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## JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

### 1<sup>ST</sup> JOINT COUNCIL MEETING OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN CUSTOMS UNION'S MEMBER STATES AND MOZAMBIQUE- UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND, ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (EPA)

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28<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2025

1. The Ministers and Senior Officials from the Southern African Customs Union Member States (Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia, and South Africa), Mozambique (SACUM), and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK) convened the First Joint Council Meeting under the SACUM-UK Economic Partnership Agreement (SACUM-UK EPA) in Gaborone, Botswana, on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2025.
2. This Meeting marked a significant milestone in the implementation of the SACUM-UK EPA, which governs trade relations and promotes economic cooperation between the Parties. In this regard, the Joint Council took stock of progress made in the implementation of the agreement and endorsed several key decisions including the approval of the Rules of Procedure (RoP) for the Joint Council and the Trade and Development Committee. These RoP are necessary to establish the framework of the agreement and guide the operations of these institutions.
3. The Joint Council welcomed the progress towards finalising the list of 21 arbitrators and looks forward to the adoption of the list by the TDC for the purposes of implementing Articles 80 and 94 of the SACUM-UK EPA.
4. The Joint Council further commended the collaborative efforts in finalizing the Rules of Procedure for Dispute Avoidance and Settlement and the Code of Conduct for Arbitrators and Mediators.

The Joint Council was pleased to adopt the Decision as recommended by the Trade and Development Committee.

5. Equally, the Joint Council underscored the importance of continued collaboration to advance the SACUM-UK EPA's objectives. In this regard the Parties agreed to convene future meetings to address matters of mutual interest, as guided by the adopted Rules of Procedures.
6. Parties agreed to advance and expedite work on outstanding market access issues under the Built-in Agenda and Transitional Arrangements.
7. The outcomes of the 1st Joint Council Meeting demonstrate the Parties' shared commitment to deepening economic partnerships, promoting inclusive growth, and ensuring mutual benefits for all stakeholders.

Issued jointly, in the Republic of Botswana on Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> January 2025, on behalf of the SACU, Mozambique and United Kingdom Joint Council.

SACU Secretariat  
Email: [info@sacu.int](mailto:info@sacu.int)

Head of Communications  
Ministry of Industry and Trade, Mozambique  
e-mail: [assaneibramo14@gmail.com](mailto:assaneibramo14@gmail.com)

Department for Business and  
Trade, UK  
[tradeagreementimplementation@trade.gov.uk](mailto:tradeagreementimplementation@trade.gov.uk)