Mission Statement
“Leveraging on partnerships and innovative technologies, to produce and disseminate relevant, quality, timely statistics and spatial data that are fit-for-purpose in accordance with international standards and best practice”

Vision Statement
“Be a high performance institution in quality statistics delivery”

Core Values
- Integrity
- Excellent Performance
- Accuracy
- Team Work
- Accountability
- Transparency
International merchandise trade plays a crucial role in economic development as it binds producers and consumers located in different countries into a global economic system. In this context, availability of timely and high-quality trade statistics becomes a precondition for an in-depth analysis of the employment, production, income, consumption and overall welfare both at the country and global level. It is in that light that since its establishment, the NSA has strived to make provision of timely and quality statistics through various publications. This publication outlines the monthly developments of Namibia’s merchandise trade with the rest of the world during the period of November 2020.

The month of November 2020 saw Namibia’s total merchandise trade declining to the level of N$17.5 billion, which is 12.8 percent and 8.5 percent less than its level of N$20 billion and N$19.1 billion recorded in October 2020 and November 2019 respectively. However, the country’s trade balance remained in a deficit with the current deficit amounting to N$1.4 billion, narrowing from N$2.4 billion recorded in November 2019 and from N$4.4 billion in October 2020.

Namibia’s trade composition by partner was skewed towards a few countries. China emerged as Namibia’s largest export market while South Africa maintained its position as the number one source of imports. The composition of goods exported remained the same mainly comprising of minerals such as non-ferrous metals, metalliferous ores and metal scrap, non-metallic mineral manufactures, as well as non-monetary gold. Fish remained the only non-mineral products among the top five list of exports. On the other hand, the import basket comprised mainly of non-ferrous metals, metalliferous ores and metal scrap, vehicles, electrical machinery and; iron and steel.

The November 2020 trade figures indicates that re-exports deteriorated, falling by 20.5 percent month-on-month and by 3.8 percent year-on-year. Non-ferrous metals took the largest share of re-exports, constituting a share of 55.4 percent of total re-exports mainly to China, Belgium and Germany. The non-ferrous metals which were re-exported were mostly sourced from Zambia and DRC. Important to note is that some commodities e.g. non-ferrous metals and metalliferous ores and metal scrap appear on both the export and import side. This is because such commodities are imported under warehousing procedures and re-exported thereafter. Hence, they form part of total exports (domestic plus re-export).

For this publication, the category of spices, coffee, tea and mate was chosen as the commodity of the month. Namibia imported these products worth N$31 million in November 2020 mainly distributed among commodities such as spices, black tea and coffee mostly sourced from South Africa.

Let me take this opportunity to thank all our stakeholders who made it possible for the production of this report. I would also like to urge all our Traders and Clearing Agents to continue providing all the required information when declaring their goods as this information is vital in the production of trade statistics. In the same vain I would like to urge our users of statistical information to send to us any comments that may enhance the improvement of this report.

ALEX SHIMUAFENI
STATISTICIAN GENERAL & CEO
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List of acronyms

BRIC: Brazil, Russia, India and China
CIF: Cost, Insurance and Freight
COMESA: Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
DRC: Democratic Republic of Congo
EAC: East African Community
EFTA: European Free Trade Association
EPZ: Export Processing Zone
EU: European Union
FOB: Free on Board
ROW: Rest of World
SACU: Southern African Customs Union
SADC: Southern African Development Community
VAR: Imported from Various Countries
1.1 **Total Exports and Total Imports**

The value of exports in November 2020 rose by 2.3 percent to reach the level of N$8 billion from its level of N$7.8 billion in October 2020 (Chart 1). However, when compared to its level of N$8.3 billion observed in November 2019, exports deteriorated by 3.9 percent. The import side showed a negative trend, falling by 22.4 percent and 12.1 percent when compared to October 2020 and November 2019, respectively. Following the developments in exports and imports, Namibia’s total merchandise trade with the ROW weakened by 8.5 percent from its level of N$19.1 billion in November 2019 to the current N$17.5 billion while deteriorating by 12.8 percent from its level of N$20 billion in October 2020.

*Chart 1: Total exports and imports November 2019 to November 2020*

1. Exports represents total exports derived from the sum of domestic exports and re-exports.
2. Rest of the world (ROW).
1.2 Trade Balance

The trade balance compares the country’s trade with the ROW in terms of earnings (exports) and expenditure (imports). During the month under review, Namibia recorded a trade deficit to the tune of N$1.4 billion. The recent figure shows that the deficit improved by 66.9 percent and 40.2 percent from its level of N$4.4 billion and N$2.4 billion recorded in October 2020 and November 2019, respectively (Chart 2).

Chart 2: Trade balance, November 2019 to November 2020

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3 Trade balance here is measured as the difference between the country’s total exports and total imports. A positive balance is referred to as a surplus while a negative balance is referred to as a deficit.

4 The value of imports here is denoted as negative to show an out flow.
2.1 Top Five (5) Export Markets

During the month of November 2020, Namibia’s top three trading partners in terms of exports remained the same as in the previous month as well as in the corresponding period of last year. The top three countries (China, South Africa and Botswana) maintained their positions while Spain and Zambia lost their positions amongst the top five trading partners to Belgium and Germany, respectively. These top five markets absorbed 74.9 percent of Namibia’s total exports to the ROW (Chart 3), up from 69.4 percent and 65.3 percent absorbed in November 2019 and October 2020, respectively.

*Chart 3: Export market share by top five countries*

China emerged as the largest export market for the country, absorbing 41.3 percent of all goods exports, ahead of South Africa in the second place whose market share of Namibia’s exports remained constant at 13.9 percent of total exports. Botswana claimed the third position to account for 8.1 percent while Belgium and Germany occupied the fourth and fifth positions with respective shares of 7.6 percent and 4 percent.
2.2 Top Five (5) Import Markets

Similarly, the composition of Namibia’s import markets remained the same comprising of countries such as South Africa, Zambia, Bulgaria, China and DRC which replaced Puerto Rico when compared to the list of October 2020. These countries supplied Namibia with 84.7 percent of all import requirements needed by the country. The individual contribution of each of these countries to Namibia’s total imports is shown in Chart 4.

*Chart 4: Import market share by top five countries*

South Africa maintained her position as Namibia’s largest import market with a share of 42.4 percent of the value of all goods received into the country during the month under review. Following in the second place was Zambia with a contribution of 26.7 percent to total imports. Bulgaria in third place accounted for 6.2 percent of Namibia’s total imports whereas China and the DRC occupied the fourth and fifth position with contributions of 5.3 percent and 4 percent, respectively.
SECTION 3: TRADE BY PRODUCTS

Section 3 of this report outlines Namibia’s trade flow based on the Standard International Trade Classification Revision 4 (SITC rev 4). The SITC groups all commodities into headings suitable for economic analysis, in this section, the SITC is disaggregated to 2-digit level. The SITC is recommended by the United Nations for use in external trade data and thus promotes international comparability of trade statistics.

3.1 Top Five (5) Export Products

Non-ferrous metals, mainly destined to China, Belgium and Germany was Namibia’s largest export commodity during the month under review, accounting for 25.5 percent of total exports ahead of metalliferous ores and metal scrap which accounted for 24.1 percent of total exports due to demand of this product by China, Italy and Singapore.

![Chart 5: Top five export by products (percentage share)](image)

Non-metallic mineral manufactures, primarily destined to Botswana, Belgium and United States of America claimed the third position with a contribution of 16.1 percent to total exports followed by non-monetary Gold in the fourth place with 6.8 percent, as South Africa continued to be Namibia’s only market for gold export. Finally, fish occupied the fifth position with a contribution of 6.5 percent as a result of exports to Spain, South Africa and Zambia. The aforementioned top five export commodities jointly accounted for 79 percent of total exports (Chart 5), up from its previous contributions of 77 percent and 77.2 percent when compared to November 2019 and October 2020, respectively.
3.2 Top Five (5) Re-export Products

Re-exports are commodities imported by residents who assumes short-term ownership of the commodities. The commodities are subsequently exported without undergoing any significant industrial transformation. Even though no substantial transformation is done, re-exports have the potential to benefit the intermediate country by rendering services such as sorting, re-packaging, storage, transport and trade mediation services. This implies that the country’s services sector greatly benefits from activities of re-exports. Additionally, re-exports serve as an indication of favorable corporate tax in the intermediate country⁵.

The November 2020 figures show that total re-exports fell by 3.8 percent to register N$3.6 billion after recording N$3.8 billion in the corresponding period of 2019. Additionally, a decline of 20.5 percent was observed when compared to October 2020. As indicated earlier, re-exports are foreign goods and hence imported from other countries. Looking at the origin of the main products that were re-exported, non-ferrous metals were mainly sourced from Zambia and the DRC while non-metallic mineral manufactures were imported from Botswana, South Africa and China. Furthermore, inorganic chemicals were supplied by DRC, South Africa and China.

Chart 6: Top five re-export by products (percentage share)

The top five commodities utilizing the most logistical services in Namibia are shown in Chart 6, with non-ferrous metals leading as the largest re-export product, with a share of 55.4 percent of total re-exports mostly destined to China, Belgium and Germany. Following in the second place was non-metallic mineral manufactures with a share of 20.4 percent of total re-exports which was mostly destined to Belgium, Israel and United States of America. Inorganic chemicals accounted for 3.7

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percent of all commodities re-exported and was mostly destined to China. Commodities of other categories such as iron and steel and; petroleum and petroleum products accounted for 2.5 percent and 1.8 percent respectively. Zambia was responsible for the absorption of re-exported iron and steel while Botswana absorbed most of the petroleum products re-exported with small amounts destined for Zambia.

### 3.3 Top Five (5) Import Products

During the period under review, the value of imports into the country amounted to N$9.5 billion from its level of N$10.8 billion and N$12.2 billion recorded in November 2019 and October 2020. The top five commodities imported into Namibia jointly accounted for 47.7 percent of total imports with non-ferrous metals leading with the largest share of 29.2 percent. Following in the second position is metalliferous ores and metal scrap with a share of 7 percent of all commodities imported. The category of vehicles was ranked third after making a contribution of 6 percent to total import while electrical machinery and; iron and steel followed in the fourth and fifth position with contributions of 2.8 percent and 2.7 percent, respectively (Chart 7).

*Chart 7: Top five import by products (percentage share)*

Non-ferrous metals were mostly imported from Zambia and DRC while most of metalliferous ores and metal scrap imported into the country originated from Bulgaria with South Africa and Zambia contributing small amounts. Domestic demand for vehicles and electrical machinery were mainly met by supply from South Africa. Finally, South Africa and China supplied most of the iron and steel coming into the country.
4.1 Exports by Economic Regions

Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC) was the largest export destination for Namibia’s goods (mostly metalliferous ores and metal scrap; and non-ferrous metals) during the month of review, with a market share of 42.1 percent of the total exports. The Southern African Customs Union (SACU) and the European Union (EU) followed in the second and third positions, accounting for a market share of 22 percent and 19 percent, respectively (Chart 8).

*Chart 8: Top five export by Economic Regions (percentage share)*

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6 The percentages for economic regions are based on the world aggregates because of overlapping member states for some regions hence the percentages do not add up to 100%.
4.2 Imports by Economic Regions

In November 2020, the SACU region emerged as the largest source of imports for Namibia accounting for 43.8 percent of all goods imported (mainly vehicles, beverages, manufactures of metals, miscellaneous manufactured articles and essential oils). Non-ferrous metals were responsible for the high value of imports from COMESA which had a share of 31.2 percent of total imports and hence making it the second largest source of imports into the country. Equally, SADC excluding SACU region accounted for 31 percent of Namibia’s total import bill, followed by the EU and BRIC in the fourth and fifth positions with 10.8 percent and 6.8 percent, respectively (Chart 9).

*Chart 9: Percentage share of imports by economic regions*

Imports from SADC excluding SACU comprised mainly of non-ferrous metals, inorganic chemicals, metalliferous metals and animal feeds while metalliferous ores and metal scrap were responsible for the high import bill from the EU. Furthermore, iron and steel and; pharmaceutical products as well as machinery were commodities mostly imported from BRIC during the period under review.
5.1 Export by mode of transport

During the month of November 2020, exports amounting to N$4.5 billion, representing 55.6 percent of total exports left the country by sea, translating into an increase of 25.6 percent when compared to its level of N$3.5 billion recorded in the corresponding period of 2019. An increase of 8.3 percent was observed when compared to the level of N$4.1 billion in October 2020. Furthermore, air and road transportation accounted for 22.9 percent and 21.5 percent of total exports, respectively (Chart 10).

In terms of tonnage, the month of November 2020 saw about 145,596 tons of goods leaving Namibia by sea, up from 116,665 tons and 94,620 tons recorded in November 2019 and October 2020, respectively. About 131,640 tons of goods left the country by road when compared to its level of 140,423 tons recorded in the corresponding period of 2019 and from 130,970 tons recorded in the preceding month.

Whereas only 208 tons left the country by air after registering 297 tons in the same period a year ago and 137 tons in the preceding month.
5.2 Import by mode of transport

Road was the most frequent mode of transport used for imports during the period of review. Imports by road amounted to N$7.6 billion, representing 80.4 percent of all goods imported in the country. Following in the second place was the sea transport which accounted for 17.7 percent of all the goods that reached the country while the remaining 1.8 percent of all imported goods arrived by air (Chart 11).

*CHART 11: Import by mode of transport (percentage share)*

In terms of tonnage, about 259,755 tons of goods that reached the country came in by road, this is less than its level of 271,902 tons observed in November 2019 but higher than the level of 207,955 tons recorded in the preceding month. Whereas 108,295 tons of goods reached the country by sea compared to its level of 188,894 tons recorded in November 2019 and 276,004 tons recorded in October 2020. A further, 131 tons and 93 tons of goods were imported into the country via air and rail, respectively.
6. Impact of COVID-19

This section focuses on selected commodities mostly contained in food parcels distributed by the Government to the public in the wake of COVID-19. Since the country’s lock down measures, the supply chain of certain basic commodities was disrupted and hence became of interest to the Agency to monitor as government responded to the pandemic. Among these commodities, are food items such as cooking oil, rice, sugar as well as maize grains and wheat. Non-food items constitutes of disinfectants, toilet paper and breathing appliances. The trend of imports for the commodities outlined above since Jan-2020 to Nov-2020 are illustrated in Chart 12.

CHART 12: Import of selected commodities

Analysis of Chart 12 shows a mixed trend in imports of commodities considered in the evaluation of the Covid-19 impact with some commodities posting an increase while others showed signs of declining. For instance, import of maize registered the largest increase of 112.3 percent to the level N$87 million from its October 2020 level of N$41 million. The huge increase in the importation of maize was due to the Namibia Agronomic Board opening the borders to allow for the importation of maize since its closure in May 2020. Similarly, import of sugar and cooking oil rose by 12.9 percent and 5.8 percent, respectively. On the other hand, import of wheat and rice weakened, with wheat falling by 32.6 percent while cooking oil dropped by 27.8 percent.

The import trend of non-food items such as breathing appliances, disinfectants and toilet paper are also reflected in Chart 12, with toilet paper posting an increase of 1.2 percent. On the other hand, import of disinfectants and breathing appliances declined on a monthly basis with 63.6 percent and 2.6 percent, respectively.
The category of interest for November 2020 was coffee, tea, mate and spices. During the period of review, the import value of this category of products amounted to N$31 million rising by 11 percent from its level of N$28 million in October 2020. However, a decline of 14.2 percent was noted when compared to the level of N$33 million recorded in November 2019. Overall, the country imported N$384 million worth of products of this category since November 2019 (Chart 13) with an average of N$30 million. The highest figures of N$35 million-above average was recorded in June 2020 while the lowest figure of N$23 million-below average was registered in February and May 2020.

The N$31 million import value of commodities under this category recorded in November 2020 comprised mainly of 46.7 percent of spices, 23.1 black tea and 22.8 of coffee. These products were solely sourced from South Africa (95.5).
Conclusion

In November 2020, Namibia’s exports stood at N$8 billion and imports at N$9.5 billion, subsequently the country’s trade balance resulted in a deficit of N$1.4 billion. Total trade for November 2020 amounted to the tune of N$17.5 billion.

Recent figures show that exports improved month-on-month, raising by 2.3 percent from its revised level of N$7.8 billion in October 2020, but deteriorated by 3.9 percent when compared to its level of N$8.3 billion recorded in November 2019. Similarly, imports declined, falling by 22.4 percent and 12.1 percent when compared to its level of October 2020 and November 2019, respectively. China maintained her position as the country’s largest export destination, with a share of 41.3 percent of all goods exported, and was followed by South Africa with a share of 13.9 percent. Furthermore, Botswana, Belgium and Germany formed part of Namibia’s top five export markets. The demand side saw South Africa maintaining the first spot as the country’s largest source of imports, accounting for 42.4 percent of total imports into Namibia. Zambia was also firm on the second position with 26.7 percent of the market share. Bulgaria, China and DRC also formed part of Namibia’s top five sources of imports.

The analysis of commodities revealed that the category of non-ferrous metals had the largest share (25.5%) in Namibia’s total exports ahead of metalliferous ores and metal scrap (24.1%), non-metallic mineral manufactures (16.1%), non-monetary gold (6.8%) and fish (6.5%). In terms of imports, non-ferrous metals also appeared as the most imported commodity with a relative share of 29.2 percent of total imports, followed by metalliferous ores and metal scrap with a share of 7 percent; and vehicles with a share of 6 percent. Moreover, electrical machinery and; iron and steel contributed 2.8 percent and 2.7 percent to Namibia’s total imports respectively.

In terms of regional composition, BRIC was the largest export market during the month of November 2020, with a market share of 42.1 percent of total exports followed by the SACU region with relative market shares of 22 percent while the EU and SADC-excl-SACU had a share of 19 percent and 7.3 percent, respectively. On the imports side, SACU remained the main source of Namibia’s imports having a share of 43.8 percent in the country’s total import bill followed by COMESA and SADC excluding SACU with 31.2 percent and 31 percent, respectively. The EU and BRIC had a share of 10.8 percent and 6.8 percent respectively, in Namibia’s total import bill.

Namibia’s trade by mode of transport show that in November 2020, the majority of goods exported left the country by sea, accounting for 55.6 percent of total exports. Followed by Air transport with 22.9 percent and Road transport with 21.5 percent. With regards to imports, most goods that entered the country came in by road, accounting for 80.4 percent of total imports followed by sea (17.7%) and air (1.8%).

An analysis on the import of a selected products widely distributed during the COVID-19 pandemic
indicates that sugar, maize, wheat, and cooking oil dominated the list of such products while disinfectants and breathing appliances were the least imported products for during the month of November 2020.

Finally, the category of spices, coffee, tea and mate was the commodity of the month in November 2020. The import value of these products stood at N$31 million in November 2020 mainly distributed among commodities such as spices, black tea and coffee mostly sourced from South Africa.