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 December 2020.

The month of December 2020 saw Namibia's total merchandise trade declining to the level of N$16 billion, which is 19.7 percent and 0.5 percent less than its level of N$20 billion and N$16.1 billion recorded in November 2020 and December 2019, respectively. However, the country’s trade balance remained in a deficit with the current deficit amounting to N$546 million, narrowing from N$2.6 billion recorded in November 2020 and against a surplus of N$19 million in December 2019.

Namibia's trade composition by partner was skewed towards a few countries. China emerged as Namibia's largest export market while South Africa maintained her 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, non-metallic mineral manufactures, metalliferous ores and metal scrap. Fish together with vegetables and fruit were 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, petroleum and petroleum products, vehicles, other transport equipment, and non-metallic mineral manufactures.

The December 2020 trade figures indicates that re-exports deteriorated, falling by 10.2 percent month-on-month and but improved by 4 percent year-on-year. Non-ferrous metals took the largest share of re-exports, constituting a share of 61.5 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).

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
# Table of Contents

List of acronyms ........................................................................................................ vi

SECTION 1: KEY DEVELOPMENTS ......................................................................... 1
  1.1 Total Exports and Total Imports ................................................................. 1
  1.2 Trade Balance ............................................................................................... 2

SECTION 2: DIRECTION OF TRADE (DOT) ......................................................... 3
  2.1 Top Five (5) Export Markets ...................................................................... 3
  2.2 Top Five (5) Import Markets ....................................................................... 4

SECTION 3: TRADE BY PRODUCTS .................................................................... 5
  3.1 Top Five (5) Export Products ...................................................................... 5
  3.2 Top Five (5) Re-export Products ................................................................. 6
  3.3 Top Five (5) Import Products ...................................................................... 7

SECTION 4: TRADE BY ECONOMIC REGIONS ................................................... 8
  4.1 Exports by Economic Regions ..................................................................... 8
  4.2 Imports by Economic Regions ..................................................................... 9

SECTION 5: TRADE BY MODE OF TRANSPORT ................................................ 10
  5.1 Export by mode of transport ...................................................................... 10
  5.2 Import by mode of transport ...................................................................... 11

6. Impact of COVID-19 ....................................................................................... 12

7. Commodity of the Month .............................................................................. 14

Conclusion ........................................................................................................... 16
List of Charts

Chart 1: Total exports and imports December 2019 to December 2020 .......................................................... 1
Chart 2: Trade balance, December 2019 to December 2020 ................................................................. 2
Chart 3: Percentage share of export by country ......................................................................................... 3
Chart 4: Percentage share of imports by country ......................................................................................... 4
Chart 5: Percentage share of the top five export products ...................................................................... 5
Chart 6: Percentage share of the top five re-export products .................................................................. 6
Chart 7: Percentage share of the top five import products ...................................................................... 7
Chart 8: Percentage share of exports by regions ......................................................................................... 8
Chart 9: Percentage share of imports by economic regions ..................................................................... 9
Chart 10: Percentage share of export by mode of transport ..................................................................... 10
CHART 11: Percentage share of Imports by mode of transport ............................................................... 11
CHART 12: Import of selected commodities .............................................................................................. 12
CHART 13: Import of cereals since Dec-19 - Dec-20 ............................................................................... 13
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
SECTION 1: KEY DEVELOPMENTS

1.1 Total Exports and Total Imports

The value of exports in December 2020 reduced by 10.7 percent and 4 percent to the level of N$7.8 billion from its level of N$8.7 billion in November 2020 and N$8.1 billion observed in December 2019 (Chart 1). Imports also showed a similar trend, falling by 26.6 percent when compared to November 2020. However, when compared to its level of N$8.1 billion recorded in December 2019, imports improved by 3 percent. Following the developments in exports and imports, Namibia’s total merchandise trade with the ROW weakened by 19.7 percent from its level of N$20 billion in November 2020 to the current value of N$16 billion while deteriorating by 0.5 percent from its level of N$16.1 billion recorded in December 2019.

Chart 1: Total exports and imports December 2019 to December 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\(^3\) compares the country’s trade with the ROW in terms of earnings (exports) and expenditure (imports\(^4\)). During the month under review, Namibia recorded a trade deficit to the tune of N$546 million compared to a deficit level of N$2.6 billion recorded in November 2020 and a surplus of N$19 million recorded in December 2019 (Chart 2).

\[\text{Chart 2: Trade balance, December 2019 to December 2020}\]

\[\begin{array}{c}
\text{Value (N$ m)} \\
\text{Dec-19 Jan-20 Feb-20 Mar-20 Apr-20 May-20 Jun-20 Jul-20 Aug-20 Sep-20 Oct-20 Nov-20 Dec-20}
\end{array}\]

\(^3\) 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 outflow.
2.1 Top Five (5) Export Markets

During the month of December 2020, Namibia’s top four trading partners in terms of exports remained the same as in the previous month. The top four countries (China, South Africa, Botswana and Belgium) maintained their positions while Zambia claimed the fifth position from Germany to be among the top five trading partners. These top five markets accounted for 70 percent of Namibia’s total exports to the ROW (Chart 3).

Chart 3: Percentage share of export by country

China emerged as the main export market for the country, absorbing 38.1 percent of all goods exported, ahead of South Africa in the second place whose market share of Namibia’s exports stood at 13.6 percent of total exports. Botswana claimed the third position to account for 8.9 percent while Belgium and Zambia occupied the fourth and fifth positions with respective shares of 5.5 percent and 3.9 percent.
2.2 Top Five (5) Import Markets

During the reporting period, Namibia sourced her imports mainly from countries such as South Africa, Zambia, China, DRC and Spain when compared to the list of November 2020. These countries supplied Namibia with 76.3 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: Percentage share of imports by country*

South Africa remained Namibia’s largest import market with a share of 47.3 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 17 percent of total imports. Furthermore, China in third place accounts for 4.6 percent of Namibia’s total imports whereas DRC and Spain occupied the fourth and fifth positions with contributions of 4.5 percent and 2.8 percent, respectively.
SECTION 3: TRADE BY PRODUCTS

This section 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 Italy was Namibia’s largest export commodity during the month under review, accounting for 30.5 percent of total exports ahead of second placed non-metallic mineral manufactures which accounted for 19.2 percent of total exports mainly due to the demand of this product by Botswana, Belgium, United Arab Emirates and USA.

Chart 5: Percentage share of the top five export products

Metalliferous ores and metal scrap, primarily destined for China and France, claimed the third position with a contribution of 12.7 percent of the total exports followed by fish in the fourth place with 9.1 percent, driven by the demand of domestic fish by Spain, South Africa and Zambia. Finally, vegetables and fruits occupied the fifth position with a contribution of 7.1 percent as a result of exports to Netherlands, United Kingdom and Germany. The aforementioned top five export commodities jointly accounted for 78.6 percent of total exports (Chart 5), up from its previous contributions of 76.9 percent recorded in to November 2020 and down from 78.9 percent recorded in December 2019.
3.2 Top Five (5) Re-export Products

Re-exports are commodities imported by residents who assume 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 country.

The December 2020 figures show that total re-exports fell by 10.2 percent to register N$3.8 billion after recording N$4.2 billion in the previous month. In contrast, an improvement of 4 percent was observed when compared to December 2019. As indicated earlier, re-exports are foreign goods and hence imported from other countries. Looking at the origin of the main products which were re-exported, non-ferrous metals were mainly sourced from Zambia and the DRC while petroleum and petroleum products were mainly imported from Saudi Arabia and South Africa. Furthermore, Vehicles were supplied by South Africa, United Kingdom and Japan.

![Chart 6: Percentage share of the top five re-export products](image)

The top five commodities that are utilizing the logistical services in Namibia are shown in Chart 6, with non-ferrous metals leading as the largest re-export product, with a share of 61.5 percent of total re-exports mostly destined to China and Belgium. Following in the second place was non-

---

metallic mineral manufactures with a share of 18.1 percent of total re-exports which was mostly destined to Belgium, United States of America and Israel. Vehicles accounted for 3.5 percent of all commodities re-exported and was mostly destined to Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi. Commodities of other categories such as inorganic chemicals and meat accounted for 3.4 percent and 1.7 percent, respectively. China was responsible for the absorption of re-exported inorganic chemicals while DRC absorbed most of the meat 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$8.3 billion down from its level of N$11.3 billion and N$8 billion recorded in November 2020 and December 2019. The top five commodities imported into Namibia jointly accounted for 43.2 percent of total imports with non-ferrous metals leading with the largest share of 18.3 percent. Following in the second position is petroleum and petroleum products with a share of 9.1 percent of all commodities imported. The category of vehicles was ranked third after contributing 7.3 percent to total import while other transport equipment (largely vessels and light aircraft) and non-metallic mineral manufactures followed in the fourth and fifth position with contributions of 4.5 percent and 4.1 percent, respectively (Chart 7).

Chart 7: Percentage share of the top five import products

Non-ferrous metals were mostly imported from Zambia and DRC while most of petroleum and petroleum products imported into the country mainly originated from Saudi Arabia, South Africa and India. Domestic demand for vehicles were mainly met with supply from South Africa, United Kingdom and Japan. Finally, Spain and South Africa supplied most of other transport equipment coming into the country whereas most of non-metallic mineral manufactures were sourced from Holy See (Vatican City State), Botswana and South Africa.
**SECTION 4: TRADE BY ECONOMIC REGIONS**

### 4.1 Exports by Economic Regions

Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC) was the largest export destination for Namibian goods (mostly non-ferrous metals; metalliferous ores and metal scrap; and inorganic chemicals) during the month of review, with a market share of 38.9 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 22.5 percent and 16.1 percent, respectively (Chart 8).

*Chart 8: Percentage share of exports by regions*

Exports to SACU comprised mainly of non-metallic mineral manufactures; non-monetary gold, fish and live animals, while fish, metalliferous ores and metal scrap; non-metallic mineral manufactures as well as non-ferrous metals were responsible for the large volume of exports to the EU. SADC-excluding-SACU followed in fourth place with a share of 7.8 percent due to high exports of fish, vehicles and meat. Finally, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) came in fifth position with a market share of 7.1 percent. Fish, vehicles, meat and plastics were the largest export commodity to that region.

---

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 December 2020, the SACU region remained as the largest source of imports for Namibia, accounting for 49.3 percent of all goods imported (mainly vehicles, beverages, miscellaneous manufactured articles and non-metallic mineral manufactures). Non-ferrous metals were responsible for the high value of imports from SADC excluding SACU which had a share of 22.1 percent of total imports and hence making it the second largest source of imports into the country. Equally, COMESA accounted for 22 percent of Namibia’s total import bill, followed by BRIC and the EU in the fourth and fifth positions with 8 percent and 6.7 percent, respectively (Chart 9).

Chart 9: Percentage share of imports by economic regions

Imports from COMESA were made up of commodities such as non-ferrous metals, inorganic chemicals and metalliferous ores and metal scraps whereas petroleum and petroleum products; iron and steel; cereals and clothing accessories were responsible for the high import value from BRIC. Furthermore, other transport equipment (vessels and aircrafts), petroleum and petroleum products as well as plastics had the largest value amongst all commodities imported from the EU during the period under review.
5.1 Export by mode of transport

During the month of December 2020, exports amounting to N$4 billion, representing 51.6 percent of total exports left the country by sea. However, this translates to a decline of 4.4 percent when compared to its level of N$4.2 billion recorded in the corresponding period of 2019. Similarly, a decline of 20.3 percent was observed when compared to the level of N$5 billion recorded in November 2020. Furthermore, air and road transportation accounted for 26.4 percent and 22 percent of total exports, respectively (Chart 10).

In terms of tonnage, the month under review recorded about 118,543 tons of goods leaving Namibia by road, down from the level of 124,451 tons recorded in November 2020 but up from the level of 104,760 tons recorded in the corresponding period a year ago. About 83,112 tons of goods left the country by sea, down when compared to its level of 113,372 tons and 118,440 tons recorded in November 2020 and December 2019, respectively. Whereas only 286 tons left the country by air after registering 357 tons during the same period last year and 195 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\$6 billion, representing 72.5 percent of all goods imported into the country. Following in the second place was sea transport which accounted for 23.6 percent of all the goods that reached the country while the remaining 3.9 percent of all imported goods arrived by air (Chart 11).

CHART 11: Percentage share of Imports by mode of transport

In terms of tonnage, about 216,083 tons of goods reached the country by sea, this is more than its level of 144,322 tons and 76,721 tons observed in November 2020 and December 2019 respectively. Whereas 170,410 tons of goods reached the country by road compared to its level of 241,276 tons recorded in November 2020 and 195,828 tons recorded in December 2019. A further, 205 tons and 89 tons of goods were imported into the country via air and rail, respectively.
6. Impact of COVID-19

This section focuses on selected commodities of which the supply were disrupted in the wake of COVID-19. Importation of such commodities became of interest to the Agency for monitoring as government implemented various mechanisms to respond 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 Dec-2020 are illustrated in Chart 12.

**Analysis of Chart 12 shows a declining trend of imports for most commodities under the food category apart from sugar which registered an increase of 41 percent to the level of N$126 million from its November 2020 level of N$89 million. The largest decline in food was observed in rice which fell by 31.3 percent from its level of N$22 million registered in November 2020 to the current level of N$15 million. Similarly, import of wheat, cooking oil and maize dropped by 22.3 percent, 18.5 percent and 10.7 percent, respectively.**

The import trend of non-food items such as breathing appliances, disinfectants and toilet paper are also reflected in Chart 12, with breathing appliances posting the only positive growth of 78.1 percent. Whereas, import of disinfectants and toilet paper declined on a monthly basis with 45.6 percent and 33.1 percent, respectively.
7. Commodity of the Month

Cereals was the category of interest for December 2020. During this period, the import value of this category of products amounted to N$133 million, falling by 16.8 percent from its level of N$160 million in November 2020. Similarly, it dropped by 25.3 percent when compared to the level of N$178 million recorded in December 2019. Overall, the country imported N$1.7 billion worth of products of this category since December 2019 (Chart 13) with an average of N$130 million. The highest figures of N$202 million—above average was recorded in March 2020 while the lowest figure of N$42 million—below average was registered in June 2020.

*CHART 13: imports of cereals since Dec-19 - Dec-20*

The import bill of cereal amounting to N$133 million in December 2020 mainly comprised of maize accounting for 59 percent followed by wheat (28.1%) and rice (11.3%). These products were sourced mainly from South Africa accounting for 63.2% of the total followed by, Russia (28.1%) and India (7.8%).
Conclusion

In December 2020, Namibia's exports stood at N$7.8 billion and imports at N$8.3 billion, subsequently the country's trade balance resulted in a deficit of N$546 million. Total trade for December 2020 amounted to the tune of N$16 billion.

Recent figures show that exports declined, falling by 10.7 percent from its revised level of N$8.7 billion in November 2020 and by 4 percent when compared to its level of N$8.1 billion recorded in December 2019. Similarly, imports declined month-on-month, falling by 26.6 percent when compared to its level of November 2020. However, imports slightly increased by 3 percent when compared to December 2019.

China maintained her position as the country's largest export destination, with a share of 38.1 percent of all goods exported followed by South Africa with a share of 13.6 percent. Furthermore, Botswana, Belgium and Zambia 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 47.3 percent of total imports into Namibia. Zambia held firm on its second position with 17 percent of the market share. China, DRC and Spain 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 (30.5%) in Namibia's total exports ahead of non-metallic mineral manufactures (19.2%), metalliferous ores and metal scrap (12.7%), fish (9.1%) followed by vegetables and fruits (7.1%). In terms of imports, non-ferrous metals also appeared as the most imported commodity with a relative share of 18.3 percent of total imports, followed by petroleum and petroleum products with a share of 9.1 percent; and vehicles with a share of 7.3 percent. Moreover, other transport equipment and non-metallic mineral manufactures contributed 4.5 percent and 4.1 percent to Namibia's total imports, respectively.

In terms of regional composition, BRIC was the largest export market during the month of December 2020, with a market share of 38.9 percent of total exports followed by the SACU region with relative market shares of 22.5 percent while the EU, SADC-excl-SACU; and COMESA had respective shares of 16.1 percent, 7.8 percent and 7.1 percent. On the imports side, SACU remained the largest source of Namibia's imports with a share of 49.2 percent of total import bill followed by SADC excluding SACU and COMESA with 22.1 percent and 22 percent, respectively. The BRIC and EU had a share of 8 percent and 6.7 percent, respectively.

Namibia's trade by mode of transport show that in December 2020, the majority of goods exported left the country by sea, accounting for 51.6 percent of total exports. Followed by Air transport with 26.4 percent and Road transport with 22 percent. On the demand side, most goods that entered the country came in by road, accounting for 72.5 percent of total imports followed by sea (23.6%) and air (3.9%).
Analysis of imports on selected commodities pertaining to the COVID-19 pandemic show that sugar, maize, wheat, and cooking oil dominated the list of such products while disinfectants and breathing appliances were the least imported products during the month of December 2020.

Finally, the category of cereals was the commodity of the month in December 2020. The import value of this category of products stood at N$133 million in December 2020 mainly distributed among commodities such as maize, wheat and rice. These commodities were mainly sourced from South Africa, Russia and India.