



Advancing Regional Integration
through Competitive Markets
and Empowered Consumers

Case File No: CCCC/MER/04/20/2026

Decision¹ of the 4th Meeting of the Panel Responsible for Determinations Regarding the Merger Involving Zijin Gold International Company Limited and Allied Gold Corporation

ECONOMIC SECTOR: Mining



15 May 2026

¹ In the published version of this decision, the COMESA Competition and Consumer Protection Commission has omitted or replaced information by ranges of figures or a general description, due regard had to the legitimate interest of undertakings in the protection of their business secrets, pursuant to Rule 37 of the COMESA Competition and Consumer Protection Rules 2025.

The Panel Responsible for Determinations,

The Panel Responsible for Determinations (“**Panel**”) established pursuant to Regulation 20 of the COMESA Competition and Consumer Protection Regulations (the “**Regulations**”):

Desirous of the overruling objective of strengthening and achieving convergence of COMESA Member States’ economies through the attainment of full market integration as enshrined in the Treaty Establishing the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (the “**Treaty**”);

Cognisant of Article 55 of the Treaty;

Having regard to the Regulations, and in particular Chapter Four thereof;

Recalling the overriding need to establish a Common Market;

Recognising that anti-competitive mergers may constitute an obstacle to the achievement of economic growth, trade liberalization and economic efficiency in the COMESA Member States;

Considering that the continued growth in regionalization of business activities correspondingly increases the likelihood that anti-competitive mergers in one Member State may adversely affect competition in another Member State.

Determines as follows:

Introduction and Relevant Background

1. On 4 May 2026, the COMESA Competition and Consumer Commission (the “**Commission**”) received a notification of a Merger involving Zijin Gold International Company Limited (“**Zijin Gold**” or the “**Acquiring Undertaking**”) and Allied Gold Corporation (“**Allied Gold**” or the “**Target Undertaking**”), pursuant to Regulation 42(1) of the Regulations.
2. Pursuant to Regulation 47 of the Regulations, the Commission is required to determine whether or not the merger is likely to substantially lessen competition; or is likely to significantly affect public interest in the Common Market.

The Parties

Zijin Gold (the “Acquiring Undertaking”)

3. Zijin Gold is a publicly listed mining company whose activities includes exploration, mining, processing and sale of gold. Zijin Gold forms part of the wider Zijin Group headed by Zijin Mining, a diversified mining group active in a range of mineral commodities, including (among others) gold, copper, zinc and lithium.



4. In the Common Market, the Zijin Group operates in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Eritrea.

Allied Gold (the “Target Undertaking”)

5. Allied Gold is a publicly listed gold mining company headquartered in Canada. Allied Gold's principal assets are gold mining operations and projects located in Africa including producing mines in Mali and Cote d'Ivoire, and a development-stage gold project in Ethiopia.
6. In the Common Market, Allied Gold operates in Ethiopia only.

Jurisdiction of the Commission

7. Regulation 42(1) of the Regulations requires a ‘notifiable merger’ to be notified to the Commission prior to its implementation. Only mergers that satisfy the prescribed thresholds pursuant to Regulation 41(5) and 41(8) of the Regulations are regarded as notifiable mergers. The merger notification thresholds are prescribed under Rule 23(1) of the Rules which provides that:

Pursuant to Chapter Four of the Regulations, a merger shall be notifiable if:

- a) the combined annual turnover or combined value of assets, whichever is higher, in the Common Market of all parties to a merger equals or exceeds COM\$60 million; and
 - b) the annual turnover or value of assets, whichever is higher, in the Common Market of each of at least two of the parties to a merger equals or exceeds COM\$10 million, unless each of the parties to a merger achieves at least two-thirds of its aggregate turnover or assets in the Common Market within one and the same Member State.
8. The undertakings concerned have operations in two or more Member States. The undertakings concerned derived a turnover of more than the threshold of USD60 million in the Common Market and they each derived a turnover of more than USD10 million in the Common Market. In addition, the parties do not derive/hold more than two-thirds of their respective aggregate turnover or asset value in one and the same Member State. The Panel was thus satisfied that the transaction constitutes a notifiable transaction within the meaning of Regulation 41(5) and 41(8) of the Regulations.

Details of the Merger

9. The notified transaction concerns the acquisition by Zijin Gold of all of the issued and outstanding shares of Allied Gold.



Competition Analysis

Consideration of the Relevant Markets

10. In the determination of the relevant market, which is divided into relevant product and relevant geographic markets, the Panel is guided by the COMESA Guidelines on Market Definition and other authorities on the subject.

Relevant Product Market

11. The Panel noted that, **“a relevant product market comprises all those products and/or services which are regarded as interchangeable or substitutable by the consumer, by reason of the products' characteristics, their prices and their intended use”**.²
12. The Panel observed that Zijin Gold, the Acquiring Undertaking, is active in the exploration, mining, processing, smelting, refining and sale of gold with its principal products being gold bullion, gold alloy and gold concentrate. The Panel further observed that the Target Undertaking, Allied Gold, is engaged in the exploration and production of mineral deposits in Africa and in respect of the Common Market, the Target undertaking is not yet operational but currently developing a gold mine, the Kurmuk Gold Project in Ethiopia, the only Member State where it has presence.
13. The Panel noted that according to the COMESA Merger Assessment Guidelines, it can be recalled that for horizontal mergers the Commission's focus when defining the market is on the activities where the parties overlap. In the current transaction and notwithstanding the fact that the Target Undertaking is not yet operation, it is observed that the merging parties are both active in the gold production sector. Thus, for purpose of conducting a competitive assessment the Panel considered the production and supply of gold as a relevant market since this is where any likely effects may occur as a result of the merger.

Production and supply of gold

14. The Panel observed that gold production involves the extraction of gold ore, a rich rock from the earth's crust. Modern gold mining predominantly takes place in areas where there is a significant concentration of gold-bearing ore. Gold unlike other precious metals has unique and distinct features. Gold is less chemically reactive, easily conducts electricity or heat and has soft physical properties hence it can easily be made into shapes. In terms of value, gold is the most popular precious metal for investment.
15. The Panel noted from the Commission's case precedent that gold is a distinct metal from other precious metals that are mined. The Panel noted that in one case

² Paragraph 7 of the COMESA Guidelines on Market Definition



precedent, the **IRH/Alphamin**³ merger it was considered that different metals comprise distinct markets and one metal is not replaceable with another given the differences in chemical and physical characteristics for each metal.

16. The Panel therefore considered that from a demand perspective, gold was not substitutable from other precious metals given the differences in physical characteristics, intended use and value.
17. In view of the above and consistent with the case precedent in the **Barrick Gold/Randgold**⁴ merger, the Panel identified the relevant product market as the production and supply of gold.

Relevant Geographic Market

18. The Panel noted that paragraph 8 of the COMESA Market Definition Guidelines defines the relevant geographic market as, “...**the area in which the undertakings concerned are involved in the supply and demand of products or services, in which the conditions of competition are sufficiently homogeneous, and which can be distinguished from neighbouring areas because the conditions of competition are appreciably different in those areas**”.
19. The Panel considered that the geographic scope for the production and supply of gold is global. The Panel noted that most precious metals, gold included, are traded as commodities on a global basis. For instance, the pricing of metals is mostly done through the London Metal Exchange (LME) which is a world centre for the trading of industrial metals. The Panel noted that the LME provides producers and consumers of metal with a physical market and with the ability to hedge against the risk of rising and falling world metal prices. The Panel therefore concluded that the geographic scope of the market is likely to be broader than national and could be as wide as global.
20. The Panel also observed that while the pricing of gold is influenced by trading such as at the LME, the actual production of gold is taking place across the global including in the Common Market.⁵
21. The Panel therefore considered that in view of the above and in line with case precedent in **Barrick Gold/Randgold** merger, the geographic scope for **the production and supply of gold was global**.

³ See Case Decision of the 121st Meeting of the Committee Responsible for Initial Determinations regarding the merger involving International Resources Holdings RSC LTD and Alphamin Resources Corporation, <https://comesacompetition.org/notice-of-inquiry-into-the-proposed-indirect-acquisition-by-international-resources-holding-rsc-ltd-of-the-issued-shares-in-and-joint-control-of-alphamin-resources-corporation/>

⁴ See Case Decision of the 156th Meeting of the Committee Responsible for Initial Determinations in Merger Involving Barrick Gold Corporation and Randgold Resources Limited, <https://comesacompetition.org/notice-of-inquiry-into-the-proposed-merger-involving-barrick-gold-corporation-and-randgold-resources-limited/>

⁵ See gold production by country, <https://www.gold.org/goldhub/data/gold-production-by-country> accessed on 13 May 2026



Conclusion on Relevant Markets

22. Based on the foregoing assessment, and without prejudice to the Panel's approach in similar future cases, the relevant market was identified as **the global market for the production and supply of gold.**

Consideration of Substantial Lessening of Competition or "Effect" Test

Market Shares and Concentration

23. The Panel noted the below market shares of the parties and their competitors for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024.

Table 1: Global Gold Market – Total Production and Proven and Probable Reserves in 2024

Company	Total Production (oz)	Share of Production	Total Reserves (oz)	Share of Reserves
Zijin Group (including Zijin Gold International)	2,345,003	2%	47,795,300	2.52%
Allied Gold Corporation	358,091	0.31%	10,832,000	0.57%
Newmont Corporation	6,545,000	5.58%	134,100,000	7.07%
Barrick Mining Corporation	3,910,000	3.34%	89,000,000	4.69%
Agnico Eagle Mines Limited	3,485,336	2.97%	54,300,000	2.86%
Polyus Gold	3,000,000	2.56%	105,000,000	5.54%
Others	97,546,041	83.24%	1,455,866,749	76.75%
Total for All companies	117,189,471	100.00%	1,896,894,049	100.00%

24. The Panel observed from Table 1 above that in 2024, the parties jointly accounted for approximately 2.31% of the total global gold production with an accretive share of only 0.31% from Allied Gold (representing 358,091 ounces); and 3.09% of the world's P&P gold reserves with an accretive share of only 0.52% from Allied Gold (representing 10,832,000 ounces). The Panel further observes that the proposed transaction would



result in the merged entity's potential additional production of 358,091 ounces of gold and additional reserves of 10,832,000 ounces. The Panel considered that the additional global capacity of the merged entity was not significant when compared to its competitors.

25. The Panel considered that while there is likely overlap at the global level, the market share accretion is not significant, and the parties were likely to face competitive pressure from other players in the global market as presented in Table 1 above.
26. The Panel considered that it was unlikely that competition concerns would arise on account of the insignificant change in the market structure as a result of the transaction. The Panel particularly observes that in the context of the Common Market, the market structure would not be affected given the Target Undertaking is not yet operational and finalising the development of the Kurmuk Mine Project in Ethiopia, the only Member State where it is present.

Determination

27. The Panel, therefore, determined that the merger was not likely to substantially prevent competition in the Common Market or a substantial part of it, nor would it significantly affect public interest.
28. This decision is adopted in accordance with Regulation 47 of the Regulations.

Dated this 15th day of May 2026

Commissioner Mahmoud Momtaz (Chairperson)

Commissioner Lloyds Vincent Nkhoma Commissioner Luyamba Kizito Mpamba

