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Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa

Ref: CCC/CP/CA/2/2023
26 July 2023

WARNING NOTICE

SUBSTANDARD NDOLA HYDRATED LIME EXPORTED FROM LIME RESOURCES LIMITED TO COMESA MEMBER STATES

The COMESA Competition Commission (the Commission) has become aware through media release by the Malawi Bureau of Standards (MBS) stating that in May 2023, the bureau had received complaints regarding safety hazards related to the use of the Ndola Hydrated Lime manufactured by Lime Resources Limited in Ndola, Zambia. It reported that in Lilongwe, the lime had exploded while being mixed by workers and caused serious skin burns and damaged the roof of the house where it was being used. Similarly, in Blantyre, the lime caused burns on the workers who were handling it.

According to the media release, MBS conducted an investigation and tests on the lime to assess compliance with the mandatory Malawi standard for ***Limes for use for building part 1: Hydrated Lime-Specification (MS 85-1:2013).*** The Laboratory results indicated that Ndola lime critically failed to meet the requirements of this standard. Among other things, the lab test results revealed that the product had high levels of Sulphur, a known skin irritant. In addition, labelling of the product did not meet the requirements of **MS 722:2005**, a mandatory Malawi Standard for ***labelling, presentation, and advertising of prepacked goods for the ultimate consumer***.

Based on the lab findings, the product was deemed defective and dangerous for use and in the interest of the public safety, and in line with the provisions of the Malawi Bureau of Standards Act (Cap 51:02), section 39(1), the MBS determined to ban and reject further importation of Ndola Hydrate Lime with immediate effect and ordered the re-export of 1150 bags of this defective product. The consignment was re-exported back to Zambia on 28th June 2023. MBS further advised prospective importers to obtain and send to MBS a pre-shipment sample for testing before they are allowed to import the product.

The Commission has established that in the Common Market, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, and Zimbabwe import lime from Zambia. Pursuant to Article 30(1)(b) of the COMESA Competition Regulations, the Commission hereby informs the public in the respective countries of the risks associated with the product in question and to advise consumers to avoid purchasing or using it.

Furthermore, any person within the Common Market that may have incurred any loss or was injured as a result of using the product may report the matter to the Commission by contacting **Mr. Steven Kamukama, Manager Consumer Welfare and Advocacy Division** on +265 (0) 1 772466 or by email on: skamukama@comesacompetition.org

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