SOUTHERN AFRICA TODAY

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2013 Year of regional development

SADC gender protocol enters into force, see pg 13

by Joseph Ngwawi

THE YEAR 2013 holds the key to several important regional milestones, including the implementation of an ambitious programme to develop cross-border infrastructure and the conclusion of electoral processes leading to polls in two SADC Member States, as well as entering into force of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development.

The ongoing effort by SADC to address the deteriorating security situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is also likely to dominate the regional agenda this year.

The Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan will lead future cooperation and planning, which is essential for attracting investment into the SADC region and promoting intra-and inter-regional trade as well as foreign direct investment.

Estimated to cost US$500 billion, the master plan will guide SADC's implementation of trans-boundary infrastructure networks that are coordinated and integrated in the six priority sectors of energy, transport, tourism, information technology, meteorology and water.

An infrastructure investment conference in April or May this year is expected to attract potential investors, with road shows in Asia, Europe and the United States.

A significant challenge for 2013 is that it is the final year before the 2014 target set by regional power utilities for balancing electricity supply and demand.

The region has been experiencing a power deficit in recent years due to growing demand against limited expansion in generation capacity.

Almost all SADC member states have embarked on projects to boost their electricity generation capacity, in initiatives ranging from conventional infrastructure projects to innovations, and short term to long term plans.

According to the Southern African Power Pool, which groups power utilities from 12 SADC member states, the electricity deficit will be erased by 2014, provided that planned generation projects are implemented on time.

In this regard, the year 2013 provides SADC member states with an opportunity to intensify their implementation ahead of the 2014 target.

A main challenge to regional development in 2013, in addition to the uncertain global financial environment, is the conflict in eastern DRC where anti-government rebels have threatened to march on Kinshasa, the capital of the vast, mineral-rich country.

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2013
Year of regional development

The conflict in eastern DRC has generated a massive humanitarian crisis, with serious implications for regional integration and socio-economic development.

SADC leaders held an extraordinary summit in Maputo in February to discuss the security situation in eastern DRC following a Troika summit in Dar es Salaam in January when the SADC Chairperson, President Armando Guebuza of Mozambique, met with the three leaders who form the Troika of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation.

Nine SADC Member States have pledged to contribute troops to a Neutral International Force (NIF) to be deployed in the DRC – Angola, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

SADC leaders have urged the African Union Commission, SADC and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region to urgently engage the United Nations on the deployment of the NIF in eastern DRC. (see page 7)

2013 is also the year when the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development entered into force following ratification by two-thirds of the Member States.

Ten SADC member states ratified this agreement and there is quantifiable progress at various levels in all member states toward the equality and empowerment of women alongside men in southern Africa. The regional target is gender parity – 50:50 by 2015.

With regard to political situation in the region, long-awaited elections in Madagascar are scheduled for this year and are expected to end a protracted political dispute in the Indian Ocean Island.

The first round of Madagascar's presidential elections is scheduled for 8 May, with a second round set for 3 July. The Malagasy president is elected by majority vote through a two-round system to serve a five-year term.

The Independent National Election Commission of the Transition has said that parliamentary elections will be held concurrently with the second round of the presidential vote on 3 July, with municipal elections tentatively set for 23 October.

Madagascar's political parties signed a roadmap in 2011 in an agreement brokered by SADC mediators, which allowed for the unconditional return from exile of former president Marc Ravalomanana, who was deposed in 2009 in a coup led by opposition leader Andry Rajoelina.

Ravalomanana, who is exiled in South Africa, announced in December 2012 that he will not stand for election and urged his rival to follow suit. SADC leaders announced in January that Rajoelina has also agreed not to stand in the elections.

Another important milestone is the anticipated end of the process to develop a new constitution in Zimbabwe and the holding of general elections this year.

SADC, represented by South African President Jacob Zuma, is facilitating the process of implementation of the Global Political Agreement (GPA) in Zimbabwe, but the closure has been delayed by the lengthy process of drafting a new Constitution to replace the one inherited at Independence in 1980, following the Lancaster House agreement.

The parties to the GPA and parliament have approved the draft Constitution, and this will be put to a referendum on 16 March. The referendum, regardless of its outcome, will be followed later by general elections.

In addition to the polls in Madagascar and Zimbabwe, local government and parliamentary elections are expected in Mozambique and Swaziland, respectively.

This year is also expected to mark the conclusion of the first phase of negotiations on the establishment of the Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA) involving the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), East African Community (EAC) and SADC.

The Tripartite Trade Negotiation Forum involving the three regional economic communities completed the preparatory phase of negotiations in 2012 and has proceeded to the next phase.

Negotiations for the TFTA will be conducted in three phases – preparatory phase, phase one and phase two. The preparatory phase mainly involved the exchange of relevant information, including tariffs applicable in each country as well as trade data and measures.

Phase one negotiations will cover core FTA issues of tariff liberalization, rules of origin, customs procedures and simplification of customs documentation. Facilitating movement of business persons within the region will be negotiated in parallel with phase one.

According to the roadmap adopted at the second joint COMESA-EAC-SADC Summit in June 2011, all negotiations for the so-called Grand FTA should be completed within 36 months. COMESA, EAC and SADC are expected to launch the single FTA by 2016. ❐

Council of Ministers to discuss 2013 work programme

THE SADC Council of Ministers is expected to meet in Mozambique in March to discuss the policy programme for 2013.

The Council is responsible for supervising and monitoring the functions and development of SADC and ensuring that policies are properly implemented.

It meets twice a year to deliberate on institutional matters, including approving yearly budgets and strategic plans for implementation by the SADC Secretariat based on Botswana.

The ministers, usually responsible for foreign affairs, international cooperation, economic development, planning or finance, meet again on the eve of Summit in August/September to prepare policy recommendations for SADC Heads of State and Government.

In Mozambique, Council will assess progress on a number of decisions taken so far such as the mid-term review of the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP), the region's 15-year development blueprint.

The review, which started in 2012 and is expected to be completed this year, is expected to result in the development of a focussed work programme that would enhance regional integration.

Council is also expected to discuss an improved draft SADC Communications Strategy that will incorporate a clear implementation business plan and set timeframes. ❐

RISDP review to be finalised in 2013

AN INDEPENDENT review of the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) is expected to be completed this year, paving the way for the region to deepen integration and tackle other emerging issues such as climate change and global development.

The RISDP is a 15-year strategic roadmap set by Member States as a blueprint for regional development and integration. It was approved by the SADC Heads of State and Government Summit in 2003, and its effective implementation began in 2005 and will run until 2020.

The plan, being implemented in five-year phases, provides Member States with a consistent and comprehensive programme of long-term economic and social policies.

The review follows a desk assessment of the RISDP by the SADC Secretariat in 2011.

The Zimbabwe-based Trade and Development Studies Centre (TRADES Centre) is conducting the independent review which began in 2012.

The review should enable Member States and external stakeholders from civil society, private sectors and others to reflect on the key issues that should become priorities in the next phase of implementation.

In this regard, the review provides SADC with an opportunity to boldly tackle some fundamental issues, keeping in mind that the RISDP is a strategic plan, and not a legally binding instrument.

It also provides the SADC Secretariat and its subsidiary institutions with insight into SADC-approved economic and social policies and priorities. The RISDP sets out the SADC priorities as follows:

- Sustainable peace and security in the region;
- Trade liberalization and economic development;
- Infrastructure development to support regional integration;
- Sustainable food security;
- HIV and AIDS; and,
- Crosscutting issues of skills development, gender equality, science and technology, private sector development, environment and sustainable development.

The independent review is also expected to tackle other emerging issues such as climate change, poverty and global development.

"We welcome the review, taking into account changing regional and global developments," Trudi Hartzenberg, executive director of Trade and Law Centre, said at a regional development workshop held in Harare, Zimbabwe.

"The review provides an opportunity to consider the commitment of Member States to fundamental rules-based governance; focusing on how to deal with the challenges of non-compliance and ensuring a dispute resolution regime which is essential in rules-based governance," she said.

A robust review of the RISDP would also allow SADC to develop an agenda that is appropriate for the 21st century, providing a policy, legal and institutional framework for decisions by economic actors that enhance their competitiveness and contribute to addressing fundamental development challenges such as unemployment and poverty.

Some of the SADC milestones set out in the RISDP include the attainment of the SADC Free Trade Area (FTA) by 2008, the Common Market by 2015, Monetary Union by 2016, and Single Currency by 2018.

SADC successfully launched its FTA in 2008 and this milestone has contributed to improving intra-regional trade. Preparations are underway to facilitate the establishment of other milestones.

The RISDP also re-affirms the commitment of SADC Member States to good, political, economic and corporate governance entrenched in a culture of democracy, participation by civil society, transparency and respect for the rule of law.

The ultimate objective of the plan is to deepen the integration agenda of SADC with a view to accelerating poverty eradication and the attainment of other economic and non-economic development goals.

The desk assessment conducted by the SADC Secretariat based on the RISDP Implementation Framework 2005-2010 found out that there was "satisfactory levels of RISDP implementation" over the past five years.

The assessments noted that all sectors were able to either fully or partially reach most of the different outputs and targets within the stated timeframe.

The review indicated some significant progress on Infrastructure and Services, with about 60 percent of all outputs having been fully achieved, and 40 percent partially achieved.

With regard to Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources (FANR), about 64 percent of the output targets had been fully achieved, 28 percent partially achieved and eight percent had not been achieved.

While the desk assessment has provided an overview of the implementation status of the different sectors outlined in the RISDP, a broader assessment that involves all key stakeholders in the Member States is expected to provide a more comprehensive analysis. ❒

KEY FINDINGS of the RISDP desk assessment by the SADC Secretariat include the following:

- **Fostering implementation by Member States –** Increased advocacy and technical assistance are needed to facilitate domestication and implementation of these frameworks in order to achieve the impact of regional integration.
- **Effective structures for cooperation by the Secretariat and Member State –** Suitable tools and procedures are needed to ensure that Member States are able to provide feedback of regional interests.
- **Realistic targets and ongoing RISDP evaluation –** Targets must be realistic in the formulation of policies, strategies and implementation frameworks.
- **Lack of human, financial and technical resources at SADC Secretariat –** Member States are encouraged to adequately fund all interventions, including research and extension, as these are currently over-dependent on International Cooperating Partners.
- **Fostering monitoring and evaluation –** Baselines are needed in diverse areas of cooperation to measure impact of regional programmes.
- **Mainstreaming crosscutting issues –** Effective structures are needed to take responsibility for mainstreaming the crosscutting issues into all programmes.
- **Improve think-tank capacity of Secretariat –** The Secretariat should be enabled to provide more strategic and long-term advice to Member States.
- **SADC as platform for common Pan-African and global positions –** Greater collaboration is needed among regional institutions to facilitate effective and efficient implementation of joint positions and activities. ❒

BRICS and Africa – Partnerships for Integration and Industrialization

SOUTH AFRICA will host the 5th BRICS Summit in March under the theme "BRICS and Africa – partnerships for integration and industrialization."

The BRICS group of emerging economies, comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, is regarded as having the fastest emerging markets in the world.

Studies show that by the year 2050 the combined economies of BRICS could eclipse the combined economies of the current richest countries of the world.

The summit set for 26-27 March is expected to deliberate on a number of issues to promote partnership between BRICS countries and Africa.

Key focus areas for the summit are:

- Promotion of African infrastructure development;
- Establishment of a BRICS-led development bank;
- Establishment of a BRICS think tank; and,
- Creation of a BRICS business council.

South Africa's deputy minister for International Relations and Cooperation, Ebrahim Ebrahim, said preparations are progressing well to ensure South Africa hosts a successful summit.

He said for the first time, the summit will include a dialogue between BRICS leaders and African Heads of State and Government from the eight Regional Economic Communities (RECs) on the continent.

Economic analysts have pointed out that South Africa has more to benefit from BRICS if the country represents the interests of Africa.

South Africa has an economy of about US$290 billion – the smallest of the BRICS nations and less than a quarter of that of Russia.

Its population is estimated at about 49 million compared to China's 1.3 billion, India's 1.2 billion, Brazil's 191 million, and Russia's 142 million.

Regardless of the size, South Africa is in a unique position to influence African economic growth and investment. Africa's combined Gross Domestic Product is similar to that of Brazil and Russia, and slightly above that of India.

Being the only country on the continent in this grouping of emerging markets, South Africa can thus act as a gateway to southern Africa and the entire African continent.

BRICS countries are individually making inroads into Africa and have already seen increased trade and investment, particularly Brazil, China and India.

The BRICS summit is held each year and hosting rotates among member states. The last summit was held in India in 2012.

The BRICS mechanism aims to achieve peace, security, development and cooperation. It also seeks to contribute significantly to the development of humanity and establish a more equitable and fair world. ❐

SADC to launch a Customs Union in 2013

SOUTHERN AFRICA is making efforts to launch its long-awaited SADC Customs Union in 2013 in a bid to deepen regional integration and consolidate socio-economic development.

The target for the establishment of a Customs Union was originally set for 2010. However, due to unforeseen challenges, the date was shelved to allow Member States more time to consolidate the implementation and gains of the Free Trade Area (FTA) launched in 2008.

"Due to capacity constraints within the SADC Secretariat, the implementation of the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan started late, meaning this milestone [SADC Customs Union] has not yet attained," SADC says on its website.

"However, it is anticipated that that the establishment of the SADC Customs Union will be reached by 2013."

A Customs Union is an advanced stage of integration when compared to a FTA as it does not require tariffs or quotas on goods originating from within the region.

The delays in the implementation of the SADC Customs Union mean that some of the programmes planned by SADC to deepen economic integration may be affected.

The milestones include launch of the SADC Common Market, which was set for 2015 and the Monetary Union set for 2018. ❐

Rail link to streamline SADC trade

FIVE SADC countries are planning to coordinate their rail services to increase trade through the port of Durban, South Africa.

Railway companies from Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe will use their existing rail infrastructure to facilitate transport to the Indian Ocean port.

The head of international business at Transnet Freight Rail, Nyameka Madikizela, said the main objective is to "align the five railway lines towards a unified railway system on the North-South Corridor by establishing a Joint Operating Centre in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe." ❐

Above-normal rainfall forecast for southern Africa

SOUTHERN AFRICAN climate experts have forecast normal to above-normal rainfall in most parts of the region during the period January to May 2013.

The rainfall outlook was prepared by climate scientists from national meteorological and hydrological services within the SADC region as well as the SADC Drought Monitoring Centre and the International Research Institute for Climate and Society.

The 16th Southern Africa Regional Climate Outlook Forum for Mid-Season Update, which met in Zambia recently, divided the period into three monthly outlooks, namely January to March, February to April, and March to May.

Most of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), northernmost Angola and southernmost Madagascar are expected to receive normal to below-normal total rainfall in the January to March period.

During February to April, only north-eastern Tanzania is forecast to experience normal to below-normal rainfall while the rest of the region is expected to receive normal to above-normal rainfall.

A similar pattern is forecast for March to May, with most parts of the region expected to receive normal to above-normal rainfall, except for the extreme north-western parts of the DRC where normal to below-normal rainfall is expected.

Above-normal rainfall is defined as lying within the wettest third of average recorded rainfall amounts during the 30-year period between 1971 and 2000, while below-normal is within the driest third of rainfall amounts, and normal rainfall is the middle third.

The scientists also considered that El Nino-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) is going to be in a neutral phase which is projected to persist into early 2013.

El Nino is a weather condition that begins with the warming of the waters in the Western Pacific Ocean and eventually affects the global climate.

The natural warming events alter weather patterns worldwide, usually causing droughts in southern Africa or contributing to their severity.

The regional outlook provides a first case scenario of the seasonal outlook process which then requires a localized review by national meteorological departments before it can be finalised.

Users are therefore strongly advised to contact the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services for interpretation of what normal to above-normal would mean in terms of rainfall amount, when to plant, updates and other additional guidance.

It is also relevant only to seasonal timescales and relatively large areas, and may not fully account for all factors that influence regional and national climate variability, such as local and month-to-month variations. ❒

SADC opposes tobacco ban

SOUTHERN AFRICAN countries have been urged to oppose the World Health Organisation (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.

The Association of SADC Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ASCCI) says the WHO-FCTC has not fully considered the wellbeing of farming communities in tobacco-producing countries.

WHO-FCTC Article 17 and 18, which deal with tobacco farming, seek to force farmers to phase out tobacco growing to alternative crops such as food crops, whether or not demand for tobacco continues.

Other measures proposed by the WHO-FCTC include the reduction of the area allocated to tobacco farming, a ban on financial and technical support for tobacco farmers, and the dismantling of all bodies connecting tobacco growers with governments.

ASCCI President Oswell Binha said southern Africa could not understate the importance of the tobacco crop in the region.

"Millions of people in the SADC region are reliant on the tobacco crop for their livelihoods... any guidelines to transition farmers out of tobacco must be underpinned by proven scientific evidence as well as direct consultation with farmers who will be most affected.

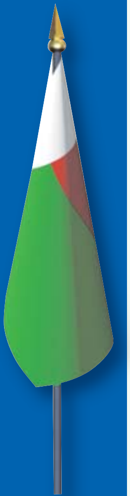
"Furthermore, we believe that attempts to impose uniform measures or set values on taxes for all countries undermine the sovereign right of countries to establish and collect taxes in accordance with their national needs and interests," said Binha.

According to a recent study by the Tobacco Institute of Southern Africa, tobacco is an important contributor to most economies in the region, with about 1.1 million acres under tobacco production. The sector employs close to four million people in the region.

All SADC Member States are parties to the WHO-FCTC, except Malawi and Zimbabwe. ❒

Madagascar

Towards peace, stability



THE TWO main political rivals in Madagascar have resolved not to stand in presidential elections set for May amid regional and international pressure to give the island nation a fresh start after four years of constitutional crisis.

Andry Rajoelina, President of the Transition in Madagascar, and former president Marc Ravalomanana have both said they will not stand in the forthcoming presidential elections.

This follows pressure from SADC and the African Union for the two rivals to stand aside to prevent any repeat of the turmoil that arose from a 2009 coup that brought Rajoelina to power.

"I will not stand in the presidential elections. I prefer to sacrifice myself rather than sacrifice 22 million Malagasy people. We want peace," Rajoelina said in a speech in January.

Ravalomanana had announced in December 2012 that he will not stand again, saying he wants the country to rebuild itself.

The Troika of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, meeting at an extraordinary summit in the United Republic of Tanzania in December 2012, welcomed the decision by Rajoelina and Ravalomanana not to contest in the presidential elections "as a way forward towards resolving this crisis."

The Troika also proposed that the Rajoelina administration should pass an amnesty law to allow Ravalomanana to return to the country before the elections.

The former president was sentenced to life imprisonment with hard labour in 2010 for his part in the deaths of about 30 protesters during the riots leading up to his unconstitutional removal.

Madagascar slid into political turmoil in March 2009 when the then opposition leader Rajoelina seized power from Ravalomanana in a public demonstration backed by the military.

The coup was similar to the method used by Ravalomanana when he seized power a few years earlier from his predecessor, Didier Ratsiraka.

SADC-led mediation efforts have seen both leaders, together with two other former Malagasy presidents including Ratsiraka, agreeing to set up a transitional government to govern the country until fresh elections are held. ❐

SADC Organ Troika - Declaration on Madagascar

RECALLING ALL the decisions taken by the SADC Summits of Heads of State and Government on the political situation in Madagascar;

Recognizing the need of preserving the interests of the Malagasy people;

Reaffirming:

(i) that the Roadmap remains the only viable mechanism for ending the crisis in Madagascar;

(ii) Further our commitment to help the Malagasy people put an end to the political crisis in Madagascar and return the country to constitutional normalcy;

(iii) the need of respecting the electoral calendar as adopted by the National Independent Electoral Commission of the Transition (CENIT) and the United Nations (UN).

We, Presidents Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete (of the United Republic of Tanzania), Hifikepunye Pohamba (of the Republic of Namibia), and Jacob Gedleyihlekisa Zuma (of the Republic of South Africa) of the SADC Organ Troika and President Armando Emilio Guebuza, (of the Republic of Mozambique), Chairperson of SADC, hereby decide as follows:

1. Welcome and commend the undertaking made by H.E. Andry Rajoelina, President of Transition in Madagascar and H.E. Marc Ravalomanana, former President of Madagascar to the effect that they will not stand for the forthcoming Presidential and Parliamentary elections;

2. Urge the Malagasy people to promote the spirit of reconciliation, peace and stability and to refrain from all acts of destabilization in the country;

3. Also urge the Malagasy political stakeholders to assume their responsibility of peacefully delivering Madagascar out of the crisis;

4. Reiterate that Government Members should resign from office sixty (60) days before the election date, should they decide to run for the legislative and/or presidential elections as provided for in Article 14 of the Roadmap;

5. Also reiterate that "the President, the Government, the Heads of Institutions and the entire administrative machinery of the Transition shall remain neutral during the transition period, particularly in the electoral process" (Article 15 of the Roadmap);

6. Further reiterate the SADC endorsement of the electoral calendar of the Presidential and Parliamentary Elections scheduled for May and July 2013;

7. Call upon the Malagasy Parliament of Transition to enact legislation to grant comprehensive amnesty to H.E. Andry Rajoelina, President of the Transition in Madagascar and H.E. Marc Ravalomanana, former President of Madagascar. This amnesty should also be extended to the Malagasy security forces;

8. Urge the Malagasy Parliament of Transition to enact legislation on status of former Malagasy Presidents. This legislation should include relevant privileges and immunities;

9. SADC leadership and the SADC Mediator on Madagascar will continue to be seized with the matter.

Done in Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania, 10 January 2013 ❐

SADC pledges troops to DRC

SADC HEADS of State and Government have called for a peaceful and durable resolution of the conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo and have pledged to contribute troops to be deployed for this purpose.

The conflict in eastern DRC is a major setback to regional integration and development that impacts on all countries in southern Africa, hence SADC leaders have decided that collective efforts are needed to address the situation.

Nine SADC Member States have agreed to contribute troops to the Neutral International Force (NIF) - Angola, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

South Africa has offered to provide logistical support to the NIF, while Tanzania has offered to provide a Force Commander for the NIF.

Other contributions by Member States or the international community to the NIF are yet to be announced, and once all the logistics are clear, SADC is expected to deploy its force in eastern DRC.

The SADC Extraordinary Summit of the Heads of State and Government, meeting in Maputo, Mozambique in early February, said deployment of troops in eastern DRC would be done in close collaboration with the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR).

Five SADC Member States are also members of the ICGLR, including DRC, as well as Angola, Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia.

The SADC Extraordinary Summit urged the African Union and SADC/ICGLR "to urgently engage the United Nations on the deployment of NIF in eastern DRC," and commended the UN Secretary General for the proposed Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the eastern part DRC and the Region.

The NIF is expected to maintain and preserve peace, and ensure the destabilization does not spread to other parts of the country and the region.

According to the Tanzanian President, Jakaya Kikwete, who chairs the Troika of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, the actual size of the contribution from each country that has pledged is yet to be determined "as there are matters which are being worked upon especially on who will be doing what in DRC. These include matters such as logistics."

The Organ Troika Summit held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in January, and attended also by the SADC Chairperson, welcomed "UN support for the deployment of the NIF through the proposed UN Framework Concept for an Intervention Brigade in the eastern DRC and expressed its readiness to work with UN."

The Troika Summit reiterated its call for "urgent attention to the grave humanitarian situation in the Eastern DRC."

South African President Jacob Zuma, who is a member of the SADC Organ Troika, said

"Part of the reason why we should have the Neutral International Force is to prevent those outside forces that enter into the DRC and cause the trouble there."

Last year, SADC leaders formally accused Rwanda of supporting the rebels and the SADC Chairperson, President Armando Guebuza of Mozambique, visited Rwanda for discussions with President Paul Kagame.

The DRC slid into political turmoil early last year and escalated in November when anti-government rebels calling themselves the March 23 movement invaded and captured the city of Goma, causing displacement of people and loss of lives and property.

The rebels have since threatened to march on Kinshasa, the capital of the vast, mineral-rich country.

SADC has demanded the cessation of hostilities, and called for peaceful and durable resolution of the conflict, saying it can be resolved through collective dialogue.

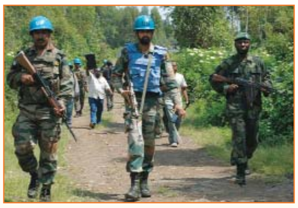
SADC leaders meeting at Summit last year in August 2012 noted that the disturbance in DRC is being perpetrated by rebel groups with assistance of Rwanda and urged that country to cease immediately its interference "that constitutes a threat to peace and stability, not only of the DRC, but also of the SADC region." ❒

UN to approve peacekeeping force to DRC

THE UNITED Nations is considering support for the deployment of a peacekeeping force to the Democratic Republic of Congo.

UN peacekeeping chief Herve Ladsous said an agreement to deploy an intervention brigade would be signed soon, adding the force would be sent to the eastern DRC to "neutralize" armed militias.

He said helicopters and "drones" would be used to maintain peace and stability in the country, although neighbouring countries including



Rwanda have rejected the use of the electronic surveillance aircraft known as drones.

The UN wants to use the drones, developed and manufactured in the United States for use in surveillance in various parts of the world, to monitor the mineral-rich border area of eastern DRC, where Rwanda has been accused of helping rebels fighting the government.

The UN peacekeeping brigade would operate under the mandate of the MONUSCO mission deployed elsewhere in the DRC.

DRC is already the UN's biggest peacekeeping mission, with more than 17,000 troops. But the forces are spread thin in the huge country and the UN is under orders to cut costs. ❒

2014-2024

Decade for Sustainable Ener

THE UNITED Nations has declared 2014-2024 as the Decade for Sustainable Energy for all to underscore the importance of energy issues in the post-2015 development agenda.

In a resolution made on 21 December 2012, the UN General Assembly called upon member states to galvanize efforts to make universal access to sustainable modern energy services a priority, noting that about 1.3 billion people worldwide are without electricity and another 2.6 billion people in developing countries rely on traditional biomass for cooking and heating.

It expressed concern that even when energy services are available, millions of people are unable to pay for them.

The resolution stressed the need to improve access to reliable, affordable, economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sound energy services and resources for sustainable development.

To that end, the General Assembly also emphasized the importance of improving energy efficiency, increasing the share of renewable energy and cleaner technologies.

In its resolution, the General Assembly called upon governments as well as relevant international and regional organizations and other relevant stakeholders to combine, as appropriate, the increased use of new and renewable energy resources, more efficient use of energy, greater reliance on advanced energy technologies, including cleaner fossil fuel technologies, and the sustainable use of traditional energy resources, to meet the increasing need for energy services.

The declaration of the decade builds on the growing interest by Member States in energy issues. General Assembly Resolution 65/151 had declared 2012 the "International Year of Sustainable Energy for All" and called on the Secretary-General to organize and coordinate activities during the year to increase awareness of the importance of addressing energy issues.

In response, UN Secretary-General, Ban ki-Moon has launched the Sustainable Energy for All Initiative, which brings together stakeholders in government, the private sector and civil society.

The initiative is led by Kandeh Yumkella of Sierra Leone, who is also the Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) and chair of UN Energy.

The purpose of the initiative is to mobilize action towards providing universal energy access; doubling the rate of global energy efficiency improvement; and doubling the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.

According to Yumkella, sustainable energy for all is essential for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and for opening up new opportunities for growth and prosperity in all countries.

"It is also central to discussions on the post-2015 development agenda and proposed new sustainable development goals," he said.

As part of the initiative, the UN has launched the Global Consultation on Energy that aims to explore why energy matters in the post-2015 development agenda and identify the key priority issues.

Its purpose is to invite an extensive range of stakeholders to build a shared vision of the world's future energy challenges and the need to integrate energy into the post-2015 development agenda.

The effort is a part of a larger global conversation comprising over 50 national consultations and 11 thematic consultations, one of which is on energy.

The consultation is taking place both on a web-based platform and at various face-to-face events worldwide.

The findings will be shared and fed into post-2015 framework development and other related processes towards 2015 when the present agenda guided by the MDGs is expected to come to an end.

Post-2015 development agenda

The eight MDGs – which range from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV and AIDS, and providing universal primary education – have been a milestone in global and national development efforts since 2000.

rgy for All

The framework has helped to galvanize development efforts and guide global and national development priorities.

While three of the eight goals have been achieved prior to the final deadline of 2015 progress has been uneven within and across countries.

Further efforts and a strong global partnership for development are, therefore, needed to accelerate progress and reach the goals by 2015.

Following the outcome of the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development, which initiated an inclusive intergovernmental process to prepare a set of sustainable development goals, there is broad agreement that there must be close linkages between the two processes and agendas.

Access to energy is widely regarded as a "missing" MDG and debate among development experts is that poverty alleviation and the general global socio-economic condition would improve if energy is identified as the ninth MDG.

Development experts argue that the failure to recognize the central role of energy in the original MDG list has had an impact on how the world responds to issues of sustainable development and poverty reduction.

Energy affects all aspects of development – social, economic, and environmental, including livelihoods, access to water, agricultural productivity, health, population levels, education, and gender-related issues.

For example, the majority of people in southern Africa still rely on traditional energy sources such as wood, or other biomass such as crop residue, which is the dominant fuel for cooking. This comes at a huge cost to the environment as families continue to cut down trees for much-needed fuel.

Therefore, attaining energy self-sufficiency would go a long way in improving SADC's chances of meeting the MDGs, creating opportunities for people to come out of the poverty trap.

Regional initiatives

To improve access to energy, Southern Africa has embarked on a programme to increase the availability of various energy sources by 2027 at a total cost of more than US$200 billion.

The recently announced Energy Sector Plan, part of a broader regional infrastructure master plan approved in 2012, addresses four key strategic objectives, namely ensuring energy security, improving access to modern energy services, tapping the abundant energy resources, and achieving financial investment and environmental sustainability.

The plan identifies "hard" infrastructure projects that include the planned electricity generation and transmission projects; refineries, storage facilities and pipelines for the petroleum and gas; and transport facilities for coal distribution and exports.

With regards to the electricity sub-sector, the master plan identified 73 power generation projects to increase generation from the current 56,000 megawatts (MW) and surpass the projected demand of 96,000 MW by 2027.

In addition to the "hard" infrastructure projects, the master plan has also identified 16 "soft" infrastructure issues that need to be addressed before the region can achieved self-sufficiency in the electricity sub-sector.

These include harmonised policies and increased cooperation in energy development and trading. ❐

Zambia, AfDB sign power loan agreement

ZAMBIA AND the African Development Bank (AfDB) have signed a US$55 million loan agreement for the construction of the Itezhi-Tezhi hydropower station and transmission line.

The agreement was signed by Zambian Minister of Finance, Alexander Chikwanda and AfDB country representative Freddie Kwesiga.

The project will involve construction and operation of a 120-megawatt (MW) hydropower plant at Itezhi-Tezhi dam along the Kafue River.

Once completed, this project will significantly increase Zambia's and the region's power supply. Zambia presently produces 1,800MW which it shares with the rest of the region through the Southern African Power Pool. ❐

Mozambique gets US$65 million loan for power station rehabilitation

MOZAMBIQUE IS expected to boosts power production after the national power utility, Electricidade de Moçambique (EDM) secured a loan from France for the rehabilitation of two power stations.

Mozambique will get a loan of 50 million Euros to rehabilitate the Mavuzi and Chicamba power stations in the central province of Manica, under an agreement signed in October with the French Development Agency.

The rehabilitation project should increase the generation capacity of the two power stations by 50 percent so that Mavuzi produces 52 megawatts (MW) while Chicamba will generate 38MW.

The two stations are owned by EDM and both are on the Revue River. ❐

PERSPECTIVE

Four Congresses, simila processes, effe

by Phyllis Johnson

FOUR OF the main political parties in southern Africa held congresses in the last quarter of 2012, former liberation movements that are ruling parties in four SADC Member States.

The leaders of all four of these political parties are Heads of State and current office bearers in the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

While many policy concerns are similar, their political processes offer different aspects of effective practices.

The party congresses were held in Mozambique at end September, Tanzania in early November, Namibia at end November, and South Africa in mid-December.

These well-established political parties have similar themes and policy issues about economic development and empowerment, but different systems for political structure and leadership transition.

All have faced challenges of leadership transition, especially the first transition after achieving their goal of national independence, and some have defined solutions.

All face elections in 2014-2015, and have held defining Congresses well in advance of those dates.

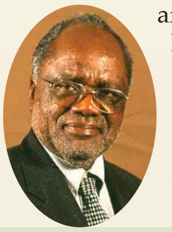
NAMIBIA

The 5th Congress of the SWAPO Party in Windhoek, Namibia presented a strong political process that has evolved since Independence in 1990.

SWAPO PARTY

With the theme "Towards Equity and Economic Emancipation", the Congress considered 13 policy papers refined at a policy conference three months earlier on a range of development issues. The SWAPO congress resolved to strengthen implementation mechanisms.

The most anticipated aspect of the 5th SWAPO Party Congress as noted in the closing statement was the election of the party leadership. President Hifikepunye Pohamba, who currently serves on the SADC Organ Troika, was elected unopposed for a second term as party leader 2013-2017.



This means that he will remain as party leader after stepping down as Head of State in 2015, following the next national elections the previous year.

Therefore, the leadership contest was not at top level, but the next level down, for vice president, secretary-general and deputy. The winner who emerged from the hotly contested campaign as Vice President of the SWAPO Party was Dr Hage Geingob, the Minister of Trade and Industry, and a former prime minister.

Geingob was appointed Prime Minister in a cabinet reshuffle announced immediately after the Congress. He will be the party candidate for President in the 2014 elections.

Thus the decision is made two years ahead of elections, avoiding divisions at election time. The contest took place, not at the top, but at second level, with no impact on the Head of State or stability of the country.

The party President appealed to all candidates to accept the results of the closely contested election, and avoid a repetition of the previous leadership race when the losing candidate left to form his own party.

This is Namibia's second leadership transition, after the first one was hard fought and fraught with allegations in which the loser refused to accept the results.

At the previous Congress, when the founding President, Sam Nujoma, stepped down, the party decided to confer him with the title of "Leader of the Namibian Revolution" with an open invitation to attend any meetings of the party.

MOZAMBIQUE

FRELIMO
PARTIDO DA PAZ

Mozambique faced some of the same challenges at the 10th Congress of the Frelimo Party, held in the northernmost province of Cabo Delgado.

President Armando Emilio Guebuza, the party leader, is Head of State and the current chairperson of SADC.

The main policy issues are contained in the National Agenda for the Struggle Against Poverty. The main result was the election of the new party leadership through an inclusive electoral quota system unique to Frelimo, called "continuity with renewal", in which there are separate candidate lists of women and men, voted by all delegates.

The complex ballot papers for Central Committee had five sections: for those seeking re-election, newcomers, young candidates under 35 years, economic and social areas, and veterans of the liberation struggle. Each section has a quota of men and women candidates, and the children of veterans are considered as veterans for this purpose.

The Political Commission has 14 members elected plus three *ex-officio* members who are the president, secretary-general and secretary of the verification commission.

r perspectives, different ective practices

The 14 members of the top party leadership are elected in two categories: 60 percent continuity (those seeking re-election) and 40 percent renewal (newcomers). For continuity, there are eight places – four men and four women. For the remaining six seats, for renewal, four are reserved for men and two for women.

This resulted in a wide representation broadly inclusive of various sectors and interest groups, including 35 percent women. The Frelimo party has three separate wings for women, youth, and war veterans.

Guebuza was overwhelmingly re-elected as party leader with 97.3 percent of the votes.

The biggest upset was that of the prime minister and his predecessor both losing their seats on the Political Commission. Government was reshuffled immediately following Congress, with a young man who is a newcomer to the Commission appointed as Prime Minister.

Guebuza is serving his second and last term as Head of State but can remain as President of the party, as his predecessor did before him, and therefore the party and government are likely to have different top leadership following the next national elections in the last quarter of 2014.

Frelimo structures do not include a direct line of succession to the presidency. Although the prime minister is often seen as a potential successor, this has not been the case to date. The presidential candidate will be selected closer to the time of elections.

UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

Further north, in the United Republic of Tanzania, where Jakaya Kikwete is the Head of State and currently serving as chairperson of the SADC Troika on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, the ruling party Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) held its 8th national congress.

Kikwete was re-elected as national chairman of the CCM party that brought national independence under its previous name, the Tanganyika African National Union, and its founding father, *Mwalimu* Julius Nyerere.

The United Republic of Tanzania is the result of the union of the mainland (Tanganyika) and Zanzibar in 1964, and the CCM party structures also reflect this union.

The 2012 congress saw the return of experienced cadres regarded as hard-working and "clean" of corruption, who had served the party previously in senior positions.

These included the top three positions under the chairman, that is, the two vice-chairmen for the mainland and for Zanzibar, and the secretary-general. All three posts are held by men but a very senior and high-profile woman was elected to the new post of secretary-general for foreign relations.

CCM also has no specific structure for succession and Kikwete will remain as head of the party beyond the next national election in October 2015 for continuity, as have his predecessors. The presidential candidate for the next national election will be chosen closer to the time, likely in first half of 2015.

SOUTH AFRICA

The last of the ruling party congresses in 2012 was the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa in December, when President Jacob Zuma saw off a challenge from his deputy, who is also deputy president of the country.

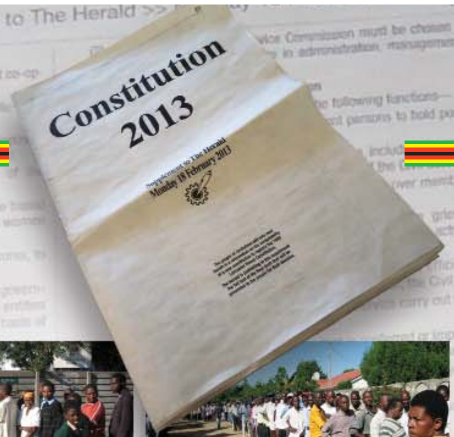
The congress marked 100 years since the ANC was formed in 1912 at the same city, in Mangaung, with most of the party leadership re-elected, except for the deputy president Kgalema Motlanthe who was replaced with a well-known businessman. The chairperson of the party remains a woman.

The pre-congress debate was more about leadership and representation than the significant policy issues facing the party, with threatened court challenges in some provinces over the process of choosing delegates to the congress.

Amid a high-profile debate over party "slates" of leadership candidates, the secretary-general denied that ANC "arranges" the leadership, saying that lobbying is part of the democratic process.

President Zuma is completing his first term as Head of State and is a member of the SADC Troika on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation. He will stand for re-election as President of South Africa in early 2014.

In its short history in government, the ANC deputy president has succeeded to the top job in the party and government, but it is not yet clear if that will be the case in the 2019 elections by which time Zuma would have completed his second term, as there will be another party congress before that time. ❐



Referendum 16 March

New Draft Constitution for Zimbabwe

THE COMPLETION of a consultative process on a new Constitution for Zimbabwe clears the way for a referendum on 16 March, followed later by elections.

"All parties have agreed. We have finally agreed on the finalisation of the draft Constitution," President Robert Mugabe told a press conference in early February, that was attended by the other two principals to the Global Political Agreement (GPA) – Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai and Deputy Prime Minister Arthur Mutambara.

According to the GPA signed in 2008, the finalization of the constitution-making process paves the way for the holding of general elections.

However, before that the country is expected to hold a referendum on whether to accept or reject the new Constitution, which replaces the British-drafted Lancaster House constitution that took effect at Independence in 1980. The referendum has been set for March 16.

The main political parties – Zanu-PF and the two MDC formations – have started a campaign urging their members to vote "Yes" in the referendum.

Zimbabwe is expected to hold presidential, parliamentary and local government elections thereafter. The date will be announced after the referendum, but elections are expected this year. Under the current Constitution, the duration of this Parliament ends on 29 June.

Zimbabwe last went to the polls in 2008, when the opposition marginally won more seats in Parliament while Zanu-PF won the popular vote and the Presidency.

The disputed polls resulted in the GPA, a SADC-brokered agreement for an inclusive government involving Mugabe, Tsvangirai and Mutambara, implemented in February 2009.

According to the GPA, President Mugabe of Zanu-PF remained Head of State, while Tsvangirai of MDC-Tsvangirai (MDC-T) became Prime Minister and Mutambara of MDC became the Deputy Prime Minister.

A cabinet comprising 15 ministers from ZANU-PF, 13 from the MDC-T and three from MDC was also sworn in. A key component of the GPA was the removal of sanctions against Zimbabwe implemented by the European Union at the insistence of the United Kingdom and the comprehensive sanctions approved by the US Congress, however this has not happened yet and the timeframe of processes in those countries seem unlikely to facilitate the lifting of sanctions before the elections.

All SADC Member States have campaigned actively for the removal of these sanctions, when speaking publicly and during private discussions. Zanu-PF organized a petition with signatures of more than two million Zimbabweans calling for the lifting of sanctions. ❐

Highlights of the draft Constitution of Zimbabwe

- Executive authority is vested in the President, who is Head of State and Government and Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Forces. Provision is made for two vice-presidents.
- The Parliament is made up of the National Assembly and the Senate.
- The National Assembly has 210 members elected by secret ballot from 210 single-member constituencies. In addition, for the first two parliaments after the adoption of the new Constitution, 60 women members will be elected by proportional representation, with six from each of the 10 provinces based on the votes cast for candidates representing political parties in the constituency elections by province.
- The Senate will comprise of 80 members, six elected from each province through a system of proportional representation, based on the votes cast for candidates representing political parties in the National Assembly elections and selected from lists "in which male and female candidates are listed alternatively, every list being headed by a female candidate." The remaining seats will be held by 18 traditional chiefs – the President and Deputy of the Chiefs Council, plus two each from the eight non-metropolitan provinces elected by the provincial assembly of chiefs. Two Senate seats are designated for representatives of people with disabilities, with the method of election to be defined under the electoral law.
- Citizen rights have been broadened through a broader chapter on the Declaration of Rights. The rights provided for are the rights to life, labour, education, water, shelter, environmental rights, freedom of expression and the media, and marriage except for same-sex marriages.
- The draft Constitution recognises 16 official languages – Chewa, Chibarwe, English, Kalanga, Koisan, Nambya, Ndau, Ndebele, Shangani, Shona, and sign-language, Sotho, Tonga, Tswana, Venda and Xhosa. Previously only three languages were recognized – English, Ndebele and Shona.
- The Preamble exalts the "brave men and women who sacrificed their lives during the national liberation struggles", acknowledges the richness of natural resources, and celebrates the vibrancy of traditions and cultures. Veterans of the liberation struggles including those who assisted them and those who were imprisoned, detained or restricted must be respected and empowered economically. ❐

From stated intention to actual application

SADC gender protocol enters into force

THE SADC Protocol on Gender and Development has entered into force following ratification of the instrument by the requisite two-thirds of Member States.

According to a communiqué issued after the annual meeting of ministers responsible for gender and women affairs in the SADC region, held in Mozambique in mid-February, 10 Member States have ratified the protocol.

These are Angola, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

"The meeting applauded Member States efforts in depositing instruments of ratification that has subsequently led to its entering into force," said the communiqué.

The meeting re-iterated the importance of ensuring effective implementation of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. This requires the domestication of the Protocol into national law.

The process of approval of a regional legal instrument requires, first, signing, and then ratification, a process that differs from country to country.

The protocol "enters into force" following ratification by two-thirds of SADC Member States. This advances the regional law from being a stated intention to actual application.

The objectives of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development are to provide for the empowerment of women, eliminate discrimination, and achieve gender quality and equity through gender-responsive legislation, policies, programmes and projects.

The targets include, among others, the achievement of 50 percent representation by women and men in politics and decision-making by 2015, in line with the decision by SADC Heads of State and Government and the African Union.

The ministers also approved the proposal to develop an Addendum to the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development to accommodate gender and climate change.

This is in response to the concern that the impacts of climate change affect women and children disproportionately in the region. ❒

Progress in signing and ratification of the SADC Gender Protocol

Country	Date of signature	Date of ratification	Deposited instruments
Angola	2008	2010	√
Botswana	Not yet signed		
DRC	2008		
Lesotho	2008	2010	√
Madagascar	2008		
Malawi	2009		
Mauritius	Not yet signed		
Mozambique	2008	2010	√
Namibia	2008	2009	√
Seychelles	2008	2011	√
South Africa	2008	2012	√
Swaziland	2008	2012	√
Tanzania	2008	2010	√
Zambia	2008	2012	√
Zimbabwe	2008	2009	√

Zimbabwe draft Constitution proposes gender equality 50:50

ZIMBABWE IS the first SADC Member State to propose a law guaranteeing 50 percent representation of women and men in Parliament and other government bodies. According to a draft Constitution developed by the Constitution Parliamentary Select Committee (COPAC), the government must promote full gender balance in Zimbabwean society.

The draft Constitution proposes the introduction of a quota system for women in Parliament, setting aside 60 additional seats for women in Parliament, six each elected through a proportional representation system from the 10 provinces. The draft Constitution also proposes the establishment of a Gender Commission whose functions will include monitoring issues concerning gender equality. ❒

SADC adopts common position ahead of UN meeting on women

by Joseph Ngwawi

MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE for gender and women affairs in the SADC region have developed a common position for the 57th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) scheduled for March.

The ministers, meeting in Mozambique in February, adopted two important documents – the Outcome Document on the SADC Position on the 57th Session of the CSW as well as the Draft Agreed Conclusions on the Priority Theme on the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls.

The ministers reiterated the importance of key priority concerns for the region, in particular the need to address domestic violence more effectively, dealing with the root causes of violence against women, developing robust sensitisation programmes targeting families and communities especially in rural areas.

Other regional priorities include prioritisation of activities on socialisation with a view to change mindsets and attitudes as well as strengthening of efforts towards economic empowerment of women. ❒

African Union @ 50
Towards deeper integration

by Kizito Sikuka

AS AFRICA celebrates 50 years since the formation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) – now the African Union – African leaders have called for deeper cooperation among member states to ensure the continent takes full control of its development agenda.

This was one of the results of the 20th Ordinary Assembly of AU Heads of State and Government held in late January at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The theme for the summit and Golden Jubilee celebrations is "Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance".

Speaking soon after assuming the AU chair, Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn said there are a number of priority issues which need to be addressed to promote continental integration.

"As we celebrate the Golden Jubilee of our organization, we need to take stock of our achievements and challenges over the last 50 years and chart out a way forward to realize our vision of creating a peaceful, democratic, prosperous and united Africa, taking its rightful place in the world."

He said that, over the past few decades, Africa has managed to register robust economic growth, attracting "growing interest as a new frontier for business and investment" from many developed and emerging economies such as China.

"There is no doubt that Africa needs to sustain the growth momentum that it has been able to achieve over the last decade. This can only be done if we manage to bring about structural transformation," Dessalegn said.

The transformation includes improvements in infrastructure, increased regional trade, progress in the smooth movement of goods and services across the continent and promotion of peace and security.

AU Commission chairperson, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma concurred, saying after 50 years, Africa has now found the right conditions to advance socio-economic development on the continent.

For example, she said six of the world's 10 fastest growing economies are in Africa and that the continent has been growing at an average of five percent per annum for more than a decade despite the global financial and economic crisis.

Africa is also endowed with rich natural resources, which are crucial ingredients for growth and development.

Furthermore, the continent has a growing, vibrant, resourceful and youthful population which is being equipped with critical skills that will drive Africa's transformation.

"These are critical components in the industrial and agricultural developmental processes that should drive economic growth, trade and social transformation," Dlamini-Zuma said.

"We must therefore take bold steps and fight for the pride of place in the world, as a global growth pole. We must develop our narrative and challenge conventional thinking and paradigms."

Benin President and outgoing AU chair Boni Yayi, called for greater cooperation between the private sector and national governments in Africa.

"The AU has never tapped into the resource presented by Africa's private sector. It is time to do that," he said.

The celebrations to mark the AU 50th anniversary will be held on 25 May to coincide with the date the OAU was formed in 1963.

Ethiopia is expected to host the main celebrations, which will be held during the Ordinary Session of the AU in the same month.

The AU traditionally holds summits twice a year – in January/February and in June/July. However, to accommodate the 50th anniversary celebration, the second annual summit has been moved to 25 May. ❐

Key decisions of the 20th AU Summit

- Refocusing the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) to support the transformation agenda of the AU, the summit urged the Secretary-General of the United Nations to provide the required support to ECA to enhance its work in accordance with Africa's priorities.
- Creation of the African Observatory on Science, Technology and Innovation (AOSTI), the summit endorsed the project, and urged development partners to avail the necessary technical and financial support for sustaining the AOSTI and its programmes.
- Coordination of the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change (CAHOSCC) and Africa's preparation for the 19th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 19) in Poland, the summit acknowledged the need to further refine and streamline the coordination mechanism for CAHOSCC.
- On the reduction of maternal, newborn and child mortality and morbidity in Africa, the summit requested that the Ministers of Health of the African Union examine the progress made regarding the state of maternal, newborn and child health, map out concrete and innovative strategies at a larger scale in order to adequately address the health needs of African women and children and submit a report to the 21st Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly in Ethiopia.

The summit took note of the proposal by the Republic of Guinea relating to the creation of a South-South and Triangular Coalition in support of Africa's post-2015 development agenda; it approved in principle the creation of a South-South and Triangular Coalition. ❐

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Southern African Development Community
SADC Secretariat, SADC House, Private Bag 0095,
Gaborone, Botswana
Tel +267 395 1863 Fax +267 397 2848/318 1070
E-mail registry@sadc.int Website www.sadc.int

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EDITOR
Munetsi Madakufamba

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE
Joseph Ngwawi, Kizito Sikuka, Egline Tauya, Admire Ndhlovu, Phyllis Johnson, Patience Ziramba, Danai Majaha, Nobuhle Sithole.

EDITORIAL ADVISOR

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sadctoday@sardc.net

Southern African Research and Documentation Centre
15 Downie Avenue, Belgravia, Harare, Zimbabwe
Tel +263 4 791 141/791 143 Fax +263 4 791 271

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Events February – April 2013

February	
11-14, Mozambique	**SADC Gender Ministers** Ministers responsible for Gender/Women's Affairs meet annually to consider policy issues and coordination for international meetings, as well as to track progress on ratification and implementation of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development.
18-22, Kenya	**Governing Council of the Global Ministerial Environment Forum** The council convenes annually to review existing and emerging policy issues, as well as budgets. It aims to promote international cooperation as well as provide general policy guidance for the direction and coordination of environmental programmes globally through UNEP. This is the 27th session.
19-21, Africa	**South Africa Energy Indaba** The annual conference aims to explore ways in which Africa can harness its huge energy resources to achieve energy self-sufficiency.
20-23, Zimbabwe	**5th International Conference on ICT for Africa** The objective is to highlight the importance of South-South collaboration between African countries and other developing countries, and between African countries and the industrialized countries towards ICT advancement and development solutions.
27, 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.
March	
8-9, Mozambique	**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 to advance regional integration. Council is preceded by preparatory meetings of senior officials which take place during the period 1-7 March.
8, Global	**International Women's Day** This is the day designated by the United Nations to commemorate issues of equality of women with men, and coincides with the 57th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women held every year in early March. The main CSW theme this year is "The Elimination and the Prevention of all Forms of Violence against Women and Girls" and a subsidiary theme "The Sharing of Responsibilities between Women and Men, including in Care Giving in the Contexts of HIV and AIDS".
20, Mozambique	**34th SAPP Executive Committee Meetings** The SAPP Executive Committee is composed of chief executives of member power utilities. The committee acts as the Board of SAPP and is responsible for the coordination and formulation of the power pool's objectives.
26-27, South Africa	**5th BRICS Summit** BRICS means Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. The leaders of these countries meet annually in Summit to seek solutions to development challenges and consider areas of collaboration for the BRICS economies.
April	
15-17, Namibia	**SADC Digital Broadcasting Migration Forum** SADC will meet to discuss and agree on activities that would ensure that all member countries are ready for digital broadcasting transition.

11 March 2013

In memory and honour of King Moshoeshoe I

King of Lesotho 1823-1870

MOSHOESHOE DAY is commemorated in Lesotho on 11 March, the day on which King Moshoeshoe I, founder of the Basotho nation, is believed to have died in 1870. He became king 190 years ago, in 1823, and is regarded as a great diplomat and leader who worked for the preservation of his country's language, art, and culture through the Sesotho language.

He was born in Menkhoaneng in 1786, the son of Mokhachane, and was known as Lepoqo, a name that marked the social calamity of conflict that had erupted in his community at the time he was born. He was later known as Moshoeshoe, named after the victory verse lyrics he composed after raiding 500 cattle of nearby chief Moeletsi as he imitated the scarping sound of the razor "shoe-shoe-shoe" to portray his victory.

This was during the time when names were significant tools through which major national events could be documented and safeguarded as lessons for future generations. A significance of the day is to urge Basotho to promote and preserve their identity and language, as language serves as a strong engine in defining the society.

During the Lifaqane wars, Moshoeshoe and his people embarked on the great trek from Menkhoaneng to Thaba Bosiu in 1824, a journey of nine days. Thaba Bosiu means "mountain at night" and, according to local belief, this high mountain plateau elevated during the night and took the shape of a high fortress, thus providing a great defence during the various wars including the third war against the Boer farmers in Free State in 1868.

Thaba Bosiu is thus imbued with great significance as the mountain is strongly associated with the formation of the Basotho nation. The grave of Moshoeshoe I on top of the mountain contributes to the site's sanctity and this landscape was declared a national monument in 1967 due to the intangible cultural wealth.

This ancestral spot has both a symbolic value and historical significance. Thus the National Department of Culture is putting efforts to ensure the area is awarded global recognition, as it serves as a constant reminder of who Basotho are and where they were "manufactured and imagined" as a nation, thus the birthplace of Lesotho, considered sacred and a "faraway" land of miracles and prophecy.

Moshoeshoe is commemorated for his power and wisdom as he gave refuge to different ethnic groups during the Lifaqane wars and out of these communities he "brewed" the Basotho. What made him outstanding was his strong belief that in gaining wisdom and power as a leader, one has to first acquire qualities of clarity of mind, goodness of heart and service to the people.

On this day in Lesotho, major symbolic celebrations are held with the laying of wreaths at the Moshoeshoe I statue, the Moshoeshoe Memorial Lectures at the National University of Lesotho, and a special lecture for high school students at the Lesotho National Library where Moshoeshoe's legacy and ideology are unpacked in order to keep his memory among young people vibrant. Traditional performances showcasing Lesotho's cultural diversity and wealth of music and dance is one of the pathways through which his memory is kept alive.

The day's events coincide with the three-day annual heritage route from Menkoaneng to Thaba Bosiu, in the footsteps of this hero from his home place to where he founded the nation called Basotho. These memory initiatives are platforms in which human beings come to make sense of their identity and their relationship with one another. Such commemorations stamp the idea that culture is a productive power that not only shapes human concepts and impacts their behaviour, but also contributes in no small measure to the betterment of their material as well as spiritual world.

This then poses a question to our leaders with regard to making efforts to ensure their names become educational memories for the coming generations. What positive traces do they leave behind in order to be commemorated by generations to come? What sketches do they leave to be celebrated through music, memory, and heritage? What legacies do they leave archived locally and regionally for coming generations, or has this calibre been destroyed by the ideology of democracy? ❒

Adapted from Sebinane Lekoekoe, a Senior Archivist at the Lesotho National Archives, who writes in his personal capacity. www.archivalplatorm.org

Ougadi holiday in Mauritius

11 April 2013

THE NAME derives from *Yuga Adi*, "the beginning of a new age", and is New Year's Day for the people of the Deccan region of India. It falls on a different day every year because the Hindu calendar is lunisolar, beginning with Chaitra (March–April), which is the first month in the Indian calendar, Panchanga.

In Mauritius, this is a family event to reaffirm the values and rites embedded in the culture. On that day, the people of the Telegu community have a shower at dawn with saffron and perfumed oil which is meant to purify and forget all issues and misunderstandings of the past year and to start afresh. Wearing new clothes is the tradition as well as preparing the *thoranam* composed of 18 mango leaves put at the entrance of the house to bring positive energy. The *muggulu*, made of flowers and coloured rice, is sketched on the floor to represent harmony.

The eating of a specific mixture of six different tastes, called *Ugadi Pachhadi*, symbolizes the fact that life is a mixture of different experiences that should be accepted together and with equanimity through the New Year – sadness, happiness, anger, fear, disgust, surprise. A prayer is done at home before proceeding to the temple. The whole family gathers to enjoy a traditional lunch, wishing one another "*Ugadi Subhakankshalu*".

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS IN SADC

February-April 2013

1 February	Abolition of Slavery Day	Mauritius
3 February	Heroes Day	Mozambique
4 February	Public Holiday	Mozambique
4 February	National Armed Struggle Day	Angola
10 February	Chinese Spring Festival	Mauritius
12 February	Carnival Day	Angola
3 March	Martyrs Day	Malawi
4 March	Public Holiday	Malawi
8 March	Women's Day	Angola, Zambia
10 March	Maha Shivaratree	Mauritius
11 March	Moshoeshoe I Day	Lesotho
12 March	National Day	Mauritius
	Youth Day	Zambia
21 March	Independence Day	Namibia
	Human Rights Day	South Africa
29 March	Martyrs Day	Madagascar
	Good Friday	All SADC except DRC, Mauritius, Mozambique
30 March	Public Holiday	Botswana
	Easter/Holy Saturday	Seychelles, Zambia
1 April	Easter Monday	All SADC except Angola, Mauritius, Mozambique
7 April	Sheikh Abeid Karume Day	Tanzania
	Women's Day	Mozambique
8 April	Public Holiday	Mozambique
11 April	Ougadi	Mauritius
13 April	Peace and Reconciliation Day	Angola
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
30 April	Youth Day	DRC