



STATEMENT

SARS MEDIA RELEASE

UNDER EMBARGO – 2pm Friday, 29 September 2023

SARS releases the preliminary trade statistics for August 2023

Pretoria, 29 September 2023 – South Africa recorded a preliminary trade balance surplus of R13.3 billion in August 2023. This surplus is attributable to exports of R181.3 billion and imports of R168.0 billion, inclusive of trade with Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho and Namibia (BELN).

The year-to-date (01 January to 31 August 2023) preliminary trade balance surplus of R32.0 billion is a deterioration from the R160.5 billion trade balance surplus for the comparable period in 2022. On a year-on-year basis, export flows for August 2023 were 4.6% higher at R181.3 billion compared to R173.3 billion recorded in August 2022, whilst import flows were 0.1% lower having decreased from R168.2 billion in August 2022 to R168.0 billion in the current period.

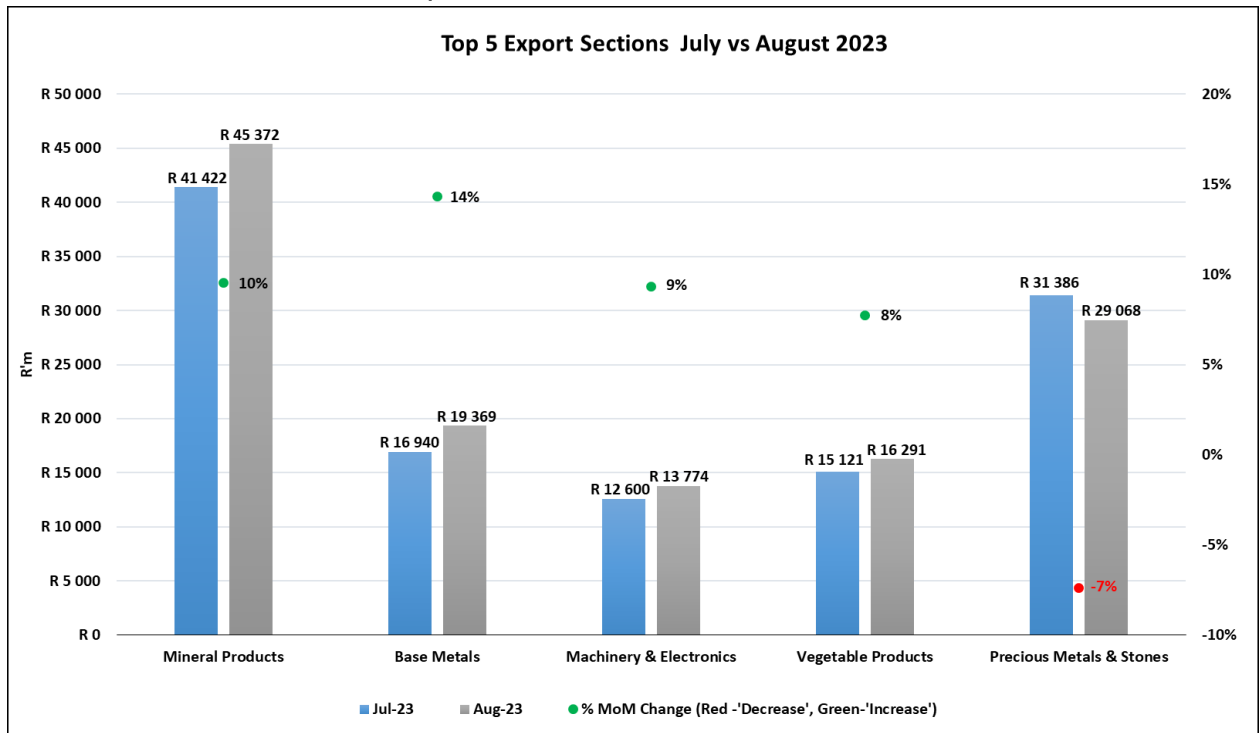
On a month-to-month basis, exports increased by R7.8 billion (4.5%) from R173.4 billion to R181.3 billion between July and August 2023, whereas imports increased by R10.0 billion (6.3%) from R158.0 billion to R168.0 billion over the same period. Export flows increased in August, driven by Citrus Fruit, Chromium Ores & Concentrates, Iron Ores, Coal, Ferro-alloys, and products of Machinery & Electronic. Value of imports increased on the back of substantial increases in importation of Fertilisers, Original Equipment Components, and Passenger Vehicles.

Due to ongoing Vouchers of Correction (VOCs), the preliminary trade balance surplus of R15.9 billion announced for July 2023 was revised downwards by R0.5 billion, with the final number at R15.4 billion.

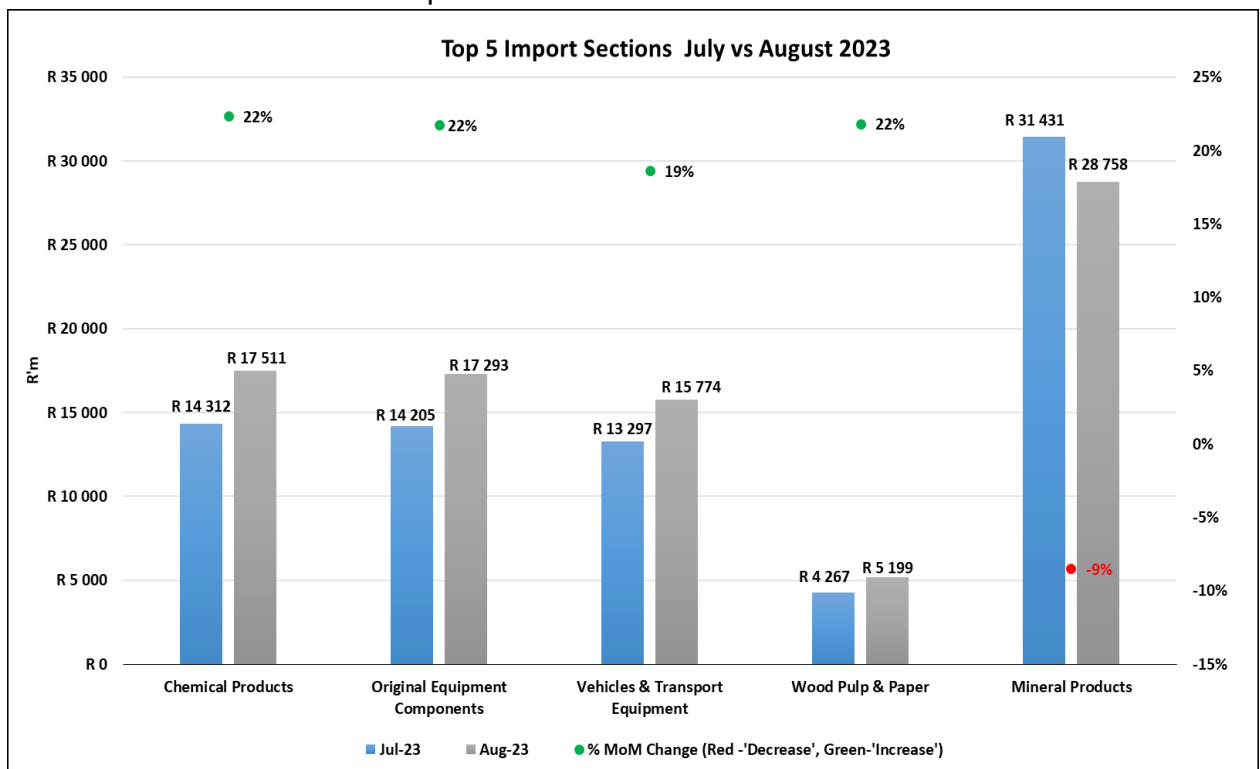
[Click here for Merchandise Trade Statistics August 2023](#)

Trade highlights by category

The main month-on-month export movements:



The main month-on-month import movements:



Trade highlights by world zone

The world zone results from July (revised) to August (preliminary) 2023 are given below:

World Zones (R' m)	The main month-on-month movements (R' m)				
	Trade Type	July 2023	August 2023	Variance	% M-o-M
Africa	Exports	48 622	49 307	685	↑ 1.4%
	Imports	14 900	12 167	-2 733	↓ -18.3%
	Trade Balance	33 721	37 139	-	-
America	Exports	16 064	14 808	-1 255	↓ -7.8%
	Imports	19 599	19 415	-184	↓ -0.9%
	Trade Balance	-3 535	-4 607	-	-
Asia	Exports	48 460	58 682	10 222	↑ 21.1%
	Imports	78 157	84 998	6 842	↑ 8.8%
	Trade Balance	-29 697	-26 316	-	-
Europe	Exports	44 717	46 009	1 292	↑ 2.9%
	Imports	43 240	48 835	5 595	↑ 12.9%
	Trade Balance	1 477	-2 826	-	-
Oceania	Exports	2 224	1 670	-554	↓ -24.9%
	Imports	1 772	1 417	-355	↓ -20.0%
	Trade Balance	451	253	-	-
Other Unclassified	Exports	12 448	9 675	-2 773	↓ -22.3%
	Imports	314	1 150	836	↑ 266.7%
	Trade Balance	12 135	8 525	-	-
Ship/Aircraft	Exports	891	1 110	219	↑ 24.5%
	Imports	-	-	-	-
	Trade Balance	891	1 110	-	-

Excluding trade data with Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho and Namibia (BELN)

South Africa's trade with the rest of the world (excl. BELN) for August 2023 indicate a preliminary trade balance surplus of R1.3 billion.

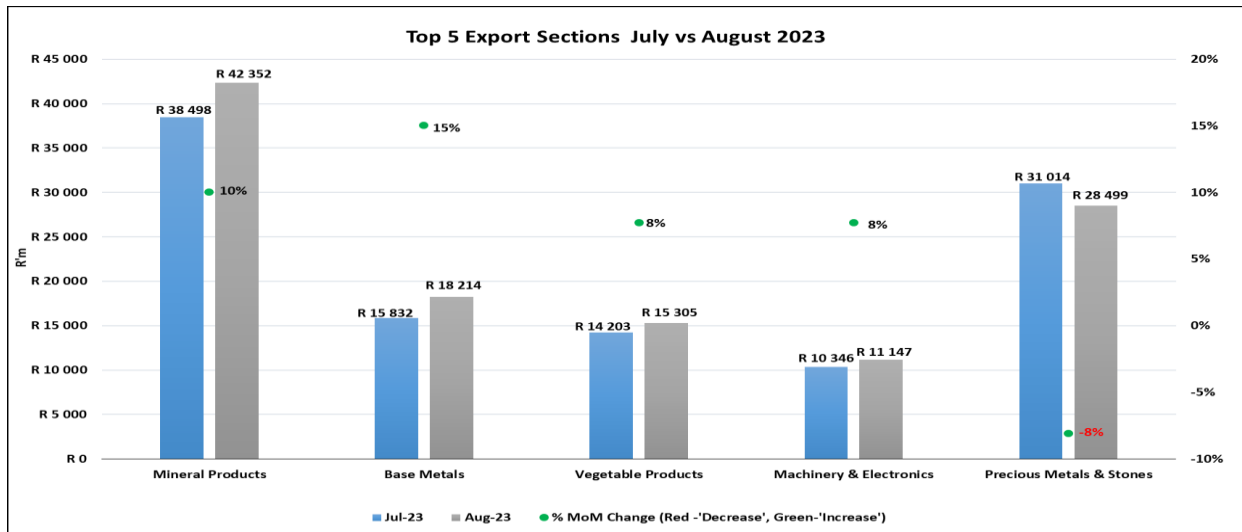
Summary

The R1.3 billion preliminary trade balance surplus for August 2023 was as a result of exports of R163.5 billion and imports of R162.2 billion. Exports increased by R6.2 billion (3.9%) between July and August 2023 whilst imports increased by R9.8 billion (6.4%) over the same period.

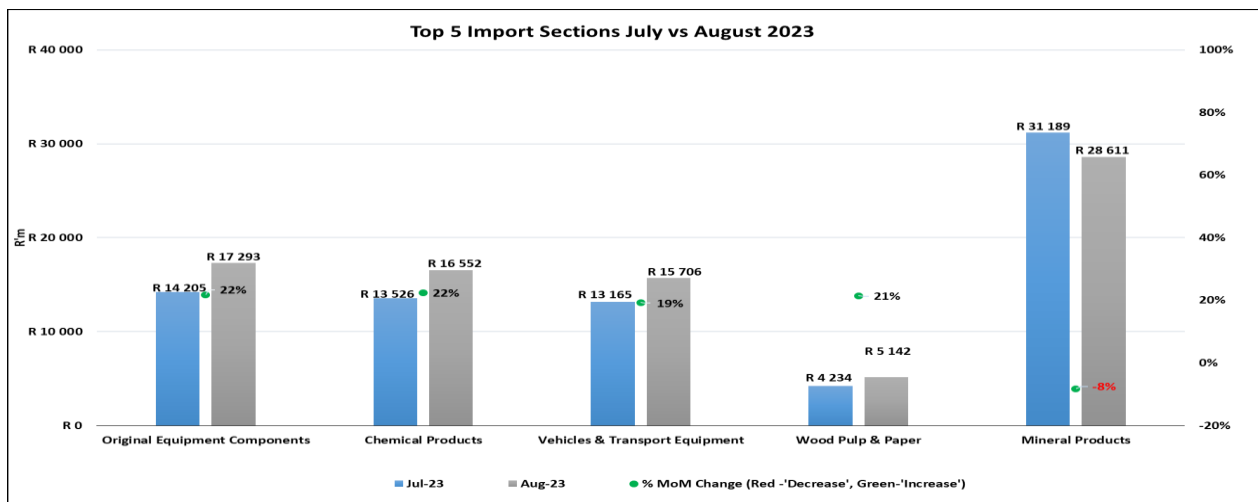
The preliminary cumulative trade balance for 2023 was a deficit of R50.5 billion, compared to R81.6 billion trade balance surplus for the corresponding period in 2022.

Trade highlights by category

The main month-on-month export movements:



The main month-on-month import movements:



Trade highlights by world zone

The world zone results for Africa, excluding BELN, between July (revised) and August (preliminary) 2023 are given below:

World Zones	The main month-on-month movements (R' m)				
	Trade Type	July 2023	August 2023	Variance	% M-o-M
Africa	Exports	32 517	31 574	-943	↓ -2.9%
	Imports	9 432	6 461	-2 971	↓ -31.5%
	Trade Balance	23 085	25 112	-	-

[Click here for Merchandise Trade Statistics August 2023](#)

SA Trade Release Table (Including BELN)

Harmonised Sections		Cumulative Trade		Monthly Trade		Exports				Imports			
Roman Section	Description	Trade Balance (R'm)	Ratio ⁵⁾ (Exports/Imports)	Trade Balance (R'm)	Ratio Exports/Imports	Month % of total	Cumulative 2022 ³⁾ (R'm)	Cumulative 2023 ³⁾ (R'm)	Month Total 2023 (R'm)	Month % of total	Cumulative 2022 ³⁾ (R'm)	Cumulative 2023 ³⁾ (R'm)	Month Total 2023 (R'm)
I, Ch 1-5	Animals/Animal Products	(792 968 647)	0.94	109 863 408	1.07	0.92	11 846 006 005	13 524 590 723	1 675 987 911	0.93	14 386 645 292	14 317 559 370	1 566 124 503
II, Ch 6-14	Vegetable Products	67 596 571 377	3.50	12 199 756 135	3.98	8.99	80 343 068 612	94 677 804 163	16 291 169 494	2.44	22 504 149 304	27 081 232 786	4 091 413 359
III, Ch 15	Fats and Oils	(3 362 073 027)	0.60	(639 342 956)	0.47	0.31	5 983 775 484	5 127 758 268	565 729 292	0.72	14 558 533 634	8 489 831 295	1 205 072 248
IV, Ch 16-24	Prepared Foods	14 824 556 120	1.40	2 627 545 278	1.55	4.09	43 018 094 099	51 606 206 731	7 406 514 494	2.84	29 535 428 226	36 781 650 611	4 778 969 216
V, Ch 25-27	Mineral Products	91 169 065 862	1.35	16 613 362 443	1.58	25.03	374 488 787 333	354 237 621 834	45 371 699 346	17.12	264 254 315 928	263 068 555 972	28 758 336 903
VI, Ch 28-38	Chemical Products	(47 718 180 761)	0.62	(7 710 534 978)	0.56	5.41	84 115 549 129	78 696 714 412	9 800 036 881	10.42	134 571 902 255	126 414 895 173	17 510 571 859
VII, Ch 39-40	Plastics and Rubber	(24 824 317 962)	0.49	(3 263 932 830)	0.50	1.82	22 673 228 675	24 107 484 256	3 293 070 775	3.90	50 052 399 787	48 931 802 218	6 557 003 605
VIII, Ch 41-43	Hides, Skins and Leather	(186 460 568)	0.94	(54 959 241)	0.87	0.21	2 616 576 414	2 861 407 287	378 347 790	0.26	2 744 927 263	3 047 867 855	433 307 031
IX, Ch 44-46	Wood and articles thereof	2 094 262 847	1.45	207 095 188	1.35	0.44	6 575 239 491	6 753 655 550	795 367 711	0.35	4 824 190 799	4 659 392 703	588 272 523
X, Ch 47-49	Pulp and Paper Products	(14 555 454 340)	0.61	(2 522 925 345)	0.51	1.48	16 062 210 694	22 629 306 737	2 676 094 391	3.09	37 591 197 804	37 184 761 077	5 199 019 736
XI, Ch 50-63	Textiles and Clothing	(24 072 849 751)	0.39	(3 610 683 374)	0.31	0.91	12 975 601 590	15 292 524 072	1 644 708 426	3.13	38 925 184 646	39 365 373 823	5 255 391 800
XII, Ch 64-67	Footwear and Accessories	(9 489 653 381)	0.21	(1 378 970 735)	0.20	0.19	2 278 559 011	2 532 963 176	350 728 359	1.03	12 092 986 261	12 022 616 557	1 729 699 094
XIII, Ch 68-70	Stone, Plaster, etc	(6 719 396 287)	0.44	(1 103 589 473)	0.40	0.40	4 719 956 619	5 302 605 637	733 085 923	1.09	11 236 628 089	12 022 001 924	1 836 675 396
XIV, Ch 71	Precious Stones	231 366 953 446	13.38	26 307 528 437	10.53	16.04	293 837 167 775	250 051 384 044	29 068 374 138	1.64	16 414 932 797	18 684 430 598	2 760 845 701
XV, Ch 72-83	Base Metals	85 412 304 663	2.28	11 380 157 486	2.42	10.69	138 568 138 125	152 380 866 538	19 369 446 317	4.76	65 226 988 614	66 968 561 875	7 989 288 831
XVI, Ch 84-85	Machinery and Appliances	(222 436 974 130)	0.31	(24 415 167 030)	0.36	7.60	88 705 433 616	100 280 578 299	13 773 789 376	22.73	237 315 164 275	322 717 552 429	38 188 956 406
XVII, Ch 86-89	Transport Equipment	32 512 413 631	1.27	9 839 099 551	1.62	14.13	121 874 398 893	153 063 454 465	25 612 947 198	9.39	89 043 918 026	120 551 040 834	15 773 847 647
XVIII, Ch 90-92	Precision Products, etc	(21 798 642 744)	0.25	(2 848 956 149)	0.26	0.56	6 562 664 131	7 374 558 980	1 010 470 744	2.30	25 043 604 758	29 173 201 724	3 859 426 893
XX, Ch 94-96	Misc Manufactured Articles	(8 062 256 100)	0.45	(1 388 100 280)	0.42	0.56	5 922 914 158	6 693 573 202	1 008 547 967	1.43	14 612 346 191	14 755 829 302	2 396 648 247
XXI, Ch 97	Works of Art/Antiques	257 411 738	1.35	66 414 661	3.11	0.05	733 599 453	987 566 952	97 857 119	0.02	245 021 361	730 155 214	31 442 458
XXII, Ch 99	Other Unclassified ¹⁾	1 378 079 763	2.30	155 912 194	1.87	0.18	3 353 665 558	2 435 654 444	335 055 361	0.11	1 020 954 799	1 057 574 681	179 143 167
XXIII, Ch 98	Special Provisions ²⁾	(110 572 258 964)	0.00	(17 290 852 758)	0.00	0.00	11 721 742	4 094 798	2 038 006	10.29	80 608 737 345	110 576 353 762	17 292 890 764
Total	Total SA Rand	32 020 132 785	1.02	13 278 719 632	1.08	100.00	1 327 266 356 607	1 350 622 374 568	181 261 067 019	100.00	1 166 810 157 454	1 318 602 241 783	167 982 347 387

World Zones	Cumulative Trade		Monthly Trade		Exports				Imports			
	Trade Balance (R'm)	Ratio ⁵⁾ (Exports/Imports)	Trade Balance (R'm)	Ratio Exports/Imports	Month % of total	Cumulative 2022 ³⁾ (R'm)	Cumulative 2023 ³⁾ (R'm)	Month Total 2023 (R'm)	Month % of total	Cumulative 2022 ³⁾ (R'm)	Cumulative 2023 ³⁾ (R'm)	Month Total 2023 (R'm)
AFRICA	237 577 061 380	3.01	37 139 427 654	4.05	27.20	317 564 085 729	355 646 679 687	49 306 799 534	7.24	107 175 220 773	118 069 618 307	12 167 371 880
AMERICA	(22 779 725 480)	0.85	(4 606 624 093)	0.76	8.17	132 307 081 156	126 930 734 742	14 808 129 017	11.56	124 319 390 132	149 710 460 222	19 414 753 110
ASIA	(243 672 413 231)	0.64	(26 316 180 386)	0.69	32.37	432 369 656 481	430 799 342 411	58 682 096 579	50.60	616 373 386 154	674 471 755 642	84 998 276 965
EUROPE	(15 514 639 277)	0.96	(2 825 854 094)	0.94	25.38	369 497 125 145	339 725 942 694	46 008 849 362	29.07	294 965 110 504	355 240 581 971	48 834 703 456
OCEANIA	(1 449 708 990)	0.90	252 744 090	1.18	0.92	10 117 021 389	13 288 053 264	1 670 198 760	0.84	17 383 930 109	14 737 762 254	1 417 454 670
OTHER UNCLASSIFIED	70 389 450 411	12.05	8 525 376 537	8.41	5.34	57 475 582 159	76 761 513 798	9 675 163 843	0.68	6 593 119 782	6 372 063 387	1 149 787 306
SHIP/AIRCRAFT	7 470 107 972	-	1 109 829 924	-	0.61	7 935 804 548	7 470 107 972	1 109 829 924				
Total	32 020 132 785	1.02	13 278 719 632	1.08	100.00	1 327 266 356 607	1 350 622 374 568	181 261 067 019	100.00	1 166 810 157 454	1 318 602 241 783	167 982 347 387

Temporary Imports	January 2023	February 2023	March 2023	April 2023	May 2023	June 2023	July 2023	August 2023
Gold Imports ⁴⁾	9 692 068 261	8 587 358 074	11 657 698 104	10 019 498 103	10 892 989 774	12 278 781 949	10 425 339 173	12 326 767 333

Notes:

- 1) Other Unclassified: Military equipment, unknown countries, ships & aircraft stores & films
- 2) Special Provisions: Automotive Production and Development Programme (APDP)
- 3) Current month data is preliminary and all other data is revised
- 4) Temporary gold imports are not included in imports or export numbers for the trade balance calculation
- 5) The ratio is the value of total exports divided by the value of total imports

SA Trade Release Table (Excluding BELN)

Harmonised Sections		Cumulative Trade		Monthly Trade		Exports				Imports			
Roman Section	Description	Trade Balance (R'm)	Ratio ⁵⁾ (Exports/Imports)	Trade Balance (R'm)	Ratio Exports/Imports	Month % of total	Cumulative 2022 ³⁾ (R'm)	Cumulative 2023 ³⁾ (R'm)	Month Total 2023 (R'm)	Month % of total	Cumulative 2022 ³⁾ (R'm)	Cumulative 2023 ³⁾ (R'm)	Month Total 2023 (R'm)
I, Ch 1-5	Animals/Animal Products	(333 196 554)	0.97	105 297 190	1.09	0.78	9 280 177 768	10 817 138 349	1 281 943 931	0.73	10 867 170 519	11 150 334 903	1 176 646 741
II, Ch 6-14	Vegetable Products	60 491 401 934	3.32	11 398 707 424	3.92	9.36	73 428 046 268	86 619 375 936	15 304 895 777	2.41	21 708 510 267	26 127 974 002	3 906 188 353
III, Ch 15	Fats and Oils	(4 903 950 429)	0.42	(878 756 519)	0.27	0.20	4 235 004 412	3 576 248 661	324 202 329	0.74	14 543 475 668	8 480 199 090	1 202 958 848
IV, Ch 16-24	Prepared Foods	5 968 247 315	1.19	1 427 026 201	1.35	3.34	30 435 236 243	37 239 348 068	5 455 569 236	2.48	24 445 411 689	31 271 100 753	4 028 543 035
V, Ch 25-27	Mineral Products	71 419 203 862	1.27	13 741 138 833	1.48	25.90	354 568 397 429	332 589 904 986	42 352 332 030	17.63	263 180 994 652	261 170 701 124	28 611 193 197
VI, Ch 28-38	Chemical Products	(52 948 230 059)	0.56	(8 396 447 833)	0.49	4.99	73 331 326 408	67 138 074 142	8 155 321 552	10.20	128 999 053 788	120 086 304 201	16 551 769 385
VII, Ch 39-40	Plastics and Rubber	(29 773 479 797)	0.38	(3 939 757 830)	0.39	1.56	17 563 089 508	18 612 184 402	2 546 394 577	4.00	49 596 453 017	48 385 664 199	6 486 152 407
VIII, Ch 41-43	Hides, Skins and Leather	(481 789 209)	0.84	(94 777 233)	0.77	0.20	2 254 671 798	2 496 960 783	325 673 882	0.26	2 664 343 348	2 978 749 992	420 451 115
IX, Ch 44-46	Wood and articles thereof	2 346 752 088	1.82	226 129 550	1.68	0.34	5 007 910 200	5 218 372 182	557 540 408	0.20	3 207 197 950	2 871 620 094	331 410 858
X, Ch 47-49	Pulp and Paper Products	(16 996 696 338)	0.54	(2 836 389 058)	0.45	1.41	13 807 413 699	19 866 635 260	2 306 007 439	3.17	37 340 890 336	36 863 331 598	5 142 396 497
XI, Ch 50-63	Textiles and Clothing	(24 338 410 415)	0.28	(3 585 871 682)	0.20	0.53	7 224 062 787	9 510 377 753	872 724 452	2.75	33 674 443 890	33 848 788 168	4 458 596 134
XII, Ch 64-67	Footwear and Accessories	(10 830 481 847)	0.09	(1 586 846 813)	0.07	0.07	880 857 241	1 045 212 427	120 080 174	1.05	11 998 854 696	11 875 694 274	1 706 926 987
XIII, Ch 68-70	Stone, Plaster, etc	(8 050 531 341)	0.33	(1 276 935 004)	0.30	0.33	3 309 958 187	3 881 264 640	546 026 823	1.12	11 149 713 756	11 931 795 981	1 822 961 827
XIV, Ch 71	Precious Stones	237 981 257 528	27.72	26 989 814 672	18.89	17.43	287 602 236 294	246 887 523 225	28 498 667 968	0.93	8 596 692 061	8 906 265 697	1 508 853 296
XV, Ch 72-83	Base Metals	78 124 463 341	2.18	10 324 570 383	2.31	11.14	130 695 967 789	144 394 443 053	18 213 545 238	4.86	64 502 855 041	66 269 979 712	7 888 974 855
XVI, Ch 84-85	Machinery and Appliances	(235 995 992 359)	0.26	(26 441 299 778)	0.30	6.82	72 544 073 256	82 598 578 103	11 146 750 193	23.16	233 890 301 387	318 594 570 462	37 588 049 971
XVII, Ch 86-89	Transport Equipment	20 837 175 420	1.17	8 045 064 178	1.51	14.52	112 775 314 249	140 733 951 580	23 750 732 572	9.68	87 950 937 420	119 896 776 160	15 705 668 394
XVIII, Ch 90-92	Precision Products, etc	(23 316 442 938)	0.20	(3 075 935 340)	0.20	0.47	5 109 077 681	5 777 597 583	776 269 942	2.37	24 955 352 918	29 094 040 521	3 852 205 282
XX, Ch 94-96	Misc Manufactured Articles	(10 750 669 072)	0.27	(1 817 668 749)	0.24	0.35	3 191 543 882	3 917 069 247	566 361 695	1.47	14 519 800 183	14 667 738 319	2 384 030 444
XXI, Ch 97	Works of Art/Antiques	252 287 959	1.35	65 796 551	3.10	0.06	728 342 048	981 900 450	97 159 104	0.02	244 396 449	729 612 491	31 362 553
XXII, Ch 99	Other Unclassified ¹⁾	1 350 551 189	2.29	151 793 428	1.85	0.20	3 314 261 604	2 393 891 672	330 023 560	0.11	1 005 886 361	1 043 340 483	178 230 132
XXIII, Ch 98	Special Provisions ²⁾	(110 573 951 215)	0.00	(17 292 890 764)	-	-	7 991 982	2 042 782	-	10.66	80 608 737 345	110 575 993 997	17 292 890 764
Total	Total SA Rand	(50 522 480 937)	0.96	1 251 761 807	1.01	100.00	1 211 294 960 733	1 226 298 095 284	163 528 222 882	100.00	1 129 651 472 741	1 276 820 576 221	162 276 461 075

World Zones	Cumulative Trade		Monthly Trade		Exports				Imports				
	Trade Balance (R'm)	Ratio ⁵⁾ (Exports/Imports)	Trade Balance (R'm)	Ratio Exports/Imports	Month % of total	Cumulative 2022 ³⁾ (R'm)	Cumulative 2023 ³⁾ (R'm)	Month Total 2023 (R'm)	Month % of total	Cumulative 2022 ³⁾ (R'm)	Cumulative 2023 ³⁾ (R'm)	Month Total 2023 (R'm)	
AFRICA	155 034 447 658	3.03	25 112 469 829	4.89	19.31	201 592 689 855	231 322 400 403	31 573 955 397	3.98	70 016 536 060	76 287 952 745	6 461 485 568	
AMERICA	(22 779 725 480)	0.85	(4 606 624 093)	0.76	9.06	132 307 081 156	126 930 734 742	14 808 129 017	11.96	124 319 390 132	149 710 460 222	19 414 753 110	
ASIA	(243 672 413 231)	0.64	(26 316 180 386)	0.69	35.88	432 369 656 481	430 799 342 411	58 682 096 579	52.38	616 373 386 154	674 471 755 642	84 998 276 965	
EUROPE	(15 514 639 277)	0.96	(2 825 854 094)	0.94	28.14	369 497 125 145	339 725 942 694	46 008 849 362	30.09	294 965 110 504	355 240 581 971	48 834 703 456	
OCEANIA	(1 449 708 990)	0.90	252 744 090	1.18	1.02	10 117 021 389	13 288 053 264	1 670 198 760	0.87	17 383 930 109	14 737 762 254	1 417 454 670	
OTHER UNCLASSIFIED	70 389 450 411	12.05	8 525 376 537	8.41	5.92	57 475 582 159	76 761 513 798	9 675 163 843	0.71	6 593 119 782	6 372 063 387	1 149 787 306	
SHIP/AIRCRAFT	7 470 107 972	-	1 109 829 924	-	0.68	7 935 804 548	7 470 107 972	1 109 829 924	-	-	-	-	-
Total	(50 522 480 937)	0.96	1 251 761 807	1.01	100.00	1 211 294 960 733	1 226 298 095 284	163 528 222 882	100.00	1 129 651 472 741	1 276 820 576 221	162 276 461 075	

Temporary Imports	January 2023	February 2023	March 2023	April 2023	May 2023	June 2023	July 2023	August 2023
Gold Imports ⁴⁾	9 692 068 261	8 587 358 074	11 657 698 104	10 019 498 103	10 892 989 774	12 278 781 949	10 425 339 173	12 326 767 333

Notes:

- 1) Other Unclassified: Military equipment, unknown countries, ships & aircraft stores & films
- 2) Special Provisions: Automotive Production and Development Programme (APDP)
- 3) Current month data is preliminary and all other data is revised
- 4) Temporary gold imports are not included in imports or export numbers for the trade balance calculation
- 5) The ratio is the value of total exports divided by the value of total imports

Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho and Namibia (Only)

South Africa's trade with the BELN countries for August 2023 show a preliminary trade balance surplus of R12.0 billion.

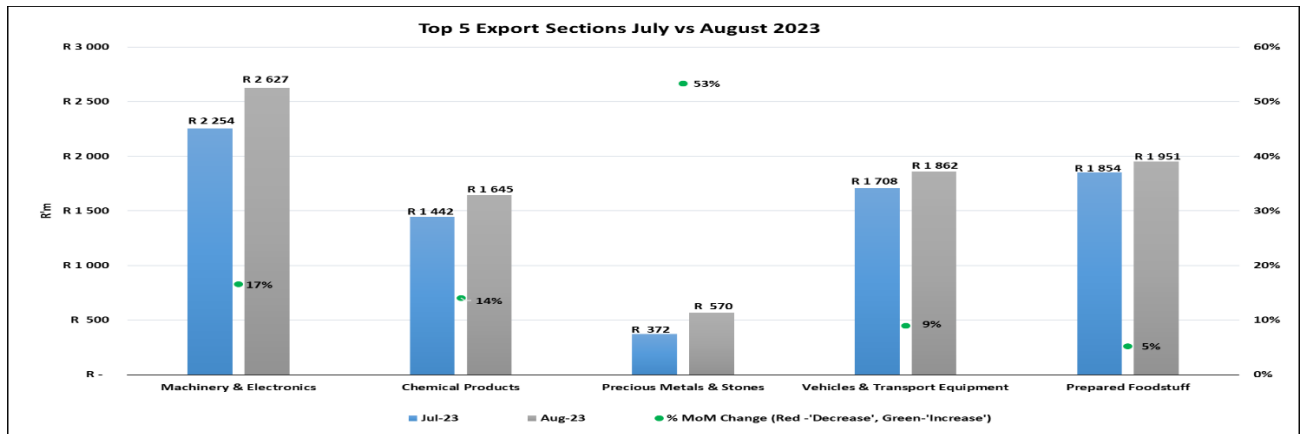
Summary

The R12.0 billion preliminary trade balance surplus for August 2023 was as a result of exports of R17.7 billion and imports of R5.7 billion. Exports increased by R1.6 billion (10.1%) between July and August 2023 and imports increased by R0.2 billion (4.3%) over the same period.

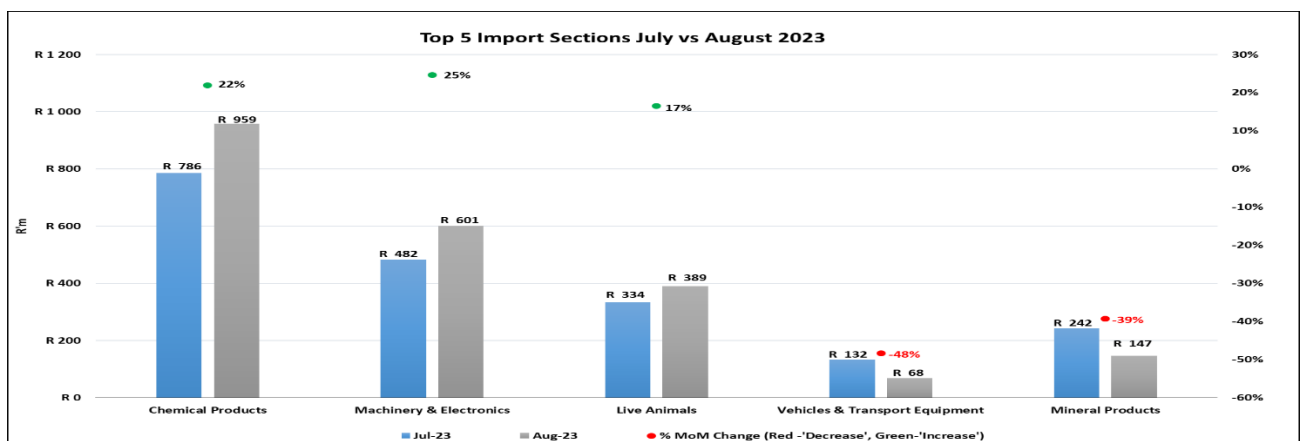
The preliminary cumulative trade balance for 2023 was a surplus of R82.5 billion, compared to R78.8 billion in 2022.

Trade Highlights by Category

The main month-on-month export movements:



The main month-on-month import movements:



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