

## Media Releases 2009

### South African Trade Statistics for December 2008

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**Trade deficit decreases in December 2008 from R12.1 billion to R9.0 billion mainly due to a month-on-month reduced imports of machinery, base metals, vehicles and motor vehicle parts, and a month-on-month increase in exports of precious metals and stones, and vegetable products.**

Pretoria, 30 January 2009 – The South African Revenue Service (SARS) today released trade statistics indicating that December exports of R48.54 billion and imports of R57.59 billion resulted in a deficit of R9.05 billion. Imports decreased by R8.35 billion (12.67%) to R57.59 billion and exports decreased by R5.34 billion (9.91%) to R48.54 billion. Highlights include a month-on-month decrease in imports of machinery and electrical appliances, base metals and articles thereof, vehicles and motor vehicle parts, and a month-on-month decrease in exports of vehicles, base metals and articles thereof, and machinery and electrical appliances.

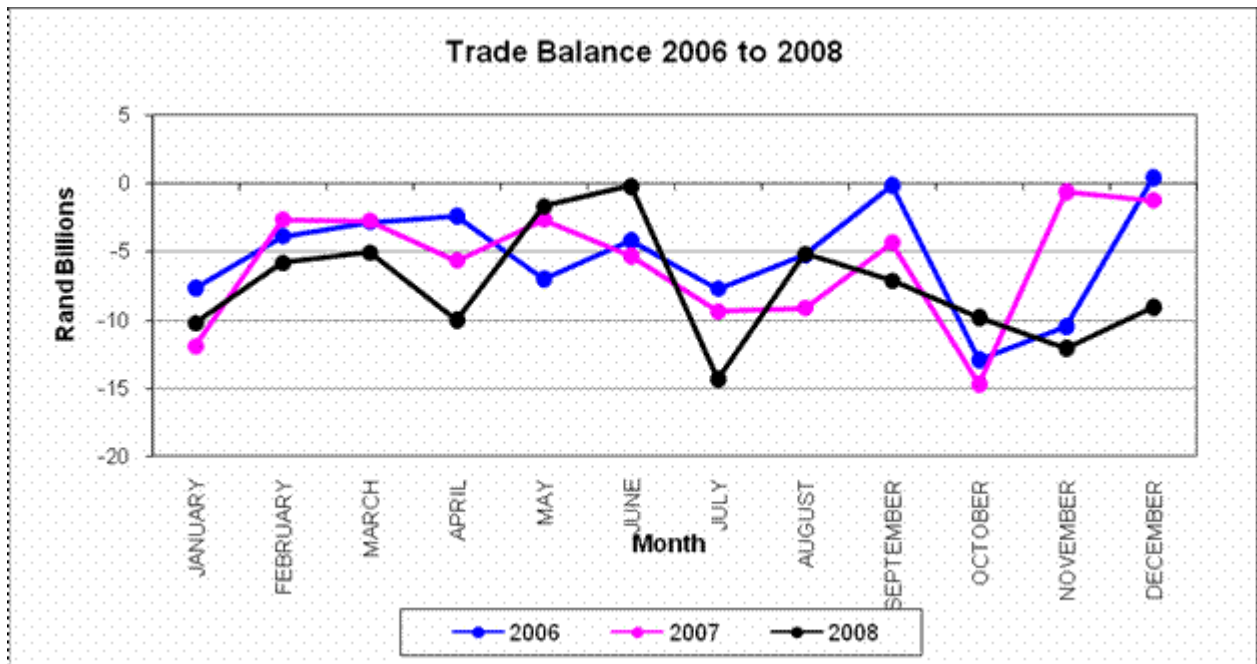
#### Trade Highlights by Category

- The November to December change (down by 12.67%) in imports of goods reflected decreases mainly in machinery and mechanical appliances [down by R2.4 billion (14%)], base metals and articles thereof [down by R1.2 billion (37%)], original equipment components [down by R1.1 billion (35%)] and vehicles [down by R1.1 billion (16%)]; and an increase in precious metals and stones [up by R2.2 billion (41%)]. The November to December change in exports of goods (decrease of 9.91%) reflected a decrease in vehicles [down by R2.8 billion (33%)], base metals [down by R1.7 billion (21%)], and machinery and electrical appliances [down by R1.0 billion (18%)]; and an increase in exports of precious metals and stones [up by R0.9 billion (9%)].
- Month-on-month exports decreased particularly as a result of decreased values of trade in goods such as pig iron, ferrous compounds, aircraft engine parts, filter apparatus, motor vehicles and aircraft.
- The month-on-month decrease in imports is the result of decreased values of trade in goods such as flat-rolled products of iron and steel, electrical motors, telephone sets, motor vehicles, aircraft and parts for motor and transport vehicles.

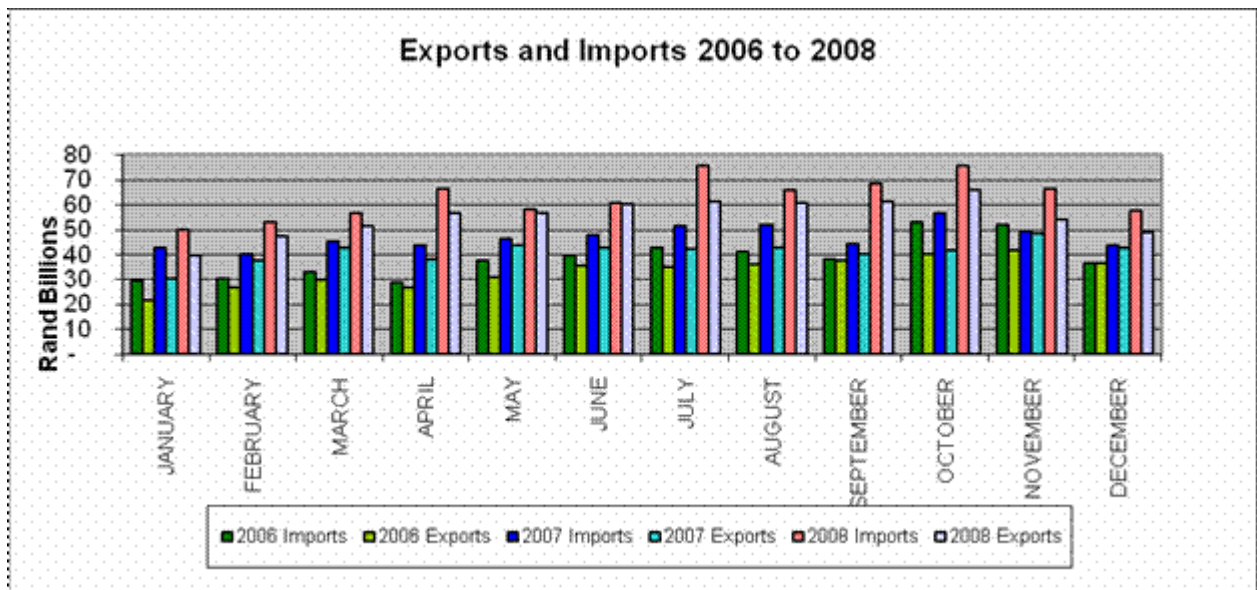
#### Trade Highlights by World Zone

- The surpluses and deficits for December 2008 as given below for the world zones are in respect of unaudited figures, and those for November 2008 are audited.  
The trade deficit with Asia decreased from R11.1 billion in November to R7.2 billion in December. Exports to Asia decreased by R1.8 billion to R13.6 billion and imports decreased by R5.7 billion to R20.8 billion.
- The trade deficit with Europe decreased from R7.4 billion in November to R1.9 billion in December. Exports decreased by R0.4 billion to R14.8 billion and imports decreased by R5.9 billion to R16.7 billion.
- The trade deficit with America increased from R1.6 billion in November to R4.7 billion in December. Exports decreased from R7.3 billion to R5.0 billion and imports increased from R8.9 billion to R9.7 billion.
- The trade surplus with Africa decreased from R4.2 billion to R0.1 billion. Imports increased from R6.5 billion to R8.9 billion and exports decreased from R10.7 billion to R9.0 billion in December.

Trade for the year



The cumulative trade deficit for January 2008 to December 2008 was R88.0 billion versus a deficit of R69.9 billion (audited) for the same period in 2007; this represents a year-on-year growth of R18.1 billion (34%). The cumulative trade deficit for January 2006 to December 2006 was R68.6 billion (audited), reflecting a year-on-year growth of R1.3 billion (21%) in 2007.



Compared to the same period in 2007, the growth in exports was 35% and the growth in imports 34%. Cumulative imports increased by R189.9 billion (34%) from R561.2 billion to R751.1 billion and exports increased by R171.8 billion (35%) from R491.3 billion to R663.1 billion. With respect to the same period in 2006, the growth in exports in 2007 was 25% (a cumulative increase of R97.3 billion year-on-year) and the growth in imports 21% (reflecting a cumulative increase of R98.6 billion).

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