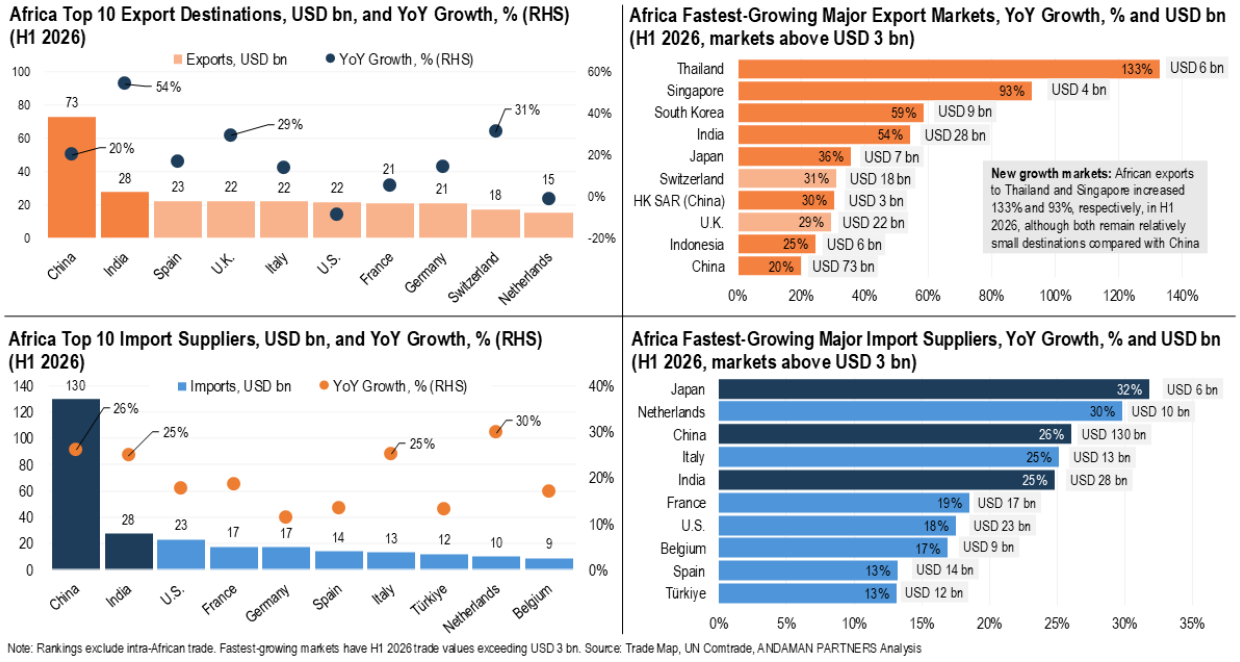
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Asian Economies Shape Africa's Changing Trade Landscape

China dominates trade volumes, while Thailand, Singapore and South Korea emerge among the fastest-growing destinations for African exports



Asia is playing an increasingly prominent role in Africa's trade, with China dominating trade volumes while several other Asian economies emerge as fast-growing markets for African exports.

In H1 2026, China remained Africa's largest export destination at USD 73 billion, up 20% year-on-year, and its largest import supplier at USD 130 billion, up 26%. India also stood out, with African exports to the country rising 54% to USD 28 billion, making it the continent's second-largest export market.

Yet some of the most striking growth occurred in smaller Asian markets. African exports to Thailand surged 133% to USD 6 billion, while shipments to Singapore rose 93% to USD 4 billion and South Korea recorded 59% growth to USD 9 billion. These increases highlight the expanding reach of African exports beyond traditional markets, although their absolute volumes remain relatively modest.

On the import side, Japan and the Netherlands recorded the fastest growth among major suppliers, at 32% and 30%, respectively. China's 26% increase was particularly significant given its much larger trade base, reinforcing its central position in Africa's supply chains.

The emerging picture is one of evolving trade relationships, with established partners retaining their importance while new sources of demand gain momentum. For global businesses, these shifts point to opportunities in African export markets, sourcing networks and cross-regional commercial partnerships.

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