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## SOUTHERN AFRICAN CUSTOMS UNION SECRETARIAT

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| <b>Purpose</b>                     | Press Statement  |
| <b>Circulation</b>                 | All  |
| <b>Subject</b>                     | SACU Council of Ministers Meeting<br>To be held on 07 December in Windhoek, Namibia. |
| <b>Date of media release issue</b> | 05 December 2007   |

1. The Southern African Customs Union (SACU) Council of Ministers meeting is scheduled on Friday 07 December 2007 in Windhoek, Namibia. This is the last SACU Council of Ministers meeting for the year.
2. The SACU Council of Ministers consists of Ministers of Finance and Trade from each Member State (Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland). It is the supreme decision making authority on SACU matters and meets on a quarterly basis to discuss and make decisions on issues relating to the Policy direction; Policy mandates and the functioning of SACU Institutions.

3. The meeting will be preceded by the SACU Commission meeting which will also be held in Windhoek, Namibia from the 03 to the 06 December 2007.
4. The Council of Ministers Meeting will focus on a number of issues. These include the Secretariats budget for 2008/09 financial year and the progress and status of a number of initiatives in the SACU work programme, whose primary objective is the implementation of the 2002 Agreement and its intended benefits to the Member States.
5. Key initiatives in the SACU work programme are the Regional Integration programme; the implementation of the Tariff Board, National Bodies and the Tribunal; the Common Revenue Pool (CRP); SACU's trade agenda and the Common Negotiating Mechanism (CNM). Council will also receive an update on SACU's Trade Negotiations and take decisions on key issues with regards to furthering SACU Trade Relations with third parties.
6. A number of studies are currently being undertaken to assist in the development and implementation of some of the SACU work programme initiatives. These include the study on the SACU rebates and duty draw backs. The study will give

guidance to the ongoing work on the management and distribution of customs revenue collected into the Common Revenue Pool.

7. In the area of Regional Integration two studies are underway. One is on the consolidation of SACU, and other is on the impact assessment, of the SADC FTA for 2008 and SADC Customs Union for 2010, on SACU Members States. Council will receive an update on the studies being undertaken.

**End.**

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