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SACU Council of Ministers Meeting

The SACU Council of Ministers held their 13th meeting in Windhoek, Namibia on the 7 December 2007. In his opening remarks Council Chairperson, the Honourable Baledzi Gaolathe, Minister of Finance and Development Planning for Botswana, said "The Council meeting takes place at a crucial time in the history of SACU, given the major strategic challenges facing the organisation and the Southern African region as a whole. These challenges have implications for the regional integration process and on the achievement of the aims and objectives of the 2002 SACU Agreement"

He indicated that the recent joint meeting of the SADC Ministers of Trade and Finance, held in November 2007, confirmed the road map for the launch of the Free Trade Area (FTA) in August 2008 and Customs Union in 2010. All SACU Member States are also in SADC and subscribe to its integration agenda. Whilst the integration agenda presents challenges to the basic aims of SACU, the organisation needs to stay focussed and objective in interpreting the dynamics of the region. "As much as possible, we need to identify those elements of the Agenda that will promote the aims of SACU and capitalise on them, I am confident that our ongoing efforts at consolidating and positioning SACU in relation to the integration developments at regional level can provide mutually beneficial solutions to the SACU Member States and the larger Southern African region" said the Minister.

The Council of Ministers Meeting addressed the issue of how SACU should use trade to achieve its objective to enhance global economy integration, given that as SACU peruses this objective the international agenda is becoming diverse with important issues such as trade in services, while aid and development is also taking a more prominent role. The widening scope of trade negotiations compels SACU to adopt pro-active and well informed strategies on issues that are not presently covered by the Agreement, which may have implications on the outcome of the organisation's trade negotiations with third parties.

The meeting stressed the need for SACU to continue harmonising existing trade relations with third parties, whilst striving to uphold the principles and obligations of the SACU Agreement. In going forward this would impel SACU to spend more time on developing common policies and harmonising its interests.

The Council of Ministers noted that their meeting took place on the evening before the 2nd EU-Africa Heads of State and Government Summit which was scheduled to start on 8 December 2007 in Lisbon, Portugal. The agenda for the forthcoming Summit was to discuss and adopt a Joint EU-Africa Strategy with an emphasis on political issues, sustainable economic growth, development, regional integration



Hon. Baledzi Gaolathe, Minister of Finance and Development Planning for Botswana and the current Chairperson of the SACU Council of Ministers

and trade. These discussions were viewed against the background of the African Union's efforts to promote continental economic integration. As Europe is SACU's largest trading partner, it was expected that the outcome of the EU - AU Summit would see a strengthened commitment from Europe to assist Africa in achieving her economic integration objectives.

The meeting concluded by addressing the strategic challenges and work activities facing SACU in 2008 - including the establishment of the remaining SACU institutions - namely the SACU Tariff Board, institutional development, capacity building in the Member States, policy harmonisation and trade facilitation initiatives.



SACU Workshop on Trade Remedies



SACU Secretariat Legal Advisor,
Advocate Thabang Phatela

A workshop was held in Windhoek Namibia on the 12th November 2007 on Trade Remedies for the reference group on the establishment of SACU National Bodies and the Tariff Board. The group was provided with training in Trade Remedies by Consultants from the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the European Union (EU).

The meeting was facilitated by the SACU Trade and Industry Liaison Committee (TLIC) which is chaired by Namibia through her Trade Policy Analyst from the Ministry of Trade and Industry Mr. Sacky Shiyamba. In addition to training on

Trade Remedies, the Reference Group reviewed the road map on the Establishment of the Tariff Board and National Bodies. The Chairperson of the (TLIC) reference group Mr. Shiyamba expressed hope that the meeting would be able

to come up with tangible recommendations on the way forward regarding the establishment of the outstanding SACU Institutions, namely the Tariff Board and the National Bodies.

The Secretariat, through the Legal Advisor, Advocate Thabang Phatela, gave an update of what had been achieved so far and challenges that had led to a proposal to review the road map in consultation with the Member States.



Group Picture of the participants of the SACU Trade Remedies workshop

Meeting of the SACU Ministers and Senior Officials responsible for Trade

SACU Ministers and Senior Officials responsible for Trade met on 29-31 August 2007 in Gaborone, Botswana, to discuss SACU's ongoing Trade Negotiation Agenda with third parties.

The meeting deliberated on the following ongoing trade negotiations with third parties:
SACU-India negotiations: SACU and India have been engaged in discussions on a

possible negotiating framework agreement. A draft text was developed for this purpose between negotiators from both sides. Namibia is the lead negotiator in the SACU – India negotiations. Member States expressed a preference for first negotiating a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) with India, rather than immediately negotiating a Free Trade Agreement (FTA). Once a PTA has been concluded, an assessment could be made

about the potential benefits of moving towards a free trade agreement over the longer term. In moving forward issues that needed to be finalized by the two parties include:

- Finalizing the text of the proposed Negotiating Framework Agreement;
- Deciding on the technical prerequisites needed for the

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negotiations of a PTA between the two Parties; and

- Developing a time frame for the negotiations of a PTA.

The next round of negotiations is scheduled for 4 October 2007 and is to be held in South Africa.

SACU-USA Trade, Investment and Development Cooperation Agreement (TIDCA):

SACU-US consultations that took place on the fringes of the recent AGOA Forum (held on 18-19 July 2007 in Accra, Ghana). Several recommendations have been made on the way forward. Both sides have reserved the right to revert back to certain issues, pending internal consultations with affected stakeholders or Member States. South Africa is the lead Negotiator in the SACU – USA TIDCA.

SACU-MERCOSUR:

Certain issues regarding the SACU-MERCOSUR Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) negotiations needed further negotiation before the agreement could be concluded. These included additional exchanges of tariff concessions on a few items identified on both sides, special requests on beef for Paraguay and Uruguay, as well as rules of origin, customs cooperation, non-tariff measures (such as SPS) and autos. Further ongoing negotiations are planned for early 2008. South Africa is the lead Negotiator in the SACU – MERCOSUR PTA.

SACU-EFTA Free Trade Agreement:

Ratification and Implementation: SACU-EFTA Free Trade Agreement was signed in July 2006. EFTA and SACU Member States commenced ratification processes aimed at implementing the agreements. All EFTA Member States have ratified the agreements. SACU Member States are in processes of finalizing the ratification process. It is anticipated that all SACU member States will have finalized the ratification during

the first half of 2008. Following full ratification on both sides the implementation of the agreement will begin.

East African Community (EAC):

A decision has been made by the SACU Council of Ministers that SACU should consider negotiations with an African Country or a bloc of African Countries. In this regard a decision has been taken by Council to consider the EAC. The Secretariat is to commission a study on the EAC as a possible trade negotiating partner, also taking into account the wider regional integration processes in the Southern African region.

Doha Round of WTO Negotiations:

As requested by the World Trade Organisation (WTO) the SACU Member States met on 29 March 2007 in Walvis Bay, Namibia to consider a possible common approach in the WTO Non Agriculture Market Access (NAMA) negotiations. NAMA is the hallmark for future industrialisation and industrial tariffs may be the legitimate policy tool to achieve a common position. More technical work is to be undertaken to facilitate a common SACU position on the WTO NAMA negotiations.

SACU- MERCOSUR Trade Negotiations

The 12th round of SACU – MERCOSUR Trade Negotiations scheduled for 12-14 December 2007 has been postponed to the 17-18 April 2008. The 12th round of Negotiations will be held in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

SACU concluded and signed a Preferential Trade Agreement with MERCOSUR, which was signed by SACU and MERCOSUR Ministers at a ceremony in December 2004. The agreement included an in-built agenda to continue negotiations on a number of issues, including rules of origin, SPS and specific requests for additional trade preferences for specific products on both sides. The aim 12th round of negotiations would be to conclude all the outstanding issues in order for the final agreement to be signed.

Secretariat Staff Diplomacy Training

At the beginning of the year the Secretariat embarked on a series of Diplomacy training workshops for both the professional staff and the Secretariat Staff. The last series of workshops was held on the 18th to the 19th October 2007 at the Safari Court Hotel in Windhoek Namibia. In opening the workshop the Executive Secretary, Ms Tswelopele Moremi indicated that the SACU Secretariat, through the 2002 Agreement, has been accorded the Status of an International Organisation whose outlook and accountability, differs from other Organisation in terms of its multi-cultural and

multi-lateral approach in the delivery of its work. She said “ in serving several Member States our service is judged and viewed with very high expectations and high standards. It is also required to be of a credible nature.” She indicated that the training should be able to assist Staff to adapt to the required practices of an international organization.

The Diplomacy training covered ethics and etiquette in the workplace and on formal external engagements.



Professional Staff Report Writing workshop

As the technical and one of the permanent Institutions of SACU, the Secretariat time and again produces reports for the various SACU institutions, meetings and participates in trade negotiations including a host of other related initiatives.

As part of the organizations continuous improvement initiatives a report-writing course for professional staff of the SACU Secretariat was held at the Safari Court Hotel in Windhoek - Namibia, on 6th November 2007. The course was facilitated by Mr. John M Kasanga, a consultant based in, Lusaka, and Zambia. A total of 12 members of the SACU Secretariat staff attended the course. The main objective of the course was to enable professional staff of the SACU Secretariat develop a "house style" to guide report writing of the Secretariat and also to:

- Get an overview of concepts, skills and structures that are important for good report writing;
- Identifying appropriate tools and techniques that can

be used to convey ideas with clarity and impact by the SACU Secretariat.

The course was officially opened by Mr. Dumisani Mahlinza, the Director – Revenue Management and Trade Facilitation and Deputy Executive Secretary at the SACU Secretariat. Mr. Mahlinza noted that the SACU Secretariat, as a newly established institution, was still in the process of developing standard management systems and practices.

Mr. Mahlinza informed the participants that senior management of the Secretariat had accorded priority to ensuring that this course is held. This has been in recognition of the fact that, the Secretariat is staffed by professionals recruited from various public and private organizations in the SACU Member States. Invariably, the professionals have brought into the Secretariat, their individual report writing styles that need to be harmonized.

Mr. Mahlinza implored course participants to utilize the opportunity offered by this course

to identify common approaches that can be applied by the Secretariat to improve and standardize reports that it prepares. He also urged participants to work as a team and continue to support measures being initiated by the Secretariat to improve its service delivery capabilities. The course was deliberately structured to encourage all participants to engage in both, group and plenary discussions of practical issues associated with report writing. Apart from presentations on report writing techniques, emphasis was also given to addressing the structure and content of reports that are generated by the SACU Secretariat.

The course provided an opportunity for the Secretariat staff to review the effectiveness of current activities and reports. More importantly, the participants developed common views on issues and aspects of the Secretariat's current best practice and areas that require further improvement in the area of report writing.

Secretariat new Staff Members

Three new staff members were recruited during the quarter. The SACU Quarterly took some time off to interview them. Below are their profiles:

Mr. Farai Manwa

– Documentation and Conferencing Officer
I Completed a B(Admin)(Tourism) / B. Marketing (Australia) as well as a Masters Tourism (Australia) with my core areas being Entrepreneurship, Marketing and International Business. I have worked as a researcher with

CRC REEF for 4 years and have subsequently worked as a marketing executive, a lecturer and a business consultant within the marketing, tourism and events management fields. I enjoy the challenges of a multicultural international organization, and I enjoy the wide variety of people I interact with on a daily basis. I like starting new challenges with the aim of creating a successful legacy at the end.

Proud moments during my career are very diverse as I have worked in a few different industries. The most significant have been the successful running of logistical issues in



Mr. Farai Manwa
– Documentation and Conferencing Officer

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different events I have been involved in; project management in a few consultancies. Publication of articles, and the introduction of a new product range in the sales and marketing aspects of my job.

As Documentation and Conferencing Officer my role is to hold and be the control for all SACU documentation coming in and out of the Secretariat. Additionally my role involves providing all the logistical support for SACU meetings taking place i.e Council, Commission and Technical Liaison Committee meetings. Being a new position my role also involves investigating best practice internationally and implementing new systems to best fit my job description and environment I achieve this role by being in constant touch with all technical people at all levels of the organization. Then as information is generated I keep a record of it. Apart from technical personnel in the organization I liaise often with the support team within the Secretariat. Externally I have found that developing good working relationships with Member States is useful as often I am the first point of contact with regards to SACU meetings. Hence constant communication and feedback with Member States ensures that we provide the best support to help SACU achieve its objectives.

A typical day at work seems to depend on the time of the year. During Council, Commission, and TLC periods it involves liaising with the technical directorates and preparing the newest agenda's for regional activity. It also involves being the editor of the documents they generate for their various meetings. It includes setting up the logistics of upcoming events, of which we have one almost every month running for a week.

When SACU events are not taking place, my role involves constant improvement of ways the Secretariat is functioning. i.e. improving our physical and electronic database. This involves liaising with all institutions that have

any overlaps with SACU activities as well as relevant departments in the organization such as IT, Communication and Administration.

In my spare time I enjoy attending cultural and sporting events as well as reading finance and car magazines.

Motselisi Matsela

- Economist



Motselisi Matsela
- Economist

I hold a B.A Degree in Economics from the National University of Lesotho; a B. A. Economics (Honors) from the University of Cape Town and an M.A Economics from the University of Stellenbosch.

In my career life I have worked as a Senior Analyst - Ministry of Finance Lesotho - 2000; National Programme Officer – UNDP Lesotho - 2001; Senior Analyst – Ministry of Finance – 2002 to October, 2003; Senior Economist – Lesotho Revenue Authority – October 2003 to July 2007; Director, Performance Analysis Division – Lesotho Revenue Authority – July 2007 up until my appointment to the SACU Secretariat in December 2007.

As an Economist in the Directorate of Trade Facilitation and Revenue Management I am mandated to provide analysis on revenue

related issues and trade facilitation and oversee the work of Finance Technical Liaison Committee. I achieve my role through the strategic leadership and guidance of the Director and of course, the team work enshrined in the Directorate.

A typical day at the Secretariat is never the same particularly the tasks I undertake as stipulated in the directorate action plan and duties as may be assigned depending on the developments on the regional agenda. I have a passion for challenging job and dislike routine work.

This is my first international job and I do miss my daughter and the rest of my family and friends back home.

Letsiwe Dlamini

- Policy Coordinator

I hold a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Social sciences with a major in Economics and Public Administration from the University of Swaziland and a Masters Degree in Global Management and Development from the University of Antwerp, Belgium. I have also been awarded a Diploma in Development Policy from Antwerp University and a certificate in Women and the Law from the University of South Africa.

I started my career in the Banking industry in 1994 with ABSA Bank South Africa. In 1995 I joined SADC as an Economist in the Human Resources Development Sector and later as a Senior Human Resources Development Officer for SADC in Botswana. In 2005 I joined the Swaziland Ministry of Economic Planning and Development as an Economist and in April 2007 I was re-deployed to the Ministry of Foreign affairs as Senior Economist until December 2007 when I joined the SACU Secretariat.

My passion is to be involved in development work that actually makes the lives of poor people better.

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My role at the Secretariat involves:

Coordinate and provide support to assigned economic and trade policy research projects by assisting in the formulation of terms of reference for these and ensure that research objectives, quality outputs and agreed time scales are adhered to and met;

Establish internal, external and regional research partnerships and networks that would assist the Directorate in the coordination of the annual economic and trade policy development, harmonization and cooperation programme;

Finalize and submit research reports outlining clear and well articulated recommendations to SACU Secretariat Management as required for economic and trade policy formulation, harmonization and cooperation;

Identify and make recommendations on areas for economic and trade policy cooperation, harmonization and development; and

Build networks with research and other partner organisations with a view to source and facilitate the provision of technical assistance and capacity building initiatives and programmes for SACU in the areas of economic and trade policy development, harmonization and cooperation.

I achieve this by working closely with Member States (through the Technical Liaison Committees) to implement Articles 38-41 of the SACU Agreement.

A typical day at the Secretariat includes, following up on outstanding TLC-related work;

undertaking preparatory work for short-term consultancies and analyzing and preparing initial consolidated reports on country submissions on various economic policy issues.



Letsiwe Dlamini
- Policy Coordinator

The SACU Secretariat

The Secretariat is one of the SACU permanent Institutions. It has its headquarters in Windhoek, Namibia and is headed by an Executive Secretary who is a citizen of a SACU Member State. It is responsible for the day-to-day administration of SACU. The Secretariat further has to coordinate and monitor the implementation of all decisions of the Council and the Commission. It also arranges meetings, disseminates information and keeps minutes of meetings of the SACU Institutions. In addition, the Secretariat must assist in the harmonization of national policies and strategies of Member States in so far as they relate to SACU. The Secretariat is also responsible for keeping a record of all transactions into and out of the Common Revenue Pool and coordinates and assists in the negotiation of trade agreements with third parties. The Secretariat is the depositary of all records of SACU.

Our Purpose:

The SACU Secretariat exists to facilitate the achievement of the SACU objectives as outlined in the 2002 SACU agreement. With neutrality and dedicated focus, we provide support for all SACU activities, thereby influencing the SACU agenda. Our organisation offers expertise, consistency and continuity in the drive to promote regional integration for the benefit of all Member States. By engaging with diverse, challenging regional and global issues, we grow ourselves and others with whom we work. We make an innovative contribution through collaboration, professionalism and determination.

Our Vision:

To be A regional leader exemplifying the

ideal practice of providing quality service to a Customs Union.

Our Values:

- **Visionary Leadership:**
We recognize the need to set a vision in our respective areas of work that stretches our organizational focus beyond the immediate situation and out to a shared future.
- **Trustworthiness:**
We value honesty and we expect people to always treat one another professionally and with respect, leading to mutual trust.
- **Performance-driven:**
We value the willingness of people to be responsible and accountable for:

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- the quality of their work
- the importance of achieving positive results
- Their ability to meet or surpass expectations and manage resources entrusted to them in a cost effective and efficient manner.
- **Integrity:**
 - We believe in exercising Integrity in all business dealings with our trade partners; our business associates and our allies in serving our stakeholders.
 - We treat them with respect, fairness and integrity at all times and expect the same in return.
 - We will always take the high road by practicing the highest ethical standards, and by honouring our commitments.
 - We will take personal responsibility for our actions, and treat everyone fairly and with trust and respect.
- **People Centered:**

We are committed to an environment characterized by continuous learning, an entrepreneurial, can-do spirit and a team orientation. In addition, we are committed to an environment that is willing to allow for a healthy balance between our professional and personal lives. This commitment will enable us to attract and retain the best-qualified people and create a workplace which we can be proud and where we can always enjoy our work, while seeking to carry out our mission.
- **Working together:**

We recognize our strength and our competitive advantage is -- and always will be -- people. We value the skills, strengths, and perspectives of our diverse

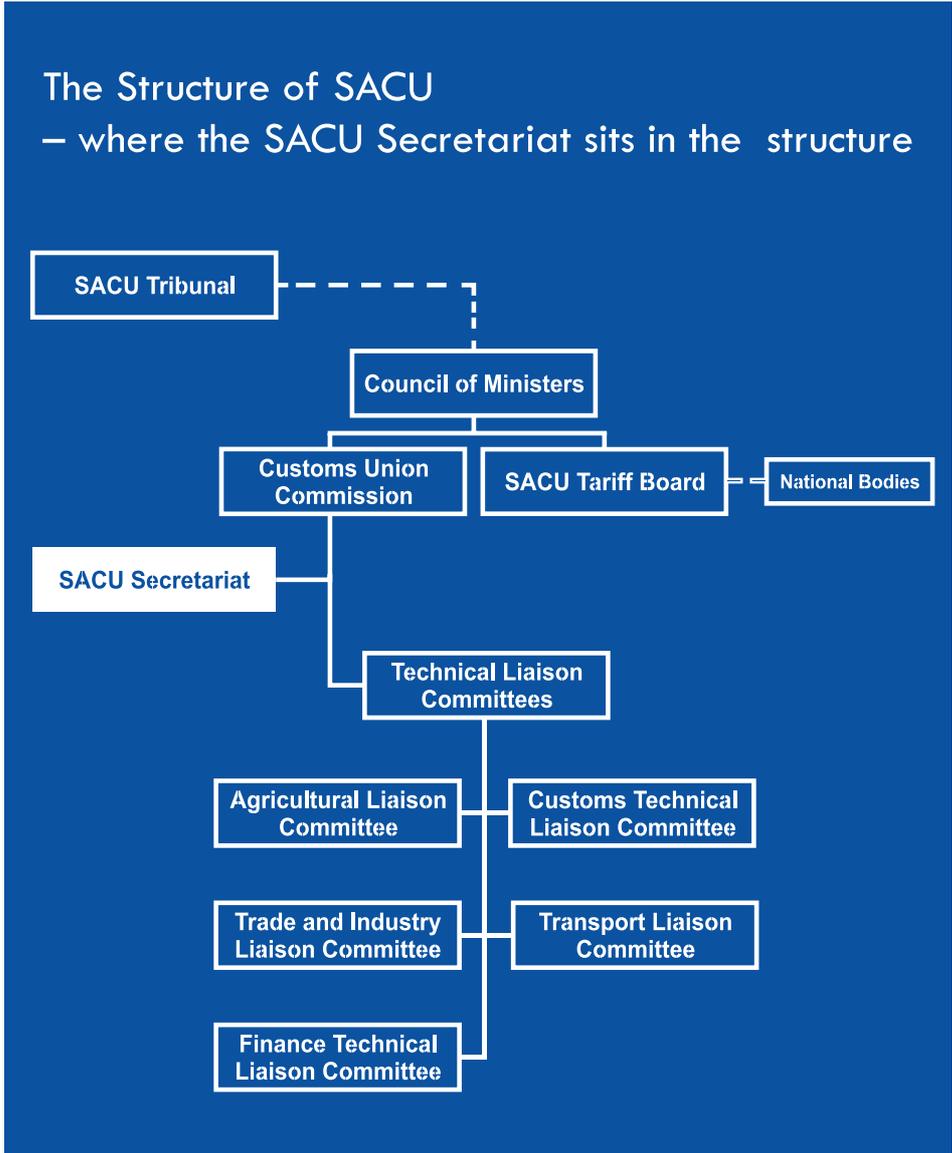
team. We will continually learn, and share ideas and knowledge. We will encourage cooperative efforts at every level and across all activities in our Organisation.

SACU Secretariat Directorates Directorates

Currently the SACU Secretariat has six Directorates:

- Executive Secretary Office

- Trade Facilitation and Revenue Management (TFRM) Directorate
- Policy Development and Research (PDR) Directorate
- Corporate Services (CS) Directorate
- Legal Services Directorate
- Internal Audit Directorate



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Calendar of Events for the Next Quarter

17 – 18 January

Aid for Trade Meeting, Maseru, Lesotho.

25 January

SACU Agriculture Technical Meeting on WTO, Pretoria, South Africa.

31 January - 2nd February

African Union (AU) Tenth ordinary session.

11 February

SACU Trade Ministers meeting on the EPAs.

20 – 22 February

SACU India Negotiations Round 2.

11 – 13 March

15th SACU Technical Liaison Committee Meeting.

17 – 18 March

Africa, Asia, America (AAA) Business Summit.

08 – 10 April

World Customs Organisation (WCO) Customs Strategy workshop.

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SACU Secretariat Strategic plan 2007 – 2010.

Informed by its purpose, vision, values and work plan the SACU Secretariat Strategic Plan 2007 – 2010 has the following Strategic themes and intents.

Economic policy coordination and harmonisation	Support the SACU objectives for enhanced economic development and deepening intergration in SACU by focusing on policy development and harmonisation initiatives.
Trade negotiation	Facilitate SACU's integration into the Global economy in order to advance the economic development of SACU member states.
Trade facilitation	Promote intra SACU free movement of goods through cross-border co-operation and trade.
Revenue Sharing	Support Member States in implementing a Revenue Sharing Framework aimed at ensuring equitable sharing of revenue.
Strategic Positioning of SACU	Facilitate a positive image and awareness of SACU as a dynamic regional institution within an African context.
Efficient and Effective SACU institutions	Enable the efficient and effective establishment and operation of all SACU institutions
Secretariat Operational Excellence	Provide professional, effective and efficient Support Services to all SACU institutions.

Mailing List

The SACU Quarterly is a SACU Secretariat newsletter that is produced every three months and is circulated free of charge. If you wish to be on the mailing list, write to SACU Quarterly, Private Bag 13285, Windhoek, Namibia, or email: sacuquarterly@sacu.int.

Comments and Feedback:

For comments and feedback, email: feedback@sacu.int or write to SACU Quarterly, Private Bag 13285, Windhoek, Namibia.