

UAE President, Central African Republic President witness signing of Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement

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President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and His Excellency Faustin-Archange Touadéra, President of the Central African Republic, witnessed the signing of a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between the two countries.

The agreement aims to enhance bilateral trade and investment opportunities, particularly in key sectors.

The agreement was signed on behalf of the UAE by His Excellency Dr. Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Minister of State for Foreign Trade, and on behalf of the Central African Republic by His Excellency Patrick Akoloza, Minister of Trade and Industry.

His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan stated that the signing of the CEPA marks a new phase in the UAE's relationship with the Central African Republic, driven by their shared vision for growth and sustainable development to achieve mutual economic and social benefits. He highlighted that the agreement aims to open new avenues for trade, investment, and cooperation that serve the interests of both nations.

President Faustin-Archange Touadéra welcomed the signing of the agreement, expressing hope that it would strengthen economic ties between the UAE and the Central African Republic and contribute to sustainable development and economic prosperity for both countries.

Non-oil trade between the UAE and the Central African Republic reached approximately US\$252 million in 2024, reflecting a 75 percent increase compared to the previous year. The UAE's non-oil exports to the Central African Republic include essential consumer goods such as food products, textiles, and electronics, as well as machinery and pharmaceuticals that support key sectors across Africa.

Meanwhile, the Central African Republic exports agricultural products, including coffee, cotton, and cassava, to the UAE, in addition to valuable mineral resources such as gold and diamonds.

The CEPA is expected to increase market access for locally produced goods in both countries by reducing or eliminating tariffs, removing non-tariff trade barriers, and boosting investment in key sectors, including agriculture, infrastructure, and technology.

As the UAE continues to expand its global trade network, the agreement underscores its commitment to strengthening strategic economic ties with African nations, recognising the continent's growing role in the global economy.

Through the agreement, both countries seek to eliminate or reduce tariffs, facilitate trade, and lay the foundation for deeper cooperation across various sectors. The CEPA programme is a cornerstone of the UAE's objective to increase total non-oil trade to USD 1.1 trillion by 2031. It has played a crucial role in enhancing access to high-growth markets, significantly contributing to the UAE's total trade volume, which reached a record USD 816 billion in 2024, reflecting a 14.6% increase from 2023.

During the meeting, His Highness the UAE President and His Excellency the President of the Central African Republic also witnessed the announcement of several agreements and memoranda of understanding between the two countries. These covered areas such as investment protection and promotion, double taxation avoidance, infrastructure, mineral resources, and education, among others.

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