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ITAC INCREASES CUSTOMS DUTY ON NEWSPRINT (LIGHTWEIGHT PAPER) FROM 0 TO 5% *AD VALOREM.*

The International Trade Administration Commission of South Africa received an application from Sappi Southern Africa Limited, for an increase in the rate of duty on newsprint, in rolls or sheets, from free of duty to 5% *ad valorem*.

The application for a tariff increase is from Sappi's Ngodwana Mill, located in Mpumalanga Province. The Ngodwana Mill is one of Sappi's largest integrated pulp and paper production facilities. It produces paper pulp, Dissolving Wood Pulp ("DWP"), kraft liner paper, packaging paper, and newsprint for both domestic and international markets.

The Applicant submitted, amongst others, that sustained financial losses arising from declining global newsprint demand, global overcapacity and increasing low-priced imports threaten the viability of Sappi's Ngodwana Mill (PM2), necessitating tariff protection to safeguard employment and preserve domestic newsprint manufacturing capacity.

During its deliberations, the Commission considered the information available, including comments received during the investigation. It found that declining global newsprint demand, persistent excess capacity and increased low-priced imports had weakened the domestic newsprint industry's operational and financial performance. This was reflected in declining production and sales volumes, capacity utilisation and market share, alongside a significant price disadvantage against imports and consistently declining profitability over the investigation period.

The Commission then decided to recommend an increase in the rate of customs duty on newsprint, in rolls or sheets, classifiable under tariff subheading 4801.00, from free of duty to 5% *ad valorem*. The Commission further decided that the duty structure should be reviewed three years after implementation, or within such other period as it may determine, to assess the measure's effectiveness and its impact on the domestic industry, downstream users and the broader value chain.

Full details of the Commission's findings and recommendations are contained in **Report No. 784**.

ISSUED BY THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE ADMINISTRATION COMMISSION OF SOUTH AFRICA