
JOINT STATEMENT

ON THE ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS WITH THE UNITED KINGDOM

ON TRADE RELATIONS POST-BREXIT

1. The Honourable Ministers responsible for Trade Policy in the United Kingdom (UK), the Lord Price; Botswana, V T Seretse; Namibia, I Ngatjizeko; South Africa, Dr. R Davies; Swaziland, J C Mabuza; Lesotho Permanent Secretary of Trade and Industry, Mr F Notoane, representing the Minister of Trade; and the High Commissioner of Mozambique to South Africa, Mr P Macaringue met in Johannesburg today, Wednesday 19 July 2017, to discuss the trade relationship between the UK and the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) countries, post Brexit.
2. The Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the SADC EPA countries (Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, Mozambique, South Africa and Swaziland) and the European Union (EU) was signed on 10 June 2016 in Kasane, Botswana. The EU-SADC Economic Partnership Agreement (EU-SADC EPA) provisionally entered into force between the SACU countries and the EU on 10 October 2016. While the UK remains a member of the EU, the EU-SADC EPA will continue to apply to trade between the SADC EPA countries and the UK.
3. The UK is in the process of exiting the EU. The SACU Ministers welcomed the UK's intention to avoid disruption for its trading partners as it withdraws from the EU. The UK re-affirmed its commitment to the trade arrangement under the current EU-SADC EPA and to maintain current market access to the UK following its withdrawal from the EU, and to ensure continuity of the effects of the EU-SADC EPA.
4. The two sides agreed to continue discussions to explore ways to ensure that the existing trade arrangement between the UK and SACU currently governed by the EU-SADC EPA will not be disrupted by the UK's departure from the EU. Talks are likely to focus on steps to agree an arrangement that replicates the effects of the EPA once the UK has left the EU. This would be a technical exercise to ensure continuity in the trading relationship, rather than an opportunity to renegotiate existing terms.
5. Given Mozambique's participation in the SADC EPA, the Ministers agreed to continue discussions on how best to work with Mozambique, in order to ensure continuity of the EPA for all partners.

DONE AT JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA, ON THIS 19TH DAY OF JULY 2017

Honourable V.T. Seretse

Minister of Investment,
Trade and Industry
Botswana

The Lord Price CVO

Minister of State at the
Department for International
Trade, United Kingdom