

## [Shroud Syndicate Report]

The Severian Principate has an extensive black market trade operation, primarily consistent of weapons manufacturing, buying, and selling in order to avoid restrictions placed upon the coalition under the [[star wars:New Republic|New Republic's rule]]. In addition to the weapons dealing most engaged in, the Principate is also a major economy for illicit and illegal drug trade, primarily due to the stresses upon its citizens of the government's authoritarian and collectivistic policies that leave little room for any one individual to fail. Their neighbors in Hutt space have been only too happy to prey upon these dependencies, using the Principate's extensive trade routes and shipping equipment to funnel their drug market between Hutt space and Coreward worlds. [[star wars:Death sticks]] and [[starwars:Spice]] are the most popular products moved in large quantities, oftentimes even mined with the Principate's surplus of equipment.

Several mining operations for Spice and the dangerous and weapons-capable Tibanna gas are earmarked specifically for trade with Hutt space within Principate territory. These operations are dispersed across five of the Principate's major mining worlds, each with extensive bases to oversee operations there, often manned both by Principate officials and citizens of those planets and liaised with Hutt Cartel members. Two stations in Principate space, Ferro Station and Cheeba Moon Base, are billed as protectorate states officially, with no seat on the council of the Principate government, but are in reality hubs for the Hutt Cartel to operate out of almost completely independently. Checks on these stations are minimal, as the Principate and Hutts maintain an understanding of mutual benefit: as long as the two bodies do not run afoul of one another, they see little need to do close monitoring of Hutt business. The one stringent rule placed on these black market dealings is that against sentient trafficking; no slavery is tolerated in Principate space, and any cadres of smugglers attempting as much are apprehended and executed summarily without the blink of an eye or wider public knowledge.

Key members of these operations have been identified as Kotek Ren, one of the Principate's Parliament members, and [[starwars:Hutt|Goddard the Hutt]], the crime lord within the Hutt Cartel with whom the Principate's dealings are ultimately funneled. The two "men" work closely together, overseeing respective networks and trade schedules in each of their domains.