Uganda seeks to get more products into Chinese market

By Aloysious Kasoma and Nelson Kiva

Uganda is steadily widening its export footprint in China, leveraging global trade platforms and deepening diplomatic engagement to position more of its products in one of the world's largest consumer markets.

This was evident during Uganda's participation at the 139th China Import and Export Fair, commonly known as the Canton Fair, held in Guangzhou from May 1 to 5.

According to Uganda's Consul General in Guangzhou, Ambassador Judyth Nsababeera, the country's participation was deliberately structured to expand exports, attract foreign direct investment and strengthen economic partnerships with China and the Asian region.



Nsababeera (second-left) interacting with visitors at the 139th China Import and Export Fair in Guangzhou

Ugandan exhibitors from several companies, such as Seedstar Speciality Coffee, Elyon Organics, Senela Organics, RhinoSeeds Africa, and Megkari Coffee, used the platform to introduce their brands to a global audience, selling Uganda's potential.

Annet Kawuki, a representative from Seedstar Speciality Coffee, said: "The world now knows Uganda coffee. Visitors from across the globe were tasting it, asking questions and showing real interest. This has opened doors for us into the global market."

Christian Nanyombi of Elyon Organics emphasised the value of exposure and market access, noting that such platforms are critical in building export-ready enterprises.

The Ugandan delegation, led by Ambassador Nsababeera, included officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ugandan embassy in Beijing.

Since 2024, bilateral trade has continued to rise, reaching approximately $1.46b (sh5.475 trillion), with further growth recorded through 2025 and into early 2026.

Uganda's exports to China have grown by over 61% during this period, driven largely by agricultural commodities such as coffee, oil seeds, and wood products.

This growth has been supported by China's introduction of a 98%–100% duty-free access scheme for Ugandan goods, which has lowered barriers and created new entry points for exporters.

At the same time, Chinese investment in Uganda has exceeded $1b (sh3.6 trillion), with capital flowing into infrastructure, manufacturing, and the oil sector.

UGANDA REPOSITIONS HERSELF

At the core of Uganda's strategy is a shift from exporting raw materials to promoting value-added products that can compete globally. Uganda's Consul General in Guangzhou, Ambassador Judyth Nsababeera, highlighted the importance of branding, packaging and adherence to international standards. "Uganda is positioning herself not just as a source of raw materials, but as a supplier of high-quality, value-added products. Competitiveness in today's market requires consistency, strong branding, and compliance with global standards," she noted.

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