



COMESA Competition Commission

Kang'ombe House, 5th Floor-West Wing

P.O. Box 30742

Lilongwe3, Malawi

Tel: +265 01 772466

Email- compcom@comesa.int



**Common Market for Eastern
and Southern Africa**

DATE: 23rd August 2021

CCC-CP-NOTICE-3-OF-2021

WARNING NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

RISK OF HYDROQUINONE IN BRONZ TONE MAXI TONE AND CAROLIGHT

The COMESA Competition Commission (the "Commission") hereby notifies the general public about the possible risks of consuming Caro Light and Bronz Tone Maxi Tone (275ml) cosmetic products because they contain hydroquinone above the recommended limits.

According to the Hydroquinone Health and Safety Guide by the World Health Organization (WHO), Hydroquinone can cause skin irritation and dermatitis and might also induce cancer. The maximum level of Hydroquinone use in cosmetics as recommended by the WHO and restricted in many jurisdictions is 2%. WHO recommends that over-the-counter sales of creams containing hydroquinone be restricted in view of the widespread inappropriate use of skin lightening creams. Hydroquinone is classified as a toxic substance (Hazard Class 6.1) by the United Nations Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods. Further, some of the COMESA Member States including Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda banned importation of cosmetics with hydroquinone.

Following the recall of the same products in Europe and other jurisdictions, the Commission carried out an investigation on samples collected from the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa ("the Common Market.") The investigation revealed that Caro Light and Bronz Tone Maxi Tone (275ml) products as indicated below contain hydroquinone in levels above the recommended limits.

Products Covered in the Warning

Product name	Model	Volume	Man Date	Exp Date	Hydroquinone Level
Caro Light	L02283	9501101371033	09/2021	09/2021	3.9%-5.02
Bronz Tone Maxi Tone (275ml)	10044991	6182000109724	07/2018	07/2021	2.57%
Bronz Tone Maxi Tone (275ml)	1034590	6182000108765	09/2020	09/2023	2.53%



The Commission has established that the above products are imported and distributed in the Common Market, mainly in Zambia, Malawi, Uganda, Kenya and Zimbabwe. Thus, the safety issue in these products may be affecting consumers in the Common Market.

In view of the foregoing and pursuant to Article 30 (1) (b) of the COMESA Competition Regulations (the "Regulations"), the Commission would like to inform the general public to exercise caution and avoid purchase or consumption of the recalled products.

The Commission welcomes any representations on the matter from all interested stakeholders and the general public. Should you require more information or clarification on the matter you may contact on +265 1 772 466, Mr. Steven Kamukama, Manager, Consumer Welfare and Advocacy Division on skamukama@comesa.int.

Ms. Meti Demissie Disasa
Registrar of the COMESA Competition Commission