.org.

MAURITIUS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE USHERS IN NEW OFFICE BEARERS



The Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) held its 171st annual general meeting (AGM) on the 19th August 2021 at the Le Labourdonnais Waterfront Hotel, Caudan, in Port Louis. The MCCI, established in 1850, is the oldest non-profit making institution representing the private sector in Mauritius. The Minister of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, Dr Renganaden Padayachy, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, Mr Nandcoomar Bodha, the Minister of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives, Mr Soomilduth Bholah, the Minister of Commerce and Consumer Protection, Mr Yogida Sawmynaden, were present at the opening ceremony of the AGM.

Commemorative stamps were gifted to the four Ministers by the MCCI's outgoing president, Mr Marday Venkatasamy. Several personalities from the public and private sectors and members of the diplomatic corps and honorary consuls were also in attendance. On that occasion, Mr Venkatasamy, delivered a speech on the State of the Economy. The AGM witnessed the re-election of Mr. Guillaume Hugnin as President for the period - 2021-2022.

In his address, Minister Padayachy, said that more than ever Government is turned towards the development of a business ecosystem in Mauritius. The global health crisis has played the role of accelerator in the process of decision-making for these decisions to be efficient, he recalled. Business as usual is no longer an option and Government has had to set priorities and therefore the current situation could be taken as an opportunity to accelerate the transition of the Mauritian economy, he pointed out.

According to him, if the objective remains the same, that is, to have a robust, inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development, the pathway to be adopted is quite different and Government is coping with this reality. The vision of Government is clear and unchanged and revolves around giving Mauritius the necessary resources to bounce back and impute a new dynamic and to do so more than MUR 100 billion has been provided to the investment and economy recovery plan, he added.

Minister Bodha, for his part, spoke about the need to have the leadership from the business community as well as enhancing the synergy to work together. He further elaborated on the state of affairs with regards to ongoing negotiations pertaining to the Free Trade Agreement with India which is expected to be concluded soon; regional cooperation and regional markets, and the Mauritius Africa Strategy, and the importance of air and maritime connectivity.

Speaking about the European Union tax haven blacklist (EU list of non-cooperative tax jurisdictions), the Minister reassured that Government is working arduously to take Mauritius out of that list at the earliest. At present, he indicated, a Mauritius technical team has been mandated to interface via visio-conference with a technical team from the Elysée Palace, France, at the request of the French President, Mr Emmanuel Macron, to work on the five deficiencies that are left so that Mauritius becomes fully compliant with the Financial Action Task Force regulations. Eight experts from the EU will be in Mauritius in August 2020 to help the country on the five sub-committees working on those five deficiencies, he announced.

Addressing the audience, Minister Bholah, emphasised that the Chamber remains a privileged partner for the Government and has always collaborated on various strategic fronts ranging from export, investment, trade negotiations, arbitration and capacity-building activities.

For him, however, the need of the hour amid the Covid-19 pandemic calls for a fundamental shift in the country's traditional methods of production. This global health crisis has demonstrated that agility, flexibility and automation are sine qua non conditions to ensure survival and technology can be a powerful enabler, he stated. He thus urged members of the business community to adopt exponential disruptive technologies associated with Industry 4.0 such as Artificial Intelligence, Soft Robotics, Internet of Things, Cloud Computing, Virtual Augmented Reality.

Minister Sawmynaden, expressed gratitude to the MCCI for supporting Government in the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic. The aspects of ensuring continuous availability of basic commodities, and zero disruption in the distribution supply chain especially food items was a challenge in itself, he noted. However, jointly and collaboratively Mauritius managed to face the situation and the results are cogent, he highlighted.

The Minister also acknowledged that the MCCI has been a partner in enabling the country achieve spectacular economic transformation, from a mono-crop industry dominated by the sugar cane to the diversification of the economy through the conception of other value-added sectors - particularly light manufacturing, offshore banking and financial services, and service-related information and communication technology.

COMESA – UNITED ARAB EMIRATES TRADE RELATIONS

United Arab Emirates (UAE) is one of COMESA's top export and import trading partner over the past years. In 2019, UAE consumed US\$10 billion of the products produced by COMESA and had a market share of 7% in the trading bloc. The top export products include, gold, petroleum oils – crude, copper refined, cobalt oxides, diamonds, jewellery, meat of sheep and goats and tea. On the other hand, COMESA sources goods worth US\$12 billion and had a market share of 4%. The top import products include, cigars, petroleum oils, cellphones, motor vehicles, polymers of ethylene and propylene, jewellery, parts and accessories for tractors, and sulphur.

The charts below highlights COMESA top export and import markets 2019

Chart 1: COMESA Top Export Markets

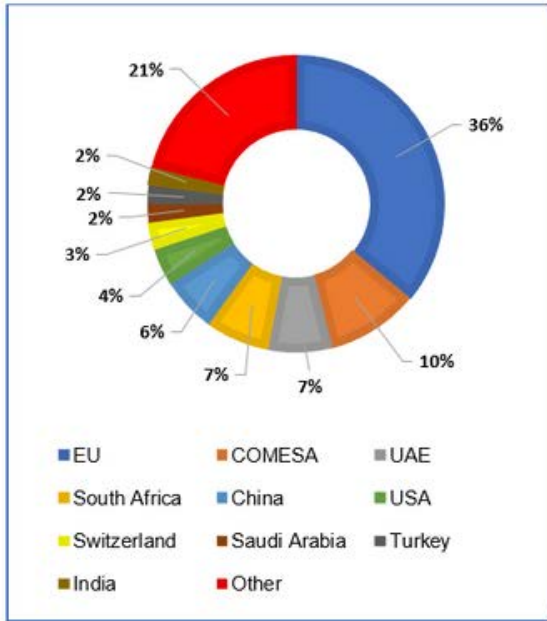
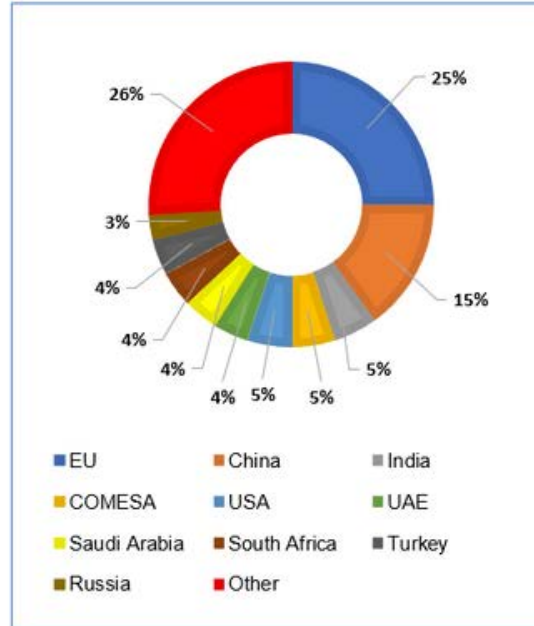


Chart 2: COMESA Top Import Sources



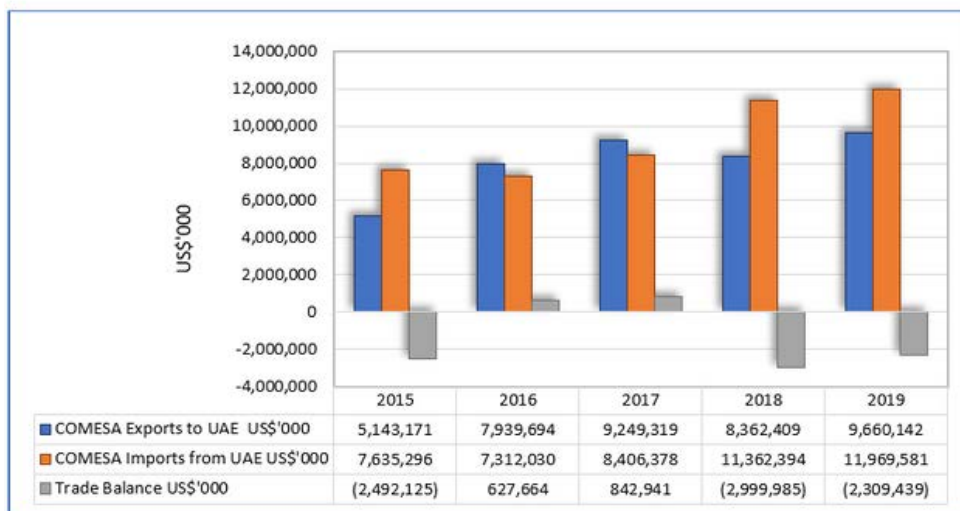
Source: COMSTAT Database

1.COMESA-UAE TRADE TREND

In 2019, COMESA total trade with UAE amounted to US\$ 47 billion (exports & imports). Goods exports totaled \$15 billion; goods imports totaled \$9 billion. COMESA goods trade deficit with UAE was \$18 billion.

The chart below highlights the bilateral trade trend between COMESA and UAE.

Chart 3: COMESA-UAE Trade Trend: 2015 – 2019



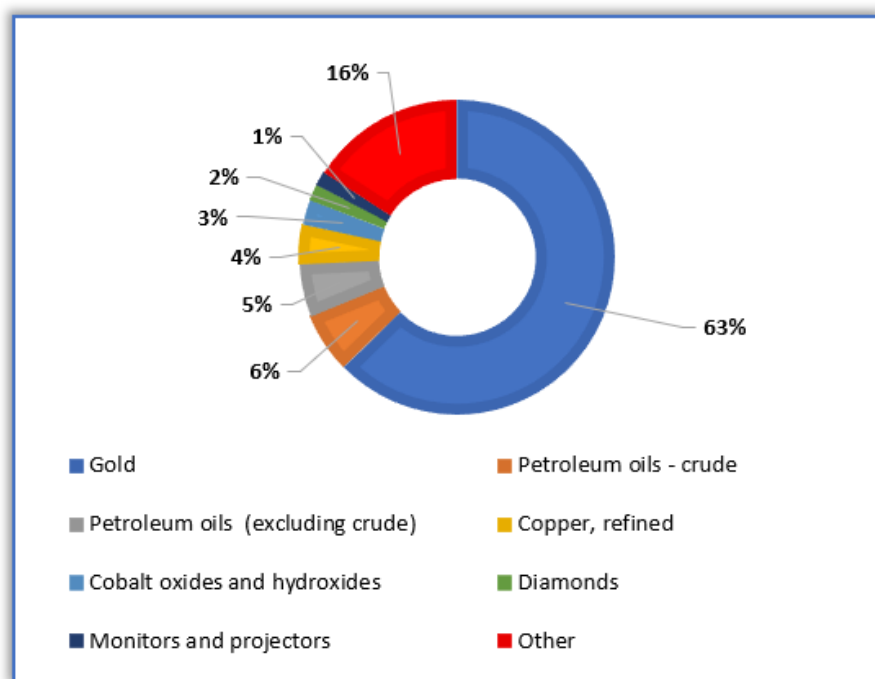
Source: UNCOMTRADE, ITC Trademap

COMESA – UNITED ARAB EMIRATES TRADE RELATIONS

1.COMESA TOP EXPORT PRODUCTS TO UAE

The top export categories (4-digit HS) in 2019 were: gold, petroleum oils – crude, copper refined, cobalt oxides, diamonds, jewellery, meat of sheep and goats and tea. Chart 4 below shows the top COMESA export products to UAE.

Chart 4: COMESA top export products to UAE- 2019



Source: UNCOMTRADE, ITC Trademap

Table 1: COMESA Top export products to UAE – 2018

Product label	Value in 2019 US\$'000
Gold	6,087,484
Petroleum oils - crude	597,888
Petroleum oils (excluding crude)	524,337
Copper, refined	395,530
Cobalt oxides and hydroxides	246,692
Diamonds	166,405
Monitors and projectors	143,807
Jewellery	133,253
Copper, unrefined	99,797
Meat of sheep or goats, fresh, chilled or frozen	89,154
Other oil seeds and oleaginous fruits	77,430
Tea, whether or not flavoured	57,615
Swedes	53,289
Citrus fruit, fresh or dried	37,868
Dates, figs, pineapples, avocados, guavas, mangoes and mangosteens, fresh or dried	35,547
Insulated	32,837
Furniture	32,135

Source: UNCOMTRADE, ITC Trademap

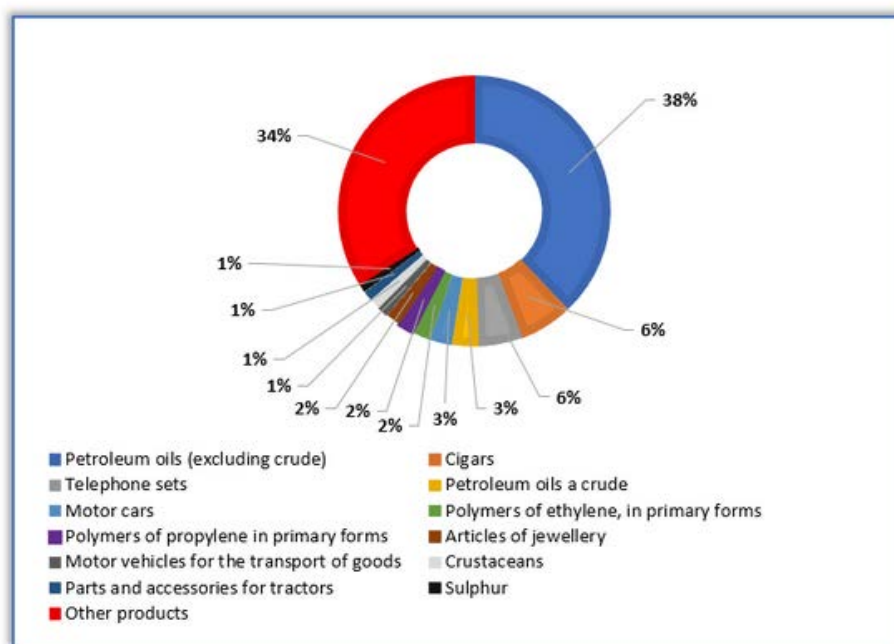
Table 1 above, shows the top import products (4-digit HS) in 2018 which were; telephone sets, diodes, tyres, yarn, iron products and woven fabrics, among others.

COMESA TOP IMPORT PRODUCTS FROM UAE

The top import categories (4-digit HS) in 2019 were: cigars, petroleum oils, cellphones, motor vehicles, polymers of ethylene and propylene, jewellery, parts and accessories for tractors, and sulphur. Chart 5 below shows the top COMESA import products from UAE.

COMESA – UNITED ARAB EMIRATES TRADE RELATIONS

Chart 5: COMESA top import products from UAE – 2019



Source: UNCOMTRADE, ITC Trademap

Table 2: COMESA Top import products from UAE – 2018

Product label	Value in 2019 US\$'000
Petroleum oils (excluding crude)	4,520,948
Cigars	750,212
Telephone sets	638,433
Petroleum oils a crude	364,847
Motor cars	308,158
Polymers of ethylene, in primary forms	262,062
Polymers of propylene in primary forms	224,587
Articles of jewellery	209,329
Motor vehicles for the transport of goods	158,318
Crustaceans	153,239
Parts and accessories for tractors	137,039
Sulphur	121,726
Acyclic hydrocarbons	109,327
Automatic data-processing machines	105,207
Mineral or chemical nitrogenous fertilisers	98,759
Milk and cream, concentrated	91,605
Medicaments	80,308
Gold	72,560
Mineral or chemical fertilisers	67,216
Dried leguminous vegetables, shelled, whether or not skinned or split	67,097
Packaging materials	66,423
Petroleum gas and other gaseous hydrocarbons	60,290

Source: UNCOMTRADE, ITC Trademap

COMESA EXPORT POTENTIAL TO UAE

The products with greatest export potential from COMESA to United Arab Emirates are Gold, semi-manufactured, for non-monetary purposes, Copper cathodes, and Diamonds, worked. Other products include horticultural products - oranges, lemons & limes, grapes, pears, apples, plums, avocados.

UP-COMING EVENTS



**4TH MEETING OF
CBC'S HEALTH CARE
SERVICES &
PHARMACEUTICALS
INDUSTRY
WORKGROUP**


COMESA BUSINESS COUNCIL
Voice of the Private Sector in the Region
BUILDING REGIONAL. GOING GLOBAL

**16th
September
2021**

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COMESA Business Council

The graphic features a large white circle on the left containing the event title. To its right, three smaller circles are arranged vertically, each containing an icon: a pill, a DNA double helix, and a water drop. Arrows point from the large circle to each of these three smaller circles. The background is a dark blue and purple gradient with a hexagonal pattern.



COMESA BUSINESS COUNCIL
Voice of the Private Sector in the Region
BUILDING REGIONAL. GOING GLOBAL

**Tobacco
Sub-workgroup Meeting**
of the Agroindustry Workgroup

30th Sept 2021

The graphic features a photograph of a large center pivot irrigation system in a field at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm orange glow. The irrigation system consists of long metal arms supported by towers, with wheels at the base. The field is green and appears to be a tobacco plantation. A stylized green leaf graphic is positioned in the upper right corner. A wavy blue line runs across the middle of the image, separating the text from the photograph.

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2. Business Facilitation Services; Business support services that are regional in nature.
3. Membership development; We partner with our members-towards strengthened business collaboration.

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OUR SERVICES

BUSINESS POLICY AND ADVOCACY

Influencing policy is at the heart of what we do

2

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

We are our members -towards strengthened business collaboration

1

BUSINESS FACILITATION SERVICES

Business support services that are regional in nature.

3



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