



Ecco Chamber

FORTNIGHTLY ITALIAN NEWS MADE IN
SOUTH AFRICA

The EU Connection

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& Mobile Investments; KMA SA
Marketing**



Chamber's Note

The EU Connection

As the Italian-South African Chamber of Trade and Industries, one would think we are linked to two main sovereign entities – South Africa and Italy. However, there is a third, unmentioned presence in our bilateral gene pool – the European Union.

Italy being part of the EU has multiple implications for any South African person or organization with a stake in il Bel Paese. These implications range from EU standards that have to be met when trading with Italy or visas that must be obtained when traveling to the region. It is commonly known that the EU is SA's biggest trading partner and the Southern African Economic Partnership Agreement has consistently increased the value of African goods going to the EU since the Agreement was signed in 2016. Moreover, the economic fortunes of Italy (and by extension its trade with the world) over the next couple of years will have a lot to do with the implementation of the EU's recovery fund.

Even diplomatically, as well as the Embassies for each individual country, South Africa also hosts the office for the European Commission, equivalent to the Embassy for the EU as a whole. Our local Chambers of Commerce to cooperate within an EU Chamber of Commerce to express the common concerns of our members.

The European Union has from its beginning been an innovation and an experiment. Nowhere before have sovereign states coordinated so intricately – sharing laws, trading freely, crossing borders at will, and wielding a common currency. To many, these kinds of regional agglomerations are necessary to achieve a level footing with national super-powers such as China or the US.

But implicit in this is that member states must forego some sovereignty in order to receive the long-term benefits that come from being part of the cooperative cluster. This practice of flexible sovereignty gestures towards a possible post-Westphalian future for other parts of the world including Africa.

Indeed, the African Union may be another post-Westphalian innovation in the making, having recently introduced the Africa Free Trade Agreement. The end of January 2021 marked the end of South Africa's tenure at the head of the AU and in a weekly letter, outgoing AU chairperson Cyril Ramaphosa noted that the pandemic had galvanized African countries into collective action. One such example was the January announcement that the African Union had secured a provisional 270 million COVID-19 vaccine doses on behalf of its member states.

One of the things we can learn from the EU is that these secured doses cannot be taken for granted. Currently, Brexiteers are celebrating their much higher rate of vaccinations, now that Britain is independent of the EU. However, if the EU did not exist you would have 27 sovereign entities tussling over vaccines and, despite current problems, the more cooperation you have, the fewer out-and-out losers emerge. As a Chamber of Commerce that endorses bilateral trade, we are fully confident in throwing our weight behind those that see that the future will be about cooperation. In an increasingly small world, we will only be hurting ourselves if we allow our neighbors to suffer.

Italcham!

RENEWABLE HYDROGEN AND GREEN POWERFUEL OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOUTH AFRICA

A webinar hosted by EE Business Intelligence and the EU Delegation to South Africa.

EE Business Intelligence and the European Union Delegation to South Africa is co-hosting a high-level webinar in association with the Department of Science and Innovation, European Commission, CSIR, Port of Rotterdam, Air Liquide, Enertrag and Nedbank.



DATE: Tuesday 9 February 2021

TIME: 14h00 to 17h00

PLATFORM: Zoom Webinar

COST: No cost, free-of-charge, all welcome

**[Click here to register](#)
[for the webinar free-](#)
[of-charge](#)**



Welcoming our New Member



Network Support, design & maintenance

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We can set up and maintain your business's network, or help troubleshoot and maintain your existing network. We are available to consult with you or your staff when problems arise with your software. This service can be either remote or on-site assistance. Cyber Security, Cloud Services & Data Management. We will work with you to establish the appropriate cloud size and available resources for your business.

Welcome to Italcham!!



Welcoming our New Member



KMA SA is a Durban based private company, registered in 1998, servicing the polymer, petrochemical and industrial manufacturing industries.

KMA SA represents some of the world's leading producers and supplies commodities and speciality polymers, compounds, chemicals and coatings. We now focus on expanding our product range and our market, especially in Italy and Europe, bringing customers the latest innovative materials available.

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