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CGCSA Calls for Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration to Combat Organised Crime and Illicit Trade

Johannesburg, 06 August 2026 - The Consumer Goods Council of South Africa (CGCSA) today called for stronger collaboration between business, government, law enforcement and civil society to combat organised crime and illicit trade, which is estimated to cost South Africa R68 billion annually across 11 key sectors. CGCSA CEO Zinhle Tyikwe said crime affecting the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector and the broader economy has evolved beyond a public safety issue into an economic, investment and national competitiveness challenge.

Speaking at the CGCSA Crime Risk Seminar in Johannesburg under the theme "Building a National Partnership Against Crime: Protecting South Africa's Economy", Tyikwe said South Africa requires a more coordinated response that strengthens intelligence sharing, aligns industry action and builds resilience against increasingly sophisticated criminal networks.

Discussions at the seminar are expected to culminate in the establishment of an Industry Anti-Crime Platform. "This initiative builds on the important work already underway through Business Against Crime South Africa (BACSA) and the Government-Business Partnership. It provides an opportunity to institutionalise collaboration, strengthen intelligence sharing, align industry priorities and develop a more coordinated response to the crime threats facing our sector and our economy," she said.

"If we are serious about tackling organised crime, illicit trade, extortion, supply chain disruption and technology-enabled crime, we must move beyond isolated interventions to an industry-wide approach.

“The proposed Anti-Crime Platform can provide that foundation by bringing together business, government and law enforcement around prevention, disruption, enforcement and measurable outcomes."

Tyikwe said organised crime has become increasingly sophisticated, with criminal syndicates operating across provinces and exploiting technology to facilitate illicit trade, counterfeiting, extortion, cargo theft, cybercrime, commercial crime, financial fraud and attacks on critical infrastructure.

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Although recent SAPS crime statistics show an 8.7% decline in murders during the third quarter of the 2025/26 financial year compared with the same period two years earlier, organised crime, kidnapping linked to extortion and commercial crime continue to threaten economic activity and investor confidence.

"For the consumer goods industry, the impact extends far beyond lost sales. Illicit trade undermines legitimate businesses, weakens local manufacturing, destroys jobs, erodes the tax base, exposes consumers to unsafe products and funds organised criminal networks."

She said CGCSA-commissioned research estimates that illicit trade deprives South Africa of approximately R68 billion annually, resources that could otherwise support schools, healthcare, infrastructure and law enforcement.

"Every rand diverted into the illicit economy is a rand that cannot be invested in economic growth, job creation or public services. Cargo theft, extortion, cybercrime, attacks on logistics networks and the infiltration of illicit goods into supply chains continue to increase the cost of doing business and undermine confidence in the economy."
Tyikwe stressed that no single organisation can address these challenges alone. "Success will depend on sustained partnerships between business, government, law enforcement, communities and civil society."

She said the collaboration between BACSA and the consumer goods industry, particularly CGCSA, demonstrates the value of coordinated action to protect businesses, employees, consumers and communities.

"Through this partnership we have worked together on critical issues including illicit trade, organised retail crime, supply chain security, extortion and emerging technology-enabled threats. It is fully aligned with the objectives of the broader Government-Business Partnership and BACSA 2030 to strengthen national resilience, improve public safety, enhance economic competitiveness and create an environment that supports investment and growth."