



16th Council of Ministers Meeting - 31st October, Windhoek Namibia.

1. The 16th Meeting of the SACU Council of Ministers will take place on Friday 31st October 2008 in Windhoek, Namibia. The meeting will be chaired by the Lesotho Minister of Finance and Development Planning, Honourable Timothy Tahane. Lesotho took up Chairmanship in July 2008 and will Chair the SACU Council for a period of twelve months.
2. This 16th Meeting of Council comes after a SACU Ministerial Retreat, that was held from the 29 August - 01 September 2008 in Kasane Botswana, and was attended by all SACU Member States. The purpose of the retreat was to develop a common vision for SACU in the light of the current regional and global changes. An important item on the Council Agenda will be the considerations of resolutions taken at the Retreat with a view to implementing them.
3. The Meeting is also taking place just before the crucial round of the SADC - EU EPA negotiations which are to take place from the 3rd to the 7th November 2008 in Brussels, Belgium, in which all SACU Members are

engaged. It is anticipated that Council will deliberate on the SACU position in preparation for the negotiations.

4. The Council meeting is preceded by the SACU Customs Union Commission meeting which was held from the 23 - 25 September 2008, in Windhoek Namibia. Council will consider the Commission Meeting Report, covering Policy issues relating to the SACU work programme and the Secretariats internal operations.
5. The meeting takes place against the backdrop of unprecedented turbulence in the world financial markets. It is anticipated that the Council of Ministers will exchange ideas on how to possibly deal with the effects of this crisis.

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