the dtic
Department:
Trade, Industry and Competition
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO. 5223

Ms K A Christie (DA) to ask the Minister of Trade Industry and Competition:

(1) Given that the President hosted the 46th Ordinary Summit of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in Durban in August 2026 and has been elected chairperson of the regional bloc, what are the plans of his department to (a) deepen economic integration, (b) expand trade across the region and (c) facilitate easier cross-border activity;

(2) whether he has received any representations from his counterparts in other SADC countries, particularly Malawi, Zimbabwe and Mozambique, regarding recent incidents targeting foreign nationals in the Republic; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details;

(3) whether trade relations with the specified countries have been negatively affected by recent xenophobic attacks and the return under duress of at least 53 000 Malawians, Zimbabweans and Mozambicans to their respective nations; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what steps does he intend to take in response? NW5647E

REPLY:

(1) (a), (b), (c)

South Africa's Chairship of SADC, from August 2026 to August 2027, provides an important opportunity to advance a practical regional economic integration agenda. The Chairship is being pursued under the theme: ***"Resilient, Sustainable and***

Inclusive Industrialisation through Infrastructure Development, Agricultural and Critical Minerals Transformation in Pursuit of a Just World."

In line with this theme, the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (**the dtic**) will focus on ensuring that regional integration translates into increased trade, stronger regional production and value chains, and more efficient movement of goods and services across borders.

A key priority will be the consolidation and effective implementation of the SADC Free Trade Area (FTA). Currently, 13 of the 16 SADC Member States participate in the SADC Trade Protocol. The Department will encourage the remaining Member States to participate fully and will continue to work with relevant member states to address non-compliance with existing commitments under the Protocol, as non-compliance undermine the integrity of the SADC FTA. This includes prioritising the removal of non-tariff barriers and other practical impediments to trade, such as restrictive import measures, customs-related obstacles, unnecessary technical requirements and other measures that prevent businesses from taking advantage of preferential market access.

A further priority will be to strengthen the link between regional trade integration and industrialisation. South Africa will promote the development of regional value chains in sectors where the region has comparative and competitive advantages, including agro-processing, critical minerals and mineral beneficiation, pharmaceuticals, manufacturing and other productive sectors.

The Department will also advance the progressive integration of regional services markets through implementation of the SADC Protocol on Trade in Services. The availability of competitive and quality services is an essential underpinning of industrial and infrastructure development as well as trade expansion.

Regarding trade facilitation and reducing the time and cost of moving goods across borders, **the dtic** will work with relevant departments and agencies, including SARS, the Border Management Authority, the Department of Home Affairs, the Department of Transport and other institutions, to support coordinated border management, harmonised customs procedures, improved border operating arrangements, customs data exchange and greater use of digital trade documentation. South Africa will further support SADC initiatives relating to One-Stop Border Posts, economic and transport corridors, harmonisation of standards and technical regulations, and sanitary and phytosanitary measures.

The above interventions are intended to support not only the development of a more integrated regional market, but indeed a more integrated regional economy in which all SADC firms can produce regionally, trade more efficiently across borders and compete collectively in African and global markets.

(2) The Minister has not received formal representations from his counterparts in Malawi, Zimbabwe and Mozambique regarding recent incidents involving foreign nationals in South Africa.

However, the Minister has engaged with his counterparts from Zimbabwe on the margins of the Bi-National Commission that South Africa hosted on 21 August 2026. Minister Tau further hosted Professor Amon Murirwa, Minister of Trade from Zimbabwe, at the Business Forum hosted between the two countries. The two Ministers led the Business representatives in discussions aimed at strengthening bilateral trade and investment relations.

The Minister also engaged the Mozambican Minister of Economy, Mr Basilio Muhate, on the margins of the SADC Summit and further at a bilateral meeting held on the margins of the 15th Edition of the UAE Annual Investment Meeting (AIM Congress) on 8 September 2026. During the last engagement, the Ministers agreed to meet in Mozambique on 27 October 2026 for the signing of the Terms of Reference (ToRs) which will pave the way for the establishment of a Joint Trade and Investment

Committee (JTIC) that will enable the resolution of issues affecting Trade and Investment between the two countries.

the dtic further supported South African companies participating in the Maputo International Trade Fair (FACIM) from 31st August up until 26th September 2026.

The Minister has not yet engaged with the Minister of Industrialisation, Business, Trade and Tourism of Malawi outside of the SADC engagements.

(3) South African export figures sourced from the South African Revenue Service (SARS) are currently available only up to the end of August 2026. Due to a lag in data reporting, a thorough determination cannot yet be made on the impact of migration issues on South Africa's trade with the three countries. However, since June 2026, exports for Malawi and Zimbabwe has increased compared with 2025 as shown below.

MALAWI		
Period	2025	2026
June	R793,764,727	R850,977,091
July	R821,935,104	R912,689,929
August	R725,982,125	R820,521,255

ZIMBABWE		
Period	2025	2026
June	R6,089,931,059	R6,472,021,135
July	R5,791,768,601	R7,500,109,415
August	R6,143,489,360	R7,339,934,987

MOZAMBIQUE		
Period	2025	2026
June	R8,908,471,142	R4,834,142,216
July	R8,535,409,293	R5,708,868,256
August	R6,344,237,905	R5,508,456,544

With respect to Mozambique there has been a decline compared with 2025, which can be attributed to the adoption of temporary quantitative restrictions on the importation of product categories introduced by the Government of Mozambique. These measures affect imports from all trade partners and engagements continue with Mozambique in this regard.

The department will continue to engage other African governments and pursue trade interventions to safeguard market access; strengthen commercial relations and reaffirm South Africa's commitment to constructive partnerships and shared prosperity across the African continent.

These efforts will be pursued through Trade and Investment Missions, Development Finance Funding and Insurance Cover projects in catalytic sectors that include, but are not limited to, infrastructure, mining, and energy on the continent. Economic Cooperation will continually be pursued through bilateral and multilateral government-to-government engagements.

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