

# SOUTHERN AFRICA TODAY



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## Eventful year beckons for southern Africa

**AN EVENTFUL** year awaits southern Africa in 2016 as the region intensifies the implementation of key milestones on industrialisation, trade and infrastructure development, as well as the migration to digital broadcasting.

On the economic front, SADC Member States are expected to start the process of ratifying the agreement on the Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA) signed in June 2015 to create an enlarged market extending from Cape to Cairo.

So far, 16 countries have signed the Tripartite FTA that covers 27 countries in three regional communities -- the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), East African Community (EAC), and SADC.

Half of these 16 countries are from SADC. These are Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, Namibia, Seychelles, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, and Zimbabwe.

The remaining SADC countries of Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, South Africa, and Zambia are expected to sign the agreement by June 2016.

Following the signing, governments will initiate a ratification process through their national

procedures. The agreement will enter into force after approval is attained by two-thirds of members of the COMESA-EAC-SADC tripartite, advancing the regional law from a stated intention to actual application.

Creation of an enlarged market with a combined population of some 600 million people and a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of about US\$1 trillion is expected to boost intra-regional trade in Africa and deepen integration through improved infrastructure development, investment flows and enhanced competition.

In addition to the TFTA, the year will witness intensified negotiations for the establishment of the proposed Continental FTA (CFTA) aimed at promoting the smooth movement of goods, services and people across the continent.

Negotiations for the CFTA began in June 2015 and the enlarged continental market is expected to evolve from the existing FTAs in sub-regional economic blocs, eventually creating a continental bloc with more than one billion people and a combined GDP of more than US\$3.4 trillion.



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## Eventful year beckons for southern Africa

The ratification and implementation of the TFTA is therefore critical for the success of the CFTA, targeted for 2017.

Both FTAs depend heavily on the industrialisation agenda.

Thus, the year 2016 will see SADC implement two historic regional programmes approved last year – the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap 2015-2063 and the Revised Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2015-2020.

A detailed costing plan for the strategy and the alignment of all other regional activities to the two new strategic documents is expected to be finalized this year.

The industrialisation strategy and roadmap aim to ensure that member states harness the full potential of their vast and diverse natural resources, as most SADC Member States are getting very little in return for their resources since these are usually exported in raw form, with most of the value addition and beneficiation taking place outside the region, thus benefiting other countries.

The RISDP is a blueprint for regional integration and development, and the revised document realigns the region's development agenda with new realities and emerging global dynamics, and takes into account the issues of industrialisation.

With regard to international trade, SADC will be looking at ways to benefit from the new US\$60 billion fund pledged by China to support development on the African continent.

China made the commitment at the Johannesburg Summit of the Forum on China Africa Co-operation (FOCAC) held in December 2015. The support covers a wide range of sectors including agriculture, energy and information technology.

China is rapidly expanding its portfolio from bilateral support to individual countries to regional economic communities including SADC.

The year is also expected to see a group of SADC Member States begin the implementation of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union (EU) signed in July 2014.

The agreement is undergoing legal vetting, leading to eventual signature, ratification and implementation in 2016.

The group of SADC countries that signed the agreement comprise Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland. In future, Angola may join this SADC group.

The other mainland SADC countries are negotiating an EPA with the EU under the Eastern and Southern Africa banner, while the island nations are negotiating under the Pacific group.

EPAs are trade and development agreements that the EU is negotiating to open up its markets with the Caribbean region; Central Africa; Eastern and Southern Africa; Pacific, Southern Africa (the SADC group) and West Africa.

On energy development, the recently approved SADC Regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (SACREEE) is set to start operations, which are expected to change the "landscape of energy development in SADC," by allowing the region to fully harness its vast renewable energy potential.

To be hosted by Namibia, SACREEE should, among other things, spearhead the promotion of renewable energy development in the region.

The commissioning of new power will be accelerated to allow the region to fully recover from the energy crisis. This year alone, SADC plans to add a total of 3,680 megawatts (MW) of new electricity to the regional grid. By 2019, the region aims to have commissioned a massive 23,580 MW.



Agriculture and food security remains a top priority for SADC in 2016 following low rainfall and drought conditions. Countries in the region have already started importing food.

With regard to the management of the environment and natural resources, SADC will host the 17th Conference of the Parties of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species in October in Johannesburg, South Africa.

One of the topical issues SADC countries want addressed is the need to lift an international ban on trade in ivory. The international community imposed a ban on ivory trading a few years ago to protect elephants and rhinoceros, which were facing extinction.

However, the ban has seriously eroded the revenue for animal conservation, and some countries have accumulated a lot of elephant tusks which they cannot dispose of, while the ban has led to an increase in poaching as communities are no longer benefiting from proceeds from the ivory trade.

Gender will occupy its rightful place this year as the region and the African continent take stock of progress towards gender equality and equity.

The African Union (AU) has set the theme for 2016 as the "African Year of Human Rights and the Rights of Women".

SADC has generally done well in promoting gender development with an increasing number of women occupying decision-making positions.

In respect of information technology, SADC has pledged to complete the migration from analogue to digital broadcasting in 2016. This is after some countries failed to meet the global deadline set by the International Telecommunications Union of 17 June 2015.

Two SADC Member States were the first African countries to migrate to Digital Terrestrial Television. Mauritius was the first African nation to fully digitise television broadcasting for all regions and islands in 2007, followed by Tanzania in 2012.

Others that have switched on from analogue to digital broadcasting are Namibia, Malawi and South Africa.

Digital broadcasting involves the use of digital signals rather than analogue wave forms to transmit television broadcast channels on assigned radio frequency bands.

Due to the use of data compression, digital links generally have more efficient bandwidth usage than analogue, which makes possible more services and channels than previously possible, and improved picture quality.

Another important milestone for the region will be the holding of elections in at least two SADC countries, the DRC and Zambia. (See page 4 on elections in DRC and Zambia).

The year will also see Swaziland host the 36th SADC Heads of State and Government Summit in August. At the summit King Mswati III will assume the SADC chair from President Seretse Khama Ian Khama of Botswana. [sardc.net](http://sardc.net) □

## SADC developing harmonised agrochemicals, fertilizer guidelines

**AGRICULTURE IS** the backbone of most economies in southern Africa.

According to the SADC Secretariat, agriculture contributes between 4 percent and 27 percent of the regional Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and about 20 percent of the total export earnings.

In addition to this, more than 70 percent of the region's 277 million people are dependent on agriculture for their livelihoods.

To ensure that the sector remains an engine for socio-economic development in the region, southern Africa is developing harmonised regional guidelines on the use and disposal of agrochemicals and fertilizers.

This is in line with other SADC instruments such as the Revised Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2015-2063, the Dar-es-Salaam Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security of 2004 and the SADC Regional Agricultural Policy that aim to address poverty and hunger in the region.

At the continental level, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme and the Malabo Declaration also call for improved use of agricultural inputs, including agrochemicals and fertilizers.

The development of harmonised guidelines is, therefore, critical because agrochemicals and fertilizers are the mostly used inputs in the agricultural sector, particularly in the control of pests, diseases and other purposes.

However, if not well managed, especially in their use and disposal they use can re-

sult in serious environmental and public health concerns.

In developing the harmonised regional guidelines on agrochemicals and fertilizers, SADC will take cognisance of the various lifecycles of agrochemicals and fertilizers to ensure that each stage of use, including registration to post registration and disposal, is addressed.

The main aim of the regional guidelines is to promote the effective utilisation and disposal of agrochemicals and fertilizer to safeguard human and environmental health while improving productivity of the agriculture sector.

While the development of harmonised regional guidelines will play a crucial role in enhancing agricultural productivity, the harmonisation will also go a long way in promoting regional integration.

Despite global efforts through international conventions to manage chemicals, adherence is very minimal in the region.

Furthermore, most SADC Member States have varying membership to global conventions, therefore, making it difficult to collectively manage the problems associated with chemicals.

The regional guidelines will therefore, promote risk reductions associated with the use and disposal of agrochemicals and fertilizers.

The guidelines will also improve the use of such inputs thereby improving food security. For example, improper or excessive use of chemicals with unchecked disposal has affected production.

According to the SADC Secretariat's timeframe, con-

sultancy for the development of the guidelines is expected to commence in the first quarter of 2016.

The consultant is expected to, among other things, provide detailed technical steps and procedures describing the appropriate procedures on use and disposal of agrochemicals and fertilizers.

Other tasks include:

- Identifying and analyzing existing gaps in the management, use and disposal of agrochemicals and fertilizers in safeguarding food safety, human health and environmental integrity;
- Developing technical guidelines to promote harmonised use and disposal of fertilizers and agrochemicals in the region;
- Identifying the regional monitoring systems for en-

suring compliance by Member States; and

- Identifying institutional capacity needs at regional and national levels to implement the guidelines.

The guidelines should reflect the scope, implementation and management modalities, as well as address issues relating to protection of the environment, biodiversity and lives through risk-reduction procedures.

The guidelines are also expected to be in line with other existing guidelines, including, but not limited to, codes developed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to facilitate the operationalisation and development of synergies, as well as other conventions related to agrochemicals management. ▣

## SADC, AU to jointly promote, implement Agenda 2063

**SOUTHERN AFRICA** and the African Union have agreed to strengthen cooperation in the implementation of Agenda 2063, a continental strategy that aims to optimize the use of Africa's resources for the benefit of all Africans.

SADC Executive Secretary Dr. Stergomena Lawrence Tax and the AU Regional Delegate to Southern Africa, SADC and COMESA, Dr. Auguste Ngomo, said soon after their meeting in early February that regional economic blocs play a critical role in spearheading continental integration.

In this regard, it was agreed that SADC and the AU will:

- Cooperate in promoting continental and regional development and integration agenda, with specific focus on Agenda 2063, as mainstreamed in SADC Regional Integration agenda and priorities.
- Establish inclusive planning and reporting mechanisms where the REC will effectively implement and report on the implementation of the Agenda 2063; and
- Jointly work on the Domestication of Continental and Regional instruments. ▣



# SADC strategizes on El Niño resilience m

**SOUTHERN AFRICA** has put in place a variety of measures aimed at reducing the impact of El Niño weather being experienced in the region.

The measures were agreed at the recent SADC Consultative Meeting on Preparedness and Response to the Impact of the 2015/16 El Niño on Agriculture and Food and Nutrition Security in Southern Africa held on 25-26 February in Johannesburg, South Africa.

The meeting noted that El Niño is threatening agriculture, food and nutrition security in southern Africa and may reverse development gains if not urgently addressed.

El Niño is a naturally occurring climate cycle which develops as the warm waters of the tropical Pacific Ocean spread eastwards in concert with shifting patterns of atmospheric pressure, eventually affecting global climate.

History shows that the El Niño effect normally causes droughts in southern Africa and floods in other parts of the world.

There has been a marked increase in the frequency and intensity of El Niño episodes in the region.

Prior to the 1980s, strong El Niño events occurred every 10 to 20 years on average. However, since 1980, strong El Niño occurrences have become stronger.

As a quick response to the challenge, Member States agreed to implement short, medium and long-term measures in a collective and coordinated manner to minimize the impacts on communities.

In the short-term, Member States are to provide preliminary data on the number of people affected, cereal and other food deficits for planning and resource mobilization.

With the support of cooperating partners, Member States will provide immediate relief to meet the food and non-food needs of the vulnerable population and increase their budgetary allocation for disaster prevention, preparedness, mitigation and response.

In particular, countries agreed to scale up on-going social protection or safety nets and ensure swift imports of food and essential non-food items into the region.

Some of the safety nets programmes include the provision of weather insur-

ance against drought to smallholder farmers which has proved successful in countries such as Malawi as well as promoting the growing of drought resistant crops such as sorghum, millet and rapoko.

In order to manage the current crisis, Member States and partners agreed to establish an El Niño specific coordination centre at the SADC Secretariat.

If implemented, the centre will support efforts by the SADC Climate Services Centre in strengthening early warning system in the region.

In the medium to long-term, Member States and partners will promote and scale-up appropriate technologies for climate resilience as well as strengthen disaster risk reduction strategies.

In particular, countries will need to implement regional agricultural policies that promote production, productivity, competitiveness and improve access to markets and promote private sector participation.

Some of the key policies include the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) which was formulated in 2003 by the African Union to encourage countries to reach a higher path of economic growth through agriculture-led development.

Under this continent-wide programme, African governments made a commitment to allocate at least 10 percent of their national budgets to the agricultural sector each year.

The SADC consultative meeting on El Niño comes at a time when the SADC Climate Services Centre released a climate outlook update indicating a high likelihood of insufficient rainfall to persist over much of southern Africa in the period February to April 2016.

The update is in line with the rainfall outlook produced by climate experts late August 2015 forecasting a persistent strong El Niño to be favoured during the bulk of the 2015/16 agricultural season.

SADC Deputy Executive Secretary for Regional Integration, Dr Theminkosi Mhlongo said most parts of the region have experienced some of the driest conditions in 35 years, causing severe water shortages, delayed crop planting and very low soil moisture that have led to

wilting and stunting of crops, and death of livestock in some areas.

Mhlongo stated that the dry conditions are likely to cause severe food shortages and malnutrition in the region adding that the situation on the ground looks worse as it follows another poor season last year which left many families vulnerable.

‘We are already witnessing food shortages as well as the loss of power generation capacities and water shortages,’ he said.

He said estimates by the SADC Early Warning and Vulnerability Assessment Systems indicate that up to 28 million people, about 10 percent of the SADC population, are food insecure as a result of the low harvest last year.

Reports show that countries in southern Africa, with the exception of Madagascar, Mauritius and Seychelles, recorded a cereal deficit of 7.90 million tonnes in the 2015/16 marketing year. □



# Measures

## El Niño weather – a result of climate change or variability?

**EXTREME WEATHER** conditions associated with the El Niño effect have affected the food security situation in southern Africa.

According to the SADC Early Warning and Vulnerability Assessment Systems, up to 28 million people, about 10 percent of the SADC population, are food insecure as a result of the poor harvest in 2014/15 farming season.

History shows that the El Niño effect normally causes droughts in southern Africa and floods in other parts of the world.

But what exactly causes an El Niño?

El Niño is a naturally occurring climate cycle which develops as the warm waters of the tropical Pacific Ocean spread eastwards in concert with shifting patterns of atmospheric pressure, eventually affecting global climate.

Climate change describes alteration in the state of the climate (mainly temperature, rainfall, radiation, wind and cloud cover) that persists for an extended period, typically for several decades up to centuries, and the climate does not necessarily return to its original state.

In contrast, climate “variability” is the temporary phenomena that occur on timescales ranging from a few minutes to a decade or more.

Variability arises from mechanisms within the climate system and results in properties that eventually go back to where they were.

The El Niño cycle experienced in the southern African region indicates variability rather than climate change.

The Southern Africa Environment Outlook Report of 2008 highlighted that many regions of the global tropics and sub-tropics exhibit climate anomalies that correlate with the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO).

ENSO can manifest itself as either El Niño or La Niña, the latter associated with warm and cool sea surface temperatures in the tropical Pacific.

During most El Niño episodes, drought conditions usually prevail over the bulk of southern Africa while La Niña conditions often result in heavy rainfall across the region.

The Zambezi Environment Outlook 2015 notes that prior to the 1980s, strong El Niño events occurred every 10 to 20 years on average. However, since 1980 droughts linked to El Niño have become stronger.

Some of the recent droughts in the region have occurred in 1982/83; 1991/92; 1994/95; 1997/98; and between 2001 and 2003 rainfall seasons.

The El Niño being experienced in 2015/16 agricultural season is believed to be much stronger

than the 1997 cycle and the worst ever recorded in 50 years.

The dry spell has already affected the region resulting in crop failures, loss of livestock and reduction of water levels in dams.

For example, the continued decline of water levels in Kariba Dam between Zambia and Zimbabwe is now an issue of major concern as this is affecting fishing and hydropower generation activities.

The Zambezi River Authority reported that water levels in Kariba had reduced to only 12 percent of capacity on 1 February compared to the 53 percent recorded on the same date the previous year.

In October 2015, the United Republic of Tanzania was forced to switch off all its hydropower plants due to low water levels in the country's dams. As a result of the low water levels, hydroelectricity generation had fallen to 20 percent of capacity, making it difficult for the dams to operate.

The food security outlook update produced by the Famine Early Warning System Network shows that southern Africa is likely to experience significant reductions in crop production in 2016 as a result of inadequate rainfall.

The most affected countries include, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe experienced a late start to the rainfall season.

As this situation is not new to southern Africa, communities have in the past implemented a number of climate resilience strategies to curb the effects of drought.

For example, the weather insurance against drought for smallholder farmers has proved successful in Malawi.

The insurance measures the amount of rain recorded at local meteorological stations and in case of a severe drought, it is assumed that all farmers within a 20 to 30 km radius are similarly affected.

The programme is similar to the safety net used traditionally in Zimbabwe to cushion communities in times of drought called zunde ramambo (the chief's granary).

This is a concept that boosts communities' grain reserves which can then be used to help those in need during droughts.

The growing of drought resistant crops such as cassava, sorghum and millet has helped communities to get better harvest during periods of drought. □



## Zambia announces date for general elections

**ZAMBIA WILL** go to the polls in August to choose new leaders to govern the country for the next five years.

This follows the signing of a new Constitution in January by President Edgar Lungu, which declares that elections in the country will be held every five years on the second Thursday of August.

The second Thursday of August for 2016 falls on 11 August.

Previously, the president had the prerogative to set the date for an election.

Other major amendments to the Constitution include the need for the winning candidate to secure at least 50 percent-plus-one vote unlike previously when the president was elected using a majority system in which the candidate with the highest number of votes was elected, even if they scored less than 50 percent of the valid votes cast.

The constitutional changes will also see presidential aspirants now having running mates for the vice-presidency. In the past, a vice-president was appointed by the president.

Elections for vice-presidents will allow them to become president in the event of the incumbent being incapacitated to lead the country. This will enable the vice-president to assume power for the remainder of the incumbent's tenure.

Such a development avoids the need for early elections as was the case last year following the death of President Michael Sata in October 2014.

Early elections were also held in October 2008 after



President Levy Mwanawasa died in June 2008.

Speaking at the signing ceremony held at the Heroes Stadium in Lusaka, and attended by thousands of Zambians, including the founding father and first President Kenneth Kaunda, and former President Rupiah Banda as well as opposition leader Nevers Mumba, President Lungu said the adoption of the new Constitution is a momentous occasion in the history of the country.

"The journey has been long and hard, but the quest by our people to have a constitution that mirrors their collective aspirations and hopes for the country has never wavered," he said.

"Today, as a people, we have an opportunity to make history as I sign into law the new Constitution. It has taken us many years to make this progress, with failed or stalled processes of the past haunting us. Zambians, here is our new Constitution and a beginning of a new era."

Lungu has been nominated by the ruling Patriotic Front to contest the elections, and will face challenge from other candidates, including Hakainde Hichilema of the main opposition United Party for National Development.



Lungu was elected president last year following the death of Sata, becoming Zambia's sixth president since the country achieved independence from Britain on 24 October 1964.

He has expressed confidence that Zambians will rally behind him to enable him to secure enough votes to remain president, and has urged people to maintain peace before, during and after the elections.

"As we proceed towards elections on 11 August, I

implore all citizens, and political players in particular, to abide by civil means of engagement with one another," he said, adding that "differences and hiccups will occur but must not be seized upon by enemies of a free society."

In the last election, declared by regional and international observer missions, including the SADC Election Observer Mission, as in conformity with regional and international standards, President Lungu won 48.3 percent of the votes against 46.7 percent for Hichilema.

A total of 5,166,088 people have registered to vote in the election, according to the Electoral Commission of Zambia. □

## DRC prepares for elections

**THE DEMOCRATIC** Republic of Congo is expected to hold presidential and legislative elections this year although a date is yet to be set.

There are discussions in parliament to amend the Constitution to allow for three presidential terms, although this constitutional change has faced resistance from opposition members and this unresolved debate could delay the holding of the elections this year.

It is not yet clear if incumbent President Joseph Kabila will stand for re-election as he is serving his second and last term in office

under the current Constitution, after coming to power in 2001 following the assassination of his father, Laurent Kabila.

President Joseph Kabila led a transitional government that in 2006 oversaw first democratic elections in more than 40 years, which he won. He was re-elected in 2011.

With support from fellow SADC Member States, DRC government forces have managed to contain rebels who had captured the eastern part of the country in 2012. □



## Kazungula Bridge to boost regional trade

**CONSTRUCTION OF** the long-awaited multinational Kazungula Bridge is expected to facilitate the smooth movement of people, services and goods across the region, boosting intra-regional trade.

The bridge linking two SADC countries -- Botswana and Zambia -- across the Zambezi River at Kazungula is one of the milestones towards regional integration in the SADC.

According to Botswana and Zambia, who are jointly implementing and financing the project valued at US\$259.3 million through a 50/50 funding agreement, the bridge is scheduled for completion by December 2018.

Financial support has also been received from the African Development Bank and Japan International Cooperation Agency.

The project includes construction of a bridge linking Botswana and Zambia over the Zambezi River to replace the unreliable existing ferries (pontoon), as well as construction of a one-stop border post between the two countries at Kazungula.

Currently, transporters are using ferries to move goods and vehicles across the river at the Kazungula border crossing between Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Although construction is expected to be within stipulated timeframes, the project has been facing some challenges, one of which is an injunction by Chilibwe Mining Company to restrain contractors from excavating quarry on its land. This delay may delay the construction pace of the bridge.

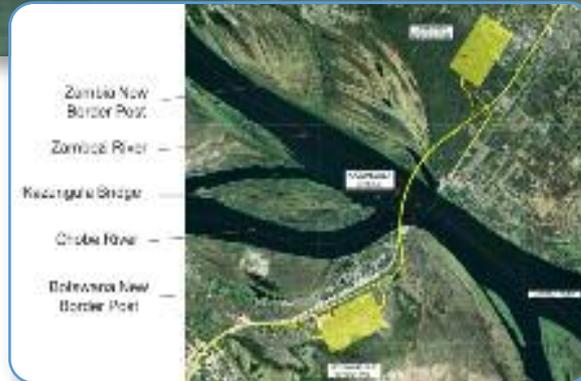
Once completed, the bridge is expected to improve the efficiency of transit traffic through the Kazungula border to facilitate increased trade activities and global competitiveness of Zambia and Botswana, improve regional connectivity and contribute to integration of the economies of SADC countries.

Kazungula Bridge is also expected to facilitate trade by im-

proving the movement of traffic, and it is anticipated that the inclusion of the rail component will allow for more efficient and cost-effective transportation of cargo and people. The railway component will

shorten the distance from South Africa to the central SADC region.

For easy implementation, the project has been divided into three stages with the first being the construction of the bridge, railway and approach ramps. The second stage will be construction of One-Stop Border Post on Botswana side, and finally another One-Stop Border Post on the Zambian side. □



## SACU to review revenue-sharing arrangement

**THE REVIEW** of the revenue-sharing arrangement among members of the Southern Africa Custom Union (SACU) is expected to be concluded this year.

The review has been going on for some years now as Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland (BLNS) have complained that the revenue-sharing formula does not fully compensate them for the price-raising effects, and that there is a lack of consultation by South Africa with its SACU partners.

There have been allegations of non-tariff barriers preventing access by other SACU countries into the South African market.

South Africa has complained, in turn, that the weighted allocation of excise and customs duties to the BLNS countries has become an increasing burden on its fiscus and that SACU has become unaffordable.

SACU has, therefore, seen it important that the new revenue-sharing arrangement be based on sound principles and technical analysis so that it is sustainable and appealing to all.

The customs union collects duty on local production as well as customs duty on imports from outside SACU. The taxes collected are put into a Common Revenue Pool (CRP). The revenue from the common pool is allocated to member countries in quarterly instalments utilizing the revenue-sharing formula.

According to the SACU agreement of 2002, the revenue-sharing formula uses three components to calculate revenue shares for member states. These are a customs component, an excise component and a development component.

Using the customs component, revenue is allocated on

the basis of each country's share of intra-SACU imports while the excise element allocates the funds on the basis of each country's share of Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Revenue allocations using the development component are fixed at 15 percent of total excise revenue and distributed according to the inverse of each country's per capita GDP.

Under the present arrangement, South Africa is the custodian of CRP and all customs and excise duty collected in the common customs area are paid into the South African national revenue fund. The revenue is then shared among member states according to a revenue-sharing formula as described in the agreement.

The review of SACU revenue-sharing agreement is a development that could have important lessons for a future SADC Customs Union. □



## Towards deeper continental integration

**THE 26<sup>TH</sup>** African Union Summit was held in late January in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to chart the development agenda for the continent. Below are some of the issues discussed and agreed at the Summit.

### African Year of Human Rights with particular Focus on the Rights of Women

**THE AFRICAN** Union Summit declared 2016 as the African Year of Human Rights with Particular Focus on the Rights of Women.

The specific focus on the rights of women aims to build on the 2015 theme of “Women’s Empowerment and Development towards Agenda 2063”, and thus signifies the consistency and urgency with which the AU strives to realize the aspirations of its various continental programmes, projects and activities such as its 50-year development blueprint – Agenda 2063.

Agenda 2063 is a continental strategy that aims to optimize the use of Africa’s resources for the benefit of all Africans.

The Summit said there is need to continue to place people and their basic human rights at the centre of the implementation of Agenda 2063 and address the evils of violent extremism, gender-based violence, and the suffering and misery that results from wars and conflict.

The continent is committed to remove the barriers that limit the full participation of women and girls in all spheres of society.

### Africa considers withdrawing from the ICC

**AFRICA HAS** adopted a proposal to develop a roadmap for the withdrawal of countries from the Rome Statute, which established the International Criminal Court (ICC), due to the refusal by the international community to consider a review of the functions and operations of the court.

The leaders expressed concern at the manner in which the ICC has conducted itself in relation to African countries. Most cases investigated by the ICC since its establishment in 2002 are in Africa.

Some of the ICC investigations have been in Central African Republic, Cote d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Libya, Mali, Sudan and Uganda.

This has led to allegations levelled against the ICC for double standards amid claims that the court turns a blind eye to allegations of war crimes and genocide committed by the West.

There have been calls for the court to also try former British Prime Minister Tony Blair and former United States President George W. Bush for alleged war crimes in Iraq.



### Zimbabwe passes the AU mantle to Chad; Rwanda to host next Summit

**AFTER SUCCESSFULLY** steering the African integration agenda for the past year, SADC has passed the continental mantle to central Africa.

The immediate past chair of SADC, President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, handed over the AU chair to President Idris Deby of Chad at the 26th AU Summit.

The new chair hailed President Mugabe for his pan-African spirit and commitment to advance Africa’s development agenda during his term at the helm of the AU.

The newly elected bureau of the AU is as follows: Chairperson (Chad); First Vice-Chairperson (Benin); Second Vice-Chairperson (Rwanda); Third Vice-Chairperson (Libya); and Fourth Vice-Chairperson and Rapporteur (Zimbabwe).

The next AU Summit will be held in Rwanda in June/July. The AU summit is held twice a year, with the first in January/February at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia while the second is hosted by another member state.

## UN Security Council reforms – Africa demands action

by Kizito Sikuka

**AFRICA'S POSITION** on the global governance and political system is clear – “reform the United Nations Security Council”.

This common position was reiterated at the 26th African Union (AU) Summit held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, when the continent said the UN Security Council is out of date and out of touch with reality.

For example, the council, which is tasked with the primary duty of maintaining international peace and security, continues to be dominated by a few powerful nations at the expense of the majority.

Of the five permanent members with veto power, none is from Africa yet the continent provides the largest membership of the UN.

The five permanent members are China, France, Russia, United Kingdom and the United States, with three of them (France, Russia, and UK) coming from Europe.

These permanent members have the right to veto, meaning that the council cannot implement any decision if one of the five permanent members objects to it.

In addition, the council is made up of 10 other non-permanent members elected for two-year terms by the UN General Assembly. However, these members do not have veto powers.

A country which is a member of the UN but not of the Security Council may participate or be invited, however without a vote in its discussions when the council considers that interests of the country are affected. Conditions of participation by such a member are set by the council.

This arrangement and structure where some countries are “more important than others” is what Africa and other developing regions want to be reformed.

Furthermore, with global power shifting in recent decades where Africa, for example, is now the fastest emerging continent and China the biggest economy, reforms to the council are more urgent to ensure that the body is in line with new realities and emerging geo-political dynamics.

The council is dominated by a few countries that were victorious in a war fought some 70 years ago, and thus determine every important decision on peace and security in the world.

Africa is the recipient of most declarations on peace and security but continues to be marginalized in influencing such decisions.

Outgoing AU chairperson, President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe said it is time that all countries in the world relate on equal footing as opposed to the current scenario where the majority are being dominated by a few powerful nations.

“If the United Nations is to survive, we must be equal members of it, equal members who can say when we go to the body; that we are now

speaking fully as members with a voice that is understood, respected and honoured,” he said.

Africa's common position on the UN Security Council reforms is clearly contained in the Ezulwini Consensus made in Swaziland in 2005 and adopted the same year at an Extraordinary Session of the Executive Council of the AU in Ethiopia.

Even though the Ezulwini Consensus is based on the idea of regional representation as opposed to the current UN system which focuses on representation of countries on the basis of their individual merit, the adoption of such a consensus by Africa is nevertheless a bold step in the right direction.

A permanent seat for Africa on the UN Security Council would allow the continent to have a voice in all decision-making organs of the UN, setting the stage for the reconstructing of global affairs.

The consensus calls for the need to expand the size of the council from 15 to 26 members, with fair representation for Africa.

“Africa's goal is to be fully represented in all the decision-making organs of the UN, particularly in the Security Council, which is the principal decision-making organ of the UN in matters relating to international peace and security,” reads part of the Ezulwini Consensus.

“Full representation of Africa in the Security Council means not less than two permanent seats with all the prerogatives and privileges of permanent membership including the right of veto, and five non-permanent seats.”

On the issue of the selection of Africa's permanent representatives in the council, the Consensus clearly states that “the question of the criteria for the selection of African members of the Security Council should be a matter for the AU to determine, taking into consideration the representative nature and capacity of those chosen.”

On the five non-permanent seats, the Ezulwini Consensus states that these will rotate between African countries, one for each of the five regions namely North, East, West, Central and South.

While amendment to the UN Charter to effect a reform to the Security Council requires a two-thirds majority out of a total UN membership of 193, some of the five permanent members, particularly France, UK and the US have openly objected to this as they want the status quo to remain the same.

However, similar to the struggle for independence, the drive towards the reform of the UN Security Council is not an easy one.

As aptly put by President Mugabe at the AU Summit, “we will fight for our own identity, for our own integrity and personality as Africans.” *sardc.net* □

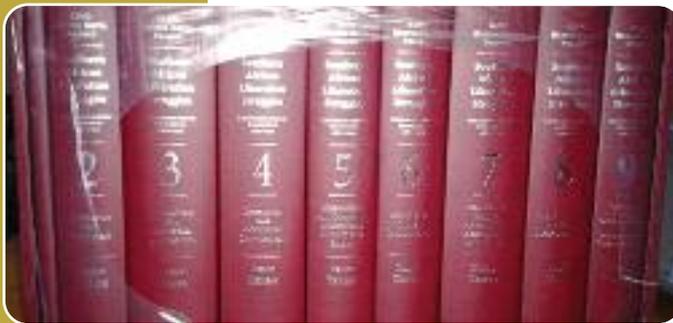
**THE UN** is made up of 193 member states from Africa (53), Asia-Pacific (53), Eastern European Group (23), Western European and Others Group (28), Latin American and Caribbean Group (33). The remaining two members -- the State of Palestine and the Holy See -- are observer states. The UN was formed in 1945 when most of Africa was not represented, and when first reforms were made in 1963, Africa was represented but was not in a particularly strong position as most countries were emerging to independence. The continent is now convinced that the time is now ripe for Africa to influence the proposed UN reforms and reconstruct global affairs.

# SADC presents liberation history p

**SADC PRESENTED** its nine-volume history publication on the liberation struggle in southern Africa to leaders attending the 26th African Union Summit held at end January in Ethiopia.

The presentation of the historical memoir of the liberation struggle in SADC is aimed at making sure that such information is accessible to all citizens of the continent.

The publication consists of nine volumes that document the history of the liberation process in southern Africa that sought to end colonial rule and apartheid in the region.



The publication presents events and stories of Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

In addition to these countries, the research also covers the contributions of countries and organisations outside the SADC region that played a key role in aiding the liberation movements in southern Africa.

The SADC history publication was officially launched at the 34th SADC Summit held in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe in August 2014.

The publication is testament to the commitment, dedication and sacrifice of all those who fought to bring the freedoms enjoyed today in southern Africa.

Late Brigadier General (Retired) Hashim Mbita, who mobilized the research process and was its patron, served as the Executive Secretary of the Liberation Committee of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) from 1972 to until it ended in 1994 with its "mission accomplished. *sadc.int* □

## Nyerere – A symbol of freedom in Africa

**JULIUS NYERERE** "carried the torch that liberated Africa," by providing vision and leadership to the continental Liberation Committee and taking on the greatest load of accommodating liberation fighters in his country, providing them with training, logistical, diplomatic and military support.

Speaking at the national launch of the book *Julius Nyerere, Asante Sana, Thank You Mwalimu*, held in late January in Zimbabwe, the outgoing African Union chairperson and immediate past chair of SADC,

President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, said the continent would not have been the same without the vision and dedication of Nyerere.

The book was presented to leaders at the African Union Summit a few days after the national launch in Zimbabwe.

"Although his country gained independence through the ballot and not the bullet, he stood ready to support an armed struggle when colonialism stopped the independence movement at Tanzania's southern boundary, the Ruvuma River," President Mugabe said in his Foreword to the publication.

"A firm believer in the unity of the people and the continent of Africa, he (Nyerere) first unified his own country through the union of Tanganyika and Zanzibar as the United Republic of Tanzania. And then he set out to support the liberation of the subcontinent, knowing that this new country of Tanzania would never be politically free until the rest of Africa was also free from colonialism and apartheid."

At one time, all of southern Africa's liberation movements had their headquarters



# publication to Africa

in Dar es Salaam, then capital of the United Republic of Tanzania.

In the heady days of the 1960s through the somewhat calmer 1980s, Tanzania was the crossroads of Africa. Almost everyone who was anyone visited Dar es Salaam during those years to meet Nyerere and the leaders of southern Africa's liberation movements.

In his famous address in October 1959 to the Legislative Council, two years before his country's independence, Nyerere made a commitment on behalf of his people, who had not yet reclaimed their own country.

He spoke of lighting a candle on top of Mt Kilimanjaro "which would shine beyond our borders giving hope where there was despair, love where there was hate and dignity where before there was only humiliation."

This was his commitment that independent Tanganyika would fully support the liberation of African countries from colonialism and apartheid, and he did that.

Today all of the countries of the continent, with the exception of Saharawi, are now fully independent.

However, at that time in 1959, when Nyerere made the dedication and commitment to the liberation of the sub-continent and to African unity, only nine countries were independent – Ethiopia, Egypt, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Libya, Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia.

At the continental level, Nyerere was instrumental in the formation of the Pan-African Freedom Movement of East and Central Africa (PAFMECA), one of the precursors to the Organisation of African Unity, now the African Union.

Nyerere was one the fast African leaders to actively establish cooperation with the new People's Republic of China.

At the book launch, President Mugabe said Zimbabwe and the rest of the African continent have benefited immensely from Nyerere's early connections with China, saying "Nyerere's links with China became Zimbabwe's links with China," and later on with the rest of the African continent.

A classic example of China-Africa relations was achieved when China assisted in the construction of the Tanzania-Zambia Railway, popularly known as TAZARA, a process that is well-illustrated in the book.

What was striking about this relationship is that China was poorer than most African countries at that time. Since then, China-Africa relations have continued to grow, leading to the current level of trade and investment on the continent, notably in infrastructure.

China-Africa relations reached new heights in December 2015 at the Johannesburg Summit of the Forum on China Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) held in South Africa, which is a member of the BRICS grouping of emerging economies, made up of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

At the summit, China and Africa took bold steps to strengthen mutual benefits, including a new US\$60 billion Chinese fund to support development on the African continent.

President Mugabe, during his tenure as chairperson of SADC and the AU, urged the continent to do more to honour the Founding Fathers who brought independence to their countries and the region, such as Dr Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, Sir Seretse Khama of Botswana, and Julius Nyerere, the first President of Tanzania and one of the founding fathers of SADC and the OAU.

SADC recognized the contribution of Nyerere when he was honoured as the first person to receive the Sir Seretse Khama SADC Medal, presented to him at a SADC Summit in Angola in 1986.

Nyerere was honoured last year by the African Union, with the naming of the AU Peace and Security headquarters under construction in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, after him.

President Mugabe said at the launch that the publication is "befitting to a great statesman, liberator and pan-Africanist par excellence."

Co-published by the Southern African Research and Documentation Centre; House of Books; African Publishing Group; and the National Gallery of Zimbabwe; as well as Mkukina Nyota publishers in Tanzania, the book is a compilation of historical photographs and statements, with Nyerere as the main writer through his documented speeches.

The national launch of the book *Julius Nyerere, Asante Sana, Thank You Mwalimu*, was hosted by State House in Harare on 27 January, and was attended by government ministers and other top officials, including Tanzania's Ambassador to Zimbabwe Charles Makakala and other SADC ambassadors, the diplomatic community, scholars, researchers, writers and the media.

This followed a successful regional launch of the publication at the 35<sup>th</sup> SADC Summit held in Gaborone, Botswana in August 2015, when the book was shared with SADC leaders. [sardc.net](http://sardc.net) □



Statue of Julius Nyerere in Dodoma, Tanzania



# Kingdom of Lesotho: A test for SADC diplomacy

## Lesotho's long history of political instability

by Phyllis Johnson

**THE KINGDOM** of Lesotho, surrounded by South Africa, has a long history of political instability dating back to independence in October 1966.

Some of Lesotho's challenges arise from being completely surrounded and economically dependent upon its neighbour South Africa, and the internal hostilities post-independence were driven and funded by the apartheid regime, especially during the 1980s, as part of its regional destabilisation agenda to maintain the dependence of neighbouring countries.

Lesotho was providing shelter for members of the African National Congress (ANC) and had an active regional academic presence at the widely respected Institute of Southern African Studies at the National University of Lesotho.

King Moshoeshoe II, father to King Letsie III, was an outspoken opponent of apartheid, and was the first to describe South Africa's restrictive measures as "sanctions against southern Africa".

Lesotho's anti-apartheid stance at the United Nations and the Organisation of African Unity (now African Union) in 1975 increased tensions with South Africa. These mounted as Lesotho refused to recognize South Africa's proclamation of an independent Transkei in 1976.

Relations deteriorated further during 1982-83 in the wake of South African armed raids against the ANC in Lesotho.

The political, economic and military divisions fuelled by apartheid remain a legacy in Lesotho more than 20 years after majority rule was achieved in South Africa in 1994, as is also the case in some other neigh-

bouring countries such as Mozambique.

King Moshoeshoe II was twice forced into short periods of exile in Europe, in 1970 and again in 1990. There were military coups in Lesotho in 1986 and 1991, leading to the military standoff in 1998 and the instability that reaches into the present.

King Moshoeshoe II returned to the throne in 1994 and he died in a motor accident in Lesotho in 1996. His son, the Crown Prince Letsie was selected by the college of chiefs to succeed him.

The country's first multi-party elections in 23 years were held in 1993 and won by the Basotho Congress Party (BCP). The opposition Basotho National Party (BNP) rejected the results.

Army units fought each other in January 1994. By then the transition had begun in apartheid South Africa with majority elections planned for late April. Just before the South African election, rebel troops in Lesotho assassinated Selometsi Baholo, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance who had been kidnapped along with four other cabinet ministers.

This, coupled with unresolved constitutional issues regarding the powers of the king and the tension with the elected government, as well as a three-week wage strike by the police and prison officers, made the country ungovernable. The government appealed for help from the region.

Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe formed a regional task force to look into the disturbances. The initiative was historic and succeeded in containing the crisis, resulting in a truce. However, there were

continued cases of indiscipline within the army.

The tension between the two neighbours began to thaw after 1994 although, as it is completely surrounded by South Africa, Pretoria continues to play a significant role in Maseru's economic and political sphere.

The water supply for the industrial province of Gauteng in South Africa is fed from Lesotho through the Lesotho Highlands Water Project, so Lesotho has a strategic and symbiotic relationship with its larger neighbour.

The BCP leader, Ntsu Mokhehle, formed a new political party in 1997, the Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD), taking with him 40 of the BCP's 64 members of parliament, securing a parliamentary majority and retaining his hold on government.

Opposition parties challenged the action as unconstitutional, but the government remained in power. In early 1998, Mokhehle retired and Pakhalita Mosisili took over as the leader of LCD.

There were tensions around the second general elections since return to civilian rule, held in May 1998, and the Prime Minister again appealed to SADC for assistance. A commission was established, headed by a South African judge, to audit the election but the results were inconclusive.

A combined military task force from South Africa and Botswana entered Lesotho on 22 September 1998 to restore order but met with unexpectedly tough resistance. Under a peace agreement in early October 1998, the government agreed to hold fresh elections in 2000, but reconciliation and peace did not last long.

Post-electoral dissatisfaction resurfaced after elections

in 2007 as the opposition refused to accept the results, plunging the country into another crisis. This resulted in a negotiating team comprising the Heads of Churches in Lesotho and SADC facilitators being put in place by southern African leaders to address the situation.

Intra-party tensions in this period had led to split in the ruling LCD with Mosisili resigning from the party and taking with him several senior officials to form the Democratic Congress (DC).

A SADC-brokered peace deal was agreed in April 2011 following more than two years of talks aimed at finding a lasting solution to the political challenges in the country.

Lesotho now uses a voting system of mixed-member proportional representation which is quite complex, designed to be inclusive and to facilitate deal-making.

Elections held in May 2012 were won by Mosisili with a slight majority of contested constituencies but he failed to gain enough votes to form a government.

Thomas Thabane who served in the LCD government of Mosisili from 1998 to 2006, before forming the All Basotho Convention (ABC), then formed an alliance with other parties and after more than five years in opposition, Thabane was appointed Prime Minister.

Thabane served until March 2015, after calling a snap election for February won by the DC led by his predecessor, Mosisili, who managed to form a coalition government as no party gained an outright majority.

Both leaders changed the army commander when they came to power. □



## Towards long-term peace, stability in the mountain kingdom

by Kizito Sikuka

**SADC IS** committed to finding a lasting solution to the political situation in the Kingdom of Lesotho which has long been wracked by power struggles in Parliament and within the Lesotho Defence Force that threaten peace and security in the country.

Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, President Filipe Nyusi of Mozambique has expressed the region's resolve to assist Lesotho to overcome its challenges and achieve sustainable peace and security.

Stability in Lesotho has for long remained an area of concern for SADC, with the latest case plunging the country into yet another crisis after the killing of the former army chief, General Maaparankoe Mahao in June last year.

Mahao was shot dead by soldiers who had come to arrest him, allegedly for complicity in a mutiny plot against the government of Prime Minister Pakalitha Mosisili.

The incident occurred after Mosisili had again replaced Mahao as army chief with Lieutenant-General Tlali Kamoli.

Mahao was appointed army chief in 2014 by the then Prime Minister, Thomas Thabane, only to be dismissed by Mosisili, who won a snap election in February 2015.

The current army chief, Kamoli, had been dismissed by Thabane in 2014 and later reappointed by Mosisili.

The three-party coalition government that emerged from the elections in 2012, led by Thabane, was expected to bring stability to the country but soon faced challenges, resulting in the latest political crisis in the wake of an alleged coup plot by Lesotho's military on 30 August 2014.

There were allegations that soldiers seized weapons from several police stations and surrounded Thabane's residence



HE Filipe Nyusi  
President of Mozambique

in Maseru. The military denied staging a coup, saying they disarmed police in the capital after getting information that some police were planning to supply arms to participants in a demonstration.

There was little evidence of conflict in Maseru after the incident, but the police had removed their uniforms and wore civilian cloths.

At a meeting between the Troika of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation and the coalition government on 1 September 2014 in Pretoria, South Africa, SADC agreed to send a facilitator to Lesotho to work with the coalition government as they implemented the agreed roadmap.

The meeting reiterated the commitment by all parties to the Windhoek Declaration of July 2014 in which they agreed to work together to restore political stability, stability, peace and security, and law and order in the country.

That political crisis was set off when Thabane, facing a vote of no confidence, had suspended Parliament in June and dismissed the Lesotho Defence Force commander Kennedy Tlali Kamoli, replacing him with Maaparankoe Mahao. His deputy prime minister in the coalition government, Mothetjoa Metsing of LCD, refused to recognize the change in army leadership.

Thabane fled to South Africa, and later returned under guard



HE Pakalitha Mosisili  
Prime Minister of Lesotho

by South African and Namibian police. SADC mediation led by the Deputy President of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa, resulted in the call for an early election. Lesotho's King Letsie III set February 28, 2015, as the date for the election, in which Mosisili regained power through a coalition government. He again replaced the army commander Mahao with Kamoli.

President Nyusi, as Chairperson of the SADC Organ Troika, told a regional consultative meeting convened on the margins of the African Union Summit held in Ethiopia in late January 2016 that Lesotho stood ready to cooperate with SADC in bringing stability to the country.

The first step was realized on 8 February when Lesotho stood by a SADC ruling to table in parliament the report of a Commission of Inquiry appointed by the region to investigate the killing of Mahao, thus making the findings public. Lesotho had earlier refused to do so by launching a legal challenge to the report prepared by a SADC-appointed commission headed by Judge Mphaphi Phumaphi from Botswana.

However, the SADC Double Troika Summit that met in Gaborone, Botswana on 18 January was firm on the ruling and gave Lesotho an ultimatum to table the report in parliament or risk suspension from the 15-member regional grouping.

Prime Minister Mosisili presented the SADC

Commission of Inquiry report on the circumstances surrounding the death of Mahao at the reopening of parliament in February. However, he said that recommendations of the report are not considered binding on his government.

While the report was finally made public, several other issues remain.

One of the recommendations by the commission is that Kamoli be relieved of his duties. Other recommendations include constitutional, public sector and security reforms.

The current government in Lesotho argues that the report is biased, alleging that the commission based its findings on testimony from Thabane and other opposition politicians exiled in South Africa.

The stance by Lesotho to refuse to abide by the recommendations of the SADC commission could be a test for SADC diplomacy.

The Double Troika Summit tasked the Kingdom of Lesotho to prepare a roadmap for the implementation of the constitutional, public sector and security reforms, and submit a progress report to the SADC Heads of State and Government Summit set for August in Swaziland.

The Foreign Minister, Tlohang Sekhamane, briefed President Nyusi in late February on progress made to date.

"We came to thank President Nyusi in his capacity as the chairperson of the SADC Organ, and to update him on what is happening in Lesotho," he said, adding that "we also came here to tell him what we are doing in Lesotho, in compliance with the recommendations of the report of the commission of inquiry on Lesotho, and show him the route for implementing the report."

"Lesotho has been one of the problematic countries within SADC, and we are working hard to remove Lesotho from this list." □

## Southern Africa improves on visa openness

**SOUTHERN AFRICA** has been ranked the third most open sub-region on the African continent which allows the highest number of the world's population into its countries without any visa restrictions.

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) 2015 Visa Openness Report released in early February shows that 29 percent of visitors travelling to the sub-region do not need to have a visa.

However, 71 percent of the world's population need traditional visas to visit countries in southern Africa.

The report states that southern African destinations have also facilitated travel for citizens from Northern and West-

ern Europe. The citizens from these two sub-regions do not require visas when travelling to most southern African countries.

The SADC region has been taking measures to promote tourism through the introduction of a UniVisa which would facilitate smooth entry for regional and international visitors, especially within Trans Frontier Conservation Areas.

There have been a number of hurdles that have stalled the progress of the UniVisa since the SADC Protocol on the development of tourism, signed in 1998.

However, Zimbabwe and Zambia officially launched the Kavango-Zambezi (KAZA) Visa in November 2014, marking the first phase of a four-stage process. *Southern Times* □

## Mauritius a critical part of the Maritime Silk Road

**CHINA CONSIDERS** Mauritius to be a key player in the new policy of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road owing to the country's strategic location in the Indian Ocean.

The Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs, Wang Yi, said this during a courtesy call on the Prime Minister of Mauri-

tius, Sir Anerood Jugnauth, in early February.

The two governments expressed commitment towards strengthening relations, and view Mauritius as a critical gateway to Africa.

The Maritime Silk Road is an ancient network of trade routes that were central to cultural and trade interaction connecting China and India to Africa and through to the Mediterranean Sea.

Chinese President Xi Jinping announced in March 2015 that China's vision of the future was presented in a new policy framework titled "Visions and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road."

Collectively known as "Belt and Road", this is a development policy with a holistic vision of economic, political and security development to reach out and initiate action to jointly build a new world order that is development-oriented, with mutual prosperity as its goal, and human security at its heart.

The initiative will establish new routes linking Asia, Africa and Europe. It has two parts — a new "Silk Road Economic Belt" linking China to Europe through Central Asia; and the "Maritime Silk Road" that links China's ports with the African coast and through Suez to Europe.

China's vision for the overland Silk Road Economic Belt, and the Maritime Silk Road by sea has the potential to change the world political and economic landscape through rapid development of infrastructure and transport corridors of countries along the routes, and the emphasis is on "joint". □

## Mauritius to introduce SME development scheme

**MAURITIUS IS** set to introduce a scheme for the development of small enterprises as part of a programme to promote their participation in the economy.

Under the scheme, eligible Small-to-Medium Enterprises would be granted a SME Development Certificate. Holders of such a certificate would be eligible for incentives and facilities such as income tax holidays for the first eight years of operation and other tax concessions.

The scheme also provides for a special grant for training, consultancy, financial management, feasibility study and technical assistance. The grant will be 10 percent of the project value, up to a maximum of US\$4,213.

*Mauritius Government Information Service* □

## Zimbabwe to curb illicit financial flows

**ZIMBABWE HAS** put in place stringent prudential measures to plug illicit financial flows, as it emerged that close to US\$2 billion was siphoned out of the country in 2015 by individuals and companies, worsening the liquidity situation.

The new measures announced by the Governor of the Reserve Bank in his monetary policy statement in January include wider use of debit cards, reporting of suspicious transactions, and removal of the concept of free funds.

A customer who wants to withdraw above \$10,000 will now be required to give the bank reasonable notice of at least one day.

The Governor, John Mangudya, said US\$864 million was externalised in 2015 by individuals under the designation of free funds that were used for various unwarranted purposes that included remittance of donations to oneself,

offshore investments and externalisation of export sales proceeds by corporates through individual accounts leading to pervasive tax evasion and externalisation.

A total of US\$1.2 billion was externalised by companies in the form of export proceeds, high management and expert fees.

It is estimated that Africa has lost more than US\$1.8 trillion to Illicit Financial Flows (IFF) between 1970 and 2008, and continues to lose resources valued at up to US\$150 billion annually through IFF or "illicit capital flight", mainly through tax evasion, and mispricing of goods and services by multi-national companies, according to a recent study commissioned by the African Union.

This means that resources intended to develop Africa are being used elsewhere to improve the economies of other countries in Europe, Asia and the US. □

## February - April 2016



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**February**  
11, South Africa

**SOLTRAIN Conference**

The conference will discuss results of the Southern African Solar Thermal Training and Demonstration Initiative (SOLTRAIN), a regional initiative on capacity building and demonstration of solar water heaters in the SADC region. The project is being implemented in Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe, with support of the Austrian Development Agency.

15-16,  
Zimbabwe

**ZAMCOM Partners Meeting**

The objective of the meeting is to establish the Basin-wide Stakeholder's Coordination Committee for the Zambezi Watercourse Commission as well as to discuss areas of cooperation with partners.

16-17,  
South Africa

**Africa Energy Indaba 2016**

The indaba will bring together international and continental experts to share insights into and solutions to Africa's energy challenges while simultaneously exploring the vast energy development opportunities on offer on the continent.

18-19,  
Zimbabwe

**Honouring Mwalimu Julius Nyerere**

The Southern African Research and Documentation Centre will hold several events in Harare to honour the legacy of its Founding Patron, former Chairman of the Frontline States and founding President of the United Republic of Tanzania. Julius Nyerere. These include a public lecture titled "Mwalimu Nyerere: His Pan-African Concept and Legacy", and the naming of SARDC buildings as Julius K. Nyerere House. Former Tanzania President Benjamin Mkapa is guest of honour at both events.

25, Botswana

**ZAMCOM Council of Ministers Meeting**

The 3rd meeting of the Zambezi Watercourse Commission Council of Ministers is expected to discuss progress of various activities being implemented by the ZAMCOM Secretariat based in Zimbabwe. Ministers are expected to consider and approve the ZAMCOM work plan and budget for 2016/17. Council will be preceded by a meeting of the Zambezi Technical Committee on 23 February.

**March**  
9, Botswana

**SADC Energy Thematic Group**

The Energy Thematic Group is a coordination meeting of cooperating partners, experts, SADC and its subsidiary organizations to discuss ways of assisting the region in tackling its energy challenges.

14-15,  
Botswana

**SADC Council of Ministers**

The SADC Council of Ministers is responsible for supervising and monitoring the functions and development of SADC and ensuring that policies are properly implemented. The ministers are expected to discuss implementation of priorities outlined in the Revised Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan 2015-2020 as well as finalisation of the Industrialization Action Plan.

31, Tanzania

**Southern African Power Pool**

The 40th meeting of the SAPP Executive Council will be attended by chief executive officers and managing directors of the 12 member utilities who will review progress on the attainment of goals towards integrating the regional power generation and distribution networks, and review the current electricity situation in the region.

27 March-  
1 April, Ethiopia

**AU Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance**

The theme for the conference is "Exploring the Synergies between the African and the Global Development Agenda" and builds on recommendations from the decisions of the African Union Summit on the need to fast track the implementation of its Agenda 2063, including flagship projects.

**April**  
11, Ghana

**12th CAADP Partnership Platform**

To be held under the theme "Financing African Agriculture and Implementation Support for Accelerated Agriculture Growth and Transformation", the platform will reflect on African socio-economic development strategies to stimulate agriculture-led growth and country commitment to put agriculture at the top of national development agendas and attract increased investment and financing for agriculture.

25 years



## 25 years Since SADC approved restructuring exercise

**MARCH 2016** marks 25 years since SADC approved a proposal to overhaul the organization's structures to improve its ability to mobilize resources as well as enhance its operational performance.

Heads of State and Government met during an Extraordinary SADC Summit in Windhoek, Namibia, in March 2001 to approve a radical restructuring of SADC institutions to "squarely face the daunting regional and global challenges".

Ministerial consultations during the previous year had proposed the restructuring and centralization of SADC functions, from 21 sectors based in 14 countries into four core clusters of sectors to be located at the SADC headquarters in Gaborone, Botswana.

The 21 sectors dealt with a diverse range of development issues from health, environment and mining to trade, tourism and investment.

The proposal was adopted by Heads of State with little change, setting SADC on course to streamline the Secretariat rapidly into four directorates, as follows:

- Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment (TIFI);
- Infrastructure and Services (I&S);
- Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources (FANR); and
- Social and Human Development and Special Programmes.

The changes were to be implemented over the next two years, beginning with the TIFI Directorate that was to be established by August 2001, and the FANR Directorate by the end of that year. The other two directorates were expected to be functional by the end of 2002.

The then SADC chairperson and Namibia's founding father, former President Sam Nujoma, said the restructuring exercise would be tested against results in terms of "greater unity, increased and meaningful economic integration as well as economic competitiveness in the global market place."

"These will be the yardsticks that will measure our successes or failures," he said in an address to the Extraordinary Summit.

The Summit also agreed to create the Department of Strategic Planning, Gender and Development and Policy Harmonization to strengthen the Secretariat in executing these functions and to serve as a think tank for community-building, regional integration and development.

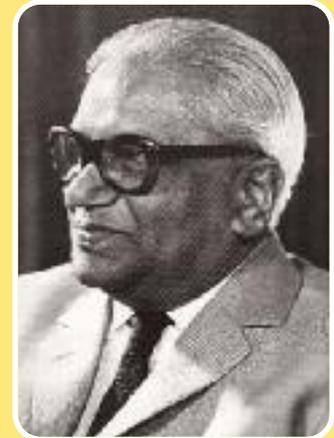
Changes at the top included more frequent meetings of controlling bodies, formalization of a troika system of control at the levels of Heads of State, Council of Ministers and senior officials, and the extension of the structure to bring the Organ on Politics, Defence, Security Cooperation into the mainstream of SADC.

## March – special month for Mauritius

**THE MONTH** of March occupies an important place in the history of Mauritius as it contains special dates of significance to the Indian Ocean island state.

The first date of significance was 24 March 1968 when Mauritius became an independent state, with Elizabeth II as Queen of Mauritius, represented as head of state by the governor-general. In December 1991, the Constitution was amended to make Mauritius a republic within the Commonwealth. Mauritius became a republic on 12 March 1992, with the last Governor General, Sir Veerasamy Ringadoo, as interim president.

The person credited with leading the independence movement was Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, who served as the first Chief Minister and Prime Minister of Mauritius. As leader of the Labour Party, Ramgoolam fought for the rights of labourers and led Mauritius to independence in 1968. As the first Prime Minister, he played a crucial role in shaping the political culture and foreign policy of modern Mauritius.



Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam

## PUBLIC HOLIDAYS IN SADC

February – April 2016

1 February	Abolition of Slavery Day	Mauritius
3 February	Thaipoozam Cavadee	Mauritius
3 February	Heroes Day	Mozambique
4 February	National Armed Struggle Day	Angola
9 February	Carnival	Angola
3 March	Martyrs Day	Malawi
7 March	MahaShivaratree	Mauritius
8 March	Women's Day	Angola, Zambia
11 March	Moshoeshoe's Day	Lesotho
12 March	National Day	Mauritius
	Youth Day	Zambia
21 March	Independence Day	Namibia
	Human Rights Day	South Africa
25 March	Good Friday	Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe
26 March	Holy Saturday	Malawi, Seychelles, Zambia
28 March	Easter Monday	Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe
29 March	Martyrs Day	Madagascar
4 April	Peace and Reconciliation Day	Angola
7 April	Sheikh Abeid Karume Day	Tanzania
	Women's Day	Mozambique
8 April	Ougadi	Mauritius
18 April	Independence Day	Zimbabwe
19 April	King's Birthday	Swaziland
25 April	National Flag Day	Swaziland
26 April	Union Day	Tanzania
27 April	Freedom Day	South Africa