

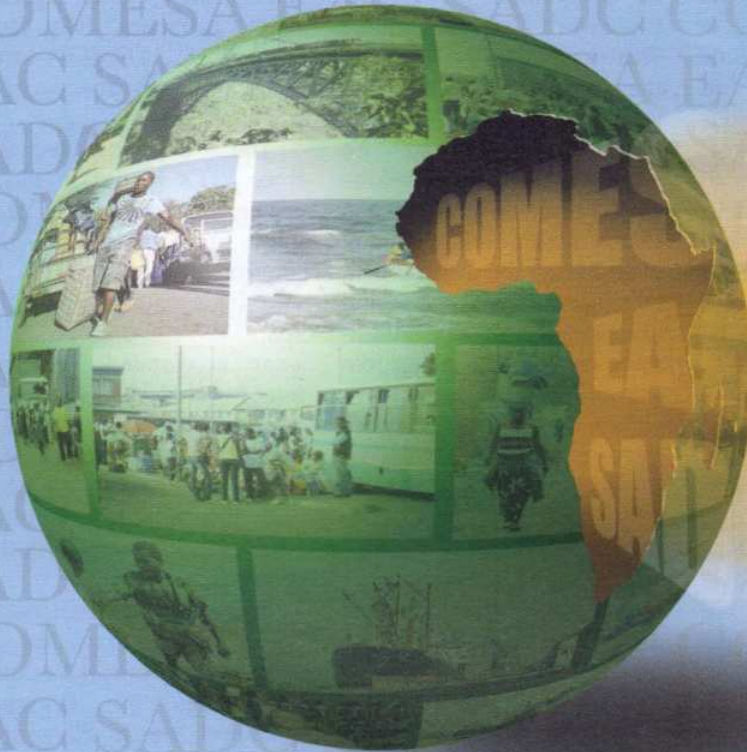


THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY TODAY



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INSIDE...



Giant step toward A single SADC-COMESA-EAC market

by Munetsi Madakufamba

THREE REGIONAL economic blocs have made a giant step towards the long-conceived goal of an African Economic Community, approving the expeditious establishment of an enlarged Free Trade Area (FTA) encompassing 26 Member States in three sub-regions.

Meeting at a Tripartite Summit on 22 October in Kampala, Uganda, leaders of Member States of SADC, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the East African Community (EAC) agreed on what many have described as an important milestone towards continental integration as envisaged by the African Union (AU).

According to the final communiqué, the historic Tripartite Summit "agreed on a programme of harmonization of trading

arrangements amongst the three RECs [Regional Economic Communities], free movement of business persons, joint implementation of inter-regional infrastructure programmes as well as institutional arrangements on the basis of which the three RECs would foster cooperation."

The Summit resolved to immediately start working towards merging the three trading blocs into a single REC with the objective of fast-tracking the attainment of the African Economic Community. In that regard, the Summit directed the Tripartite Task Force composed of the Secretariats of the three RECs to "develop a roadmap for the implementation of this merger for consideration at its next meeting."

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Giant step toward A single SADC-COMESA-EAC market

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Reaffirming southern Africa's commitment to the tripartite cooperation process, SADC Chairperson and South African President, Kgalema Motlanthe, said the region "believes the time has come for COMESA, EAC and SADC to bring together our respective regional integration programmes in order to further enlarge our markets, unlock our productive potential, increase the levels of intra-Africa trade, and enhance our developmental prospects."

The creation of the grand FTA will open borders to literally half of the continent, spanning the entire southern and eastern regions of Africa, from Cape to Cairo. It will be, by any standard, a formidable economic bloc with a combined Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of US\$625 billion.

With a combined population of 527 million, the grand FTA places Member States in a stronger position to respond effectively to intensifying global economic competition and will make the economic bloc more attractive to foreign direct investment.

"The process we embark upon today marks a historic step towards fulfilling our obligations under the AU and the Abuja Treaty framework of continental integration, which recognises that RECs are the building blocks for the African Economic Community," said Motlanthe, who addressed the Summit in his capacity as Chairperson of SADC.

The Summit was considered historic given that for the first time since the birth of the AU, three of the eight officially recognised key building blocks

of the African Economic Community have met on how to integrate their separate programmes into a coherent overall programme within the framework of the Abuja Treaty, which establishes the continental economic community.

On modalities, the Tripartite Summit directed the three RECs to undertake a study incorporating, among other issues, the development of a roadmap within a period of six months for the establishment of the FTA, taking into account the principle of variable geometry; the legal and institutional framework to underpin the FTA; and measures to facilitate the movement of business persons across the RECs.

The Summit further agreed on a Tripartite Council of Ministers to be convened within 12 months to determine the timeframe for the establishment of the single FTA, informed by the findings of the study.

On multilateral issues, the Tripartite Summit directed the chairpersons of the Council of Ministers of the three RECs to "ensure that the Secretariats participate, coordinate and harmonize positions on the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) negotiations."

The same approach would apply to other multilateral negotiations including the World Trade Organization's Doha Development Round Negotiations.

In the area of infrastructure development, the Summit launched the Joint Competition Authority (JCA) on Air Transport Liberalization which will "oversee the full implementation of the

Yamoussoukro Decision on Air Transport in the three RECs commencing January 2009."

According to the communiqué, the JCA comprises seven members, two each from EAC, COMESA and SADC plus a chairperson on a rotational basis.

The leaders directed the three RECs to put in place, within a period of one year, joint programmes for the implementation of:

- ♦ a single seamless upper airspace;
- ♦ an accelerated, seamless inter-regional ICT Broadband Infrastructure Network; and
- ♦ a harmonized policy and regulatory framework that will govern ICT and infrastructural development in the three RECs.

Within the same timeframe, the RECs are expected to "effectively coordinate and harmonize" the Regional Transport Master Plans and the Regional Energy Priority Investment Plans, as well as the Energy Master Plans of the three RECs.

The three secretariats were directed to work out a joint financing and implementation mechanism for infrastructure development, within a year.

Regarding the legal and institutional framework, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) will be drafted for approval by the Council of Ministers of each of the three RECs, within a six-month period. The MoU, which will broadly cover inter-regional cooperation and integration, will define the powers of each decision making level.

The Summit agreed on a Tripartite Summit of Heads of State and Government

which shall sit once every two years.

The new dispensation in regional integration will permanently resolve the long-standing overlapping membership conundrum, which had presented headaches as the three RECs moved towards deeper economic integration.

Technically, a country cannot belong to more than one Customs Union. In a Customs Union, members agree among other issues, to charge a common external tariff to third countries.

Yet COMESA, EAC and SADC have all attained FTA status, and are at various stages of establishing separate Customs Unions.

The EAC is the most advanced of the three RECs, having already launched its Customs Union while COMESA plans to have its own by December 2008.

SADC launched its FTA in August 2008 and plans to create a Customs Union by 2010.

If successfully implemented, the Tripartite Summit decisions will result in the three RECs coalescing into a single FTA with the ultimate objective of establishing a single Customs Union, a development that would partially fulfil the target of the treaty establishing the African Economic Community.

The treaty establishing the African Economic Community, popularly known as the Abuja Treaty, was signed in 1991 by leaders of the Organisation of African Unity, the precursor to the AU.

The treaty envisages a continental economic zone by 2028, gradually built upon merging of the many RECs across the African continent. □



Review of Progress on SADC energy recovery strategy

THE SADC energy roadmap adopted early 2008 by energy ministers has been the latest blueprint for an accelerated recovery from the current crippling power shortages and is centred on revival of the regional energy planning network.

With some of Africa's fastest expanding economies, the SADC region ran out of surplus generation capacity, a situation that became more evident in 2007, as accurately predicted by the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP) over a decade ago.

As of February 2008, SADC combined electricity demand stood at 47,067MW vs a available capacity of 43,518MW.

The energy recovery roadmap

The SADC Energy Recovery Plan contains prioritised programmes and activities covering the power sector to be reviewed on a yearly basis.

After an emergency meeting of the Energy Ministerial Task Force on Implementation of Power Sector Programme in Botswana in February 2008 and later the Energy Ministerial Meeting in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in April, SADC Member States agreed to:

- o integrate energy conservation;
- o create regional energy linkages;
- o adopt a Biomass Energy Conservation Plan and;
- o execute a Power Surplus Capacity Utilisation Programme.

At their meeting in DRC, the energy ministers also noted the importance of reviving the Energy

Planning and Environmental Management Training Programme.

Assessment of the regional power projects

A SAPP steering committee that met in August 2008 to assess progress on the implementation of power projects concluded that the electricity supply-demand situation continued to be unstable. It warned that the situation was likely to impact on the SADC region's integration agenda, whose successful implementation heavily hinges on the availability of sufficient energy and other infrastructure services.

Furthermore, a review committee set up by the SADC Secretariat in conjunction with SAPP also said in September that most of the generation and transmission projects that were embarked on as early as 2005 have not yet been completed on time.

The committee attributed the slow progress to the financial constraints arising from low tariffs, inappropriate national policies and lack of political will on the part of some Member States.

The SAPP Co-ordination Centre Manager, Lawrence Musaba, said that the policy structure of the electricity industry in the region has a bearing on the development of the sector and therefore called for an immediate review of such policies.

Musaba said that when the regional Energy Recovery Plan comes under its first annual review in February 2009, Member States need to take into account the need to urgently address lack of a regional policy in the energy sector.

SAPP has recommended that in 2009, Member States need to quickly implement the short-term projects which are currently behind schedule.

As shown by the SAPP mid-year status report presented at the SADC Summit in August, the implementation of both short and long-term regional generation and transmission projects were between a year and two years behind schedule.

Strengthening regional power pools

THE REGIONAL Electricity Regulatory Association (RERA), says there is need to start a process that will culminate in common electricity standards across the continent and bring the regional power pools together as part of the solution to the current energy shortages.

The move is meant to speed up the pace of interconnection across national borders, which has often been hampered by the existence of different standards in various countries. □

Priority regional energy projects

Regional generation projects which need urgent attention include the Inga-3 and the Grand Inga-Phase-1 with a total potential generation capacity of 9500MW.

The WESTCOR transmission interconnector project is another regional initiative that is still lagging behind.

The project was conceived through the combined initiative of the SADC Secretariat and the power utilities of Angola, Botswana, DRC,

Namibia and South Africa in 1996, but little has happened to bring it to fruition.

However, other national or bilateral projects which are set to improve power system reliability and enhance the exchange of energy are near completion, with some expected by end of 2008.

These include the 600MW DRC-Zambia interconnector, the 300MW Malawi-Mozambique interconnector, the 400MW Zambia-Tanzania-Kenya interconnector and other smaller hydro power projects dotted across the region.

Challenges and constraints for 2009

SADC is still facing a number of challenges in the energy sector despite current efforts at dealing with the shortages. Blackouts and load shedding are still prevalent in some Member States, while economic growth in countries such as Angola and Zambia will inevitably strain available capacity.

According to SAPP, the process of consolidating and updating information on SADC energy programmes and projects which is in line with the region's long term plans requires more technical support and human power than initially envisaged.

Some of the more prominent challenges and constraints are:

- o Inability of national policy structures to conform with recommendations by the Ministerial Task Force made at regional level;
- o Inadequate financial resources to implement projects and;
- o Inadequate infrastructure and human resources. □



Malawi's grain subsidy strengthens food security

THE TURNAROUND in Malawi, from being a food deficit country to one producing surplus grain and overcoming food shortages has demonstrated that regional countries have the capacity to be food secure if they apply the right policies.

The grain subsidy programme that was introduced in 2005 has seen the government increasing the provision of maize seed and fertiliser to the smallholder farmers by more than 75 percent.

As a result, Malawi has since 2005 trebled maize production from 1.2 million tonnes to 3.4 million tonnes in the 2007/2008 agricultural season.

The government policy intervention – a reintroduction of fertiliser and seed subsidies that began in 1999 – is profoundly supported by the Malawian President Bingu wa Mutharika, who doubles as Minister of Agriculture.

Starting in 2005, the government distributed coupons to low-income farmers allowing them to purchase two 50kg bags of fertiliser equivalent to US\$7, one-fifth the market price.

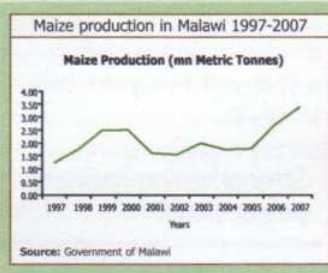
In addition, the government provided vouchers to buy seeds sufficient for planting half an acre each. As a result, the average farmer's yield increased to two tonnes per hectare from 0.8 tonnes in 2005.

In the 2007/2008 agricultural season, the subsidy programme cost the government US\$62 million or 6.5 percent of its total budget.

The programme was initially criticised by economists and multilateral agencies who argued that the expansion of subsidies would worsen the budget deficit and create distortions in the market.

But Malawi's recent

successes in turning around the agriculture sector and ensuring food security for the country has confounded critics. In fact, the phenomenal increase in maize production has saved the country a yearly budget of US\$120 million that it had spent in 2005 importing food aid.



As highlighted by Malawi's Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Frank Mwendifumbo, the important lesson for policy makers in the region is that government subsidies are necessary for growth in agriculture. Such an intervention is in line with the SADC Declaration



on Agriculture and Food Security that was adopted by SADC Member States in Tanzania.

Among the medium to long term targets, the SADC leaders agreed to ensure that all Member States progressively increase agricultural finance allocation to at least 10 percent of national budgets within a period of five years.

In the 2008/2009 agriculture season, Malawi plans to spend US\$186 million in an ambitious farm input subsidy programme for 1.7 million peasant farmers, agriculture authorities recently announced. □

Mozambique aims to lead "green revolution"

MOZAMBIQUE AIMS to lead a "green revolution" in sub-Saharan Africa by using science and innovation to improve crop varieties and boost production.

Opening a conference in September on Biotechnology, Breeding and Seed Systems for African Crops in Maputo, Mozambique's Minister of Science and Technology, Venancio Massingue, declared that a "green revolution" is needed for development in the region.

"Incorporating science in agriculture in Mozambique is key to the modernisation of the economy and to provide jobs in rural and urban areas. This is why science improves the lives of people," said Massingue.

He said his country's bid to bring about a "green revolution" would only be possible if scientists breed high-yielding varieties of crops to relieve hunger in rural areas.

Mozambique has set aside over US\$30 million dollars for seed and fertiliser distribution,

and the government is looking for private sector partnerships to widen the seed programme.

Mozambican President Armando Guebuza declared that his government is striving toward a "green revolution" to improve and diversify agriculture and increase food production.

Calisto Bias, Director of the Mozambique National

Institute of Agricultural Research, said research plays an important role in the development and promotion of new agricultural products.

"The use of improved seeds is quite (low) in Mozambique and Africa in general. Seed companies always complain about the small market compared to the cost of production," said Bias. □

Angola's rural agricultural project receives cash boost

A **SIX-YEAR** project aimed at improving Angola's smallholder farmers' produce and access to markets has received a grant of US\$6.4 million from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

The project, which will be managed by the Angolan government, hopes to open new market opportunities for rural farmers in Angola.

The PRORENDA project, as it will be known, is a groundbreaking initiative designed to benefit smallholder farmers in Angola's central highlands, 60

percent of whom are said to be women, including war widows and female heads of vulnerable households.

Beneficiaries also include people with disabilities sustained during Angola's 27-year civil conflict.

By connecting smallholder farmers in the central highlands to major urban markets for crops such as potatoes, carrots and onions, the project seeks to raise incomes of more than 51,000 smallholder farmers' families. □



Zambia's election free and transparent SADC

ELECTION OBSERVERS have praised the conduct of the 30 October presidential election in Zambia saying the process was in conformity with regional and international standards.

The SADC Election Observer Mission (SEOM), headed by Swaziland Permanent Secretary for Defence, John Kunene, said the elections were "peaceful, free and transparent" and reflected the will of the Zambian people.

"It is SADC's overall view that the elections were conducted in an open, transparent and professional manner," said Kunene.

"No acts of intimidation were observed or reported countrywide," Kunene added. The SEOM pleaded with the different political parties to follow the relevant institutions in Zambia to address any grievances.

SADC further commended the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) for the professional management of the elections and commitment to produce credible and legitimate electoral results.

The African Union (AU) said the elections were peaceful and voter counting and transmission of the results were conducted in a transparent manner.

Head of the AU observer mission and Minister of Foreign Affairs in Mauritius, Anil Gayan, said polling was in conformity with the declaration of AU principles governing democratic elections in Africa.

"Overall the elections were free, transparent and fair," the AU mission said, citing a few problems that needed to be rectified in future elections.

PROFILE

Rupiah Banda, President of Zambia

THE FOURTH president of the Republic of Zambia, Rupiah Banda, is a veteran politician who has been in the public service for more than 50 years.

Born on 19 February 1937, Banda was among a group of young leaders of the United National Independence Party (UNIP) who won Zambia's independence in October 1964, under the leadership of Kenneth Kaunda.

At the age of 27, he became Zambia's first ambassador to Egypt. It was a significant posting as Cairo was an important African capital during the leadership of Gamal Abdel Nasser, who was a key supporter of independence struggles in Zambia and the region.

Banda, an economist by profession, held several diplomatic posts including Zambia's representative to the United Nations from the late 1960s to early 1970s.

In 1975, he was appointed as Foreign Minister by Kaunda at a

The election was won by Rupiah Banda, the former acting president and candidate of the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD). According to the final results released by the ECZ on 1 November, Banda won the presidency with 40.09 percent of the vote followed by Michael Sata of the Patriotic Front (PF) who garnered 38.13 percent.

Hakaide Hichilema of the United Party for National Development (UPND) won 19.73 percent while Godfrey Miyanda of the Heritage Party (HP) got less than one percent of the vote.

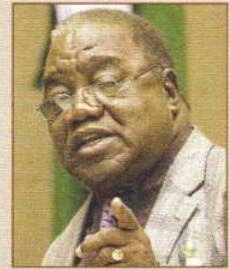
The election was necessitated by the death of incumbent Levy Mwanawasa who passed away in August.

Voter turnout was 45.43 percent representing 1.8 million people, out of a total 3.9 million registered voters. □

critical period in the history of southern Africa, at a time when Mozambique and Angola were gaining independence.

Between 1982 and 1986, he served as President of the United Nations Council on Namibia which was effectively the government of Namibia while the matter of South Africa's disputed mandate over the territory was being resolved.

In 1988, he was again elected as a Member of Parliament and served in the National Assembly until 1991 when the UNIP government was defeated in Zambia's first multi-party elections.



Rupiah Banda

In 1994, he was appointed Minister of State Mines and later became Senior Governor for Lusaka in 1998.

He resigned from politics in 2002 to join the private sector, but was recalled to the post of Vice President by the late President Levy Mwanawasa after the 2006 presidential election. □

PROFILE

Kgalema Motlanthe, President of South Africa and SADC Chairperson

THE NEW SADC Chairperson is Kgalema Motlanthe, the interim President of South Africa and Deputy President of the ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC).

A former trade unionist and previously ANC Secretary General, Motlanthe has made a significant contribution to his party and country.

Born on 19 July 1949 in Johannesburg, Motlanthe spent most of his early life in Soweto organising against the apartheid administration.

In the 1970s, while working for the Johannesburg City Council, he was recruited into Umkhonto we Sizwe -- the military wing of the ANC.

In April 1976, he was arrested for furthering the aims of the ANC and was detained without trial for 11 months at John Vorster Square in Johannesburg.

In 1977, he was found guilty of three charges under the Terrorism Act and sentenced to an effective 10 years imprisonment at Robben Island.



Kgalema Motlanthe

After his release in 1987, he was tasked with strengthening the union movement.

When the ANC was legalised in 1990, Motlanthe was put in charge of re-establishing the legal structures of the party.

In 1997 he was elected as Secretary General of ANC and was re-elected in 2002. Among other things, his responsibilities included the development of party-to-party relations in the SADC region.

He was elected ANC Deputy President in December 2007 at the party's 52nd National Conference in Polokwane, and in July 2008 he was appointed Minister in The Presidency of the Republic of South Africa, before becoming interim President in September after the incumbent, Thabo Mbeki, was recalled by the party.

South Africa hosted the SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government in August 2008, after being elected to chair the regional community for the following year. □





Time for Africa to harness its huge hydro-energy potential

by Richard Nyamanhindi

COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVES attending the 20th Session of the African Hydro Symposium held in Zambia have called for African governments to harness its huge hydro-energy potential, as it is cheap and clean.

According to Lawrence Musaba, the Coordination Centre Manager for the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP), Africa has a combined feasible hydro-capacity of more than 1,750,000 gigawatts (GW) per year, enough to power the whole continent but unfortunately, only 4.3 percent of this is being exploited.

The symposium heard from SAPP and the Regional Electricity Regulators Association of Southern Africa (RERA) that in order to deal with the regional power deficits and stop a further decline of the environment, alternative power sources have to be researched and exploited.

One such renewable energy source is hydro which involves using water to turn turbines, and generate clean and cheap electricity.

With seven major river systems (Congo, Limpopo, Niger, Nile, Orange, Senegal and Zambezi) Africa holds 10 percent of the world hydro-energy potential, but has so far exploited only a small part of its capability, the symposium heard.



Vast water sources and reservoirs in SADC such as the Vaal Dam in Gauteng, South Africa provide huge hydro-energy potential.

RERA stressed that climate change, the quest for cleaner energy and Africa's needs for constant power supply clearly underscore the need to boost investment in the hydropower sector while taking into account broader environmental, economic and social concerns.

The symposium, which aims at sharing experiences between governments and the private sector, is intended to pool resources and step up regional cooperation in the energy sector among African countries.

At the opening ceremony, Zambia's Energy and Water Development Minister, Kenneth Konga, appealed for the reinforcement of cooperation amongst countries of the region, with the aim of strengthening cohesion towards regional energy development.

Discussion at this year's conference covered topics such as the energy shortage in the region, an evaluation of progress on current projects, plans to move establish a single power pool for the continent, lessons and chal-

lenges of new energy technology, and sharing of experiences, among other issues.

Before the conference, a panel of regional utilities was assembled to review the key questions relating to water and energy resource exploitation, financing, and environmental and social impacts.

The panel's report noted that hydropower has been financed traditionally by public funds and therefore recommended the involvement of the private sector as the continent is facing a shortage of public funds.

The panel also called for the development of mini-hydro stations that have the potential of supplying cheap energy to rural communities.

Hydropower is plentiful in eastern and southern Africa where availability of adequate rainfall and relief creates the basic natural potential for exploitation.

Zambia, World Bank sign US\$75.5m power deal

THE ZAMBIAN government has signed a US\$75.5 million financial agreement with the World Bank aimed at increasing access to electricity as the region continues to face power shortages.

According to Ng'andu Magande, Zambia's Finance Minister, "The funding will enhance Zambia's power generation projects that seek to

increase electricity supply to all parts of the country, with more emphasis on rural areas."

Magande said effective implementation of the ongoing rural electrification project as well as new generation projects need to be supported by cost-reflective tariffs to safeguard operational efficiencies for power entities such as the

Zambia Electricity Supply Company (ZESCO).

The project will see the World Bank and the Global Environment Facility providing US\$33 million and US\$4.5 million, respectively, with the European Union providing an additional US\$15 million while the Zambian government will inject US\$12 million into the project. □



African renewable energy attracts attention

North Africa has 23 percent of the continent's hydro-power, West Africa has 25 percent, while east and southern Africa have 52 percent.

Examples of major hydro projects in southern Africa include the Inga hydropower station in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) of which construction of phase three is expected to start in 2009 at a total cost of US\$3.6 billion.

The Inga Falls project is believed to be the largest single hydropower initiative in the world and, when operating at full capacity, is expected to surpass Mozambique's Cahora Bassa, currently one of Africa's biggest hydroelectric stations, producing an estimated 2,500 MW.

Other hydropower projects in southern Africa include Kariba (shared by Zambia and Zimbabwe), Kafue Gorge in Zambia, Kidatu in Tanzania, Maguga in Swaziland, and the Bethlehem power project in South Africa, among others. □

THE POTENTIAL for renewable energy development in Africa is growing as both investors and regional leaders seek a new clean energy frontier.

According to the African Development Bank (AfDB), the continent could become a "gold mine" for renewable energy due to abundant solar and wind resources.

However, the development of the industry has

been made difficult by lack of financial resources and poor infrastructure.

Meeting at the Africa Carbon Forum in Senegal in October, officials from the African Union (AU), AfDB, and power utilities shared strategies for "Clean Development Mechanism" (CDM) projects on the continent, such as greenhouse gas-reducing initiatives.

The focus of the meeting was centred on the possi-

bility of future CDM projects under a successor agreement to the Kyoto Protocol.

Yet so far, Africa has benefited the least among all continents from the US\$7 billion annual CDM market.

Since the European Union began trading "carbon credits" through its Emissions Trading Scheme in 2005, only 27 of the 1,156 CDM projects included under the scheme have been registered in Africa.

A report by the AfDB released at the meeting provides further evidence of the continent's potential.

Sub-Saharan Africa has the potential to provide more than 170 gigawatts (GW) of additional power-generation capacity -- more than double the sub-region's current installations through 3,200 "low-carbon" energy projects, such as combined heat-and-power, biofuels production, mass transportation, and energy efficiency, says the report. □

Solar power brings hope for rural clinics in Madagascar

THE USE of solar energy in rural Madagascar has brought relief to many areas that were previously disadvantaged.

Still unconnected to the national grid, several rural hospitals and clinics have recently been equipped with solar technology to produce their own electricity.

Before the initiative spearheaded by the

Madagascan government, rural residents had to bring their own candles to be attended to during the night.

According to the country's 2007 National Development Report, only three percent of the rural population are connected to the national electricity grid, yet 85 percent of Madagascar's 17 million people live in the countryside.

Another problem facing the country is that of infrastructure which has prevented the investment in electricity by private investors in the rural areas.

With the new initiative, each room at the local clinic is equipped with light bulbs. Most clinics have also been able to remove the generators that used to power refrigerators that store vaccinations and medicines. □

Angola to boost oil production in 2009

ANGOLA EXPECTS to boost its oil production in 2009 to 2.5 million barrels a day.

According to a government statement, Cabinet Ministers approved a 2009 budget based on a projected oil production of 779 million barrels.

The Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) puts

Angola's current daily production at about 1.7 million barrels a day, the largest on the African continent.

Angola joined OPEC in 2007, making it the newest member of the organisation. This year, Angola surpassed Nigeria as the leading producer of oil on the continent. □



Angola is the leading oil producer on the continent.

SADC and DBSA sign MoU for project investment facility

SADC HAS signed an agreement with the Development Bank of Southern Africa to strengthen capacity in producing projects that can attract investors.

This is a first step towards the SADC Project Preparation and Development Facility (PPDF), to be established within the context of the Regional Development Fund, as an instrument to finance regional cooperation and integration projects.

The PPDF is expected to strengthen preparation of viable regional infrastructure projects and unleash abundant project capital available in the

region by developing capacity for project identification, preparation and development.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by the SADC Executive Secretary, Tomaz Augusto Salomão, and Paul Baloyi, Chief Executive of the DBSA.

The parties said the purpose of the MoU is to clarify principles, roles and functional areas of cooperation between the SADC Secretariat and the DBSA in respect of hosting and implementing the SADC PPDF.

"This will ensure that projects are bankable and attractive to investors, and thereby contribute to the enhancement of

the state of infrastructure in the region," a SADC statement said.

The next step is to put in place an appropriate framework for managing the facility, SADC said, adding that

Member States in collaboration with DBSA will urgently examine an appropriate framework with a view to having the facility fully operational by the end of 2008. □

South Africa, Venezuela sign major energy deal

SOUTH AFRICA and Venezuela have sealed a major oil deal that could reduce the cost of fuel in South Africa and the region.

Although no details were available, the deal is likely to include plans for Venezuela to supply crude oil at preferential rates to South Africa's state oil company, PetroSA.

South Africa's pioneering gas-to-liquid technology, while PetroSA is looking to invest in oil exploration and production in Venezuela.

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez said his country was interested in using South Africa's oil storage capacity of some 45 million barrels and help expand its refining capacity.

With the world facing unstable oil prices, Chavez said it is imperative that nations of the South unite behind a "new strategic agenda, to conduct a true strategic change in international relations." □

NEPAD and SADC launch business hub

THE NEPAD Business Foundation has held talks with business leaders in the SADC region to consolidate private sector involvement in regional and continental development.

Through the NEPAD-SADC Business Hub, the two organisations hope to increase private sector participation at a regional level.

"This consolidation into regional trading hubs will allow SADC to stack up and engage in respectable trade relations and set terms of trade that are favourable for both sides and have a formidable partner that is good for reciprocity," said Reuel Khoza, chairperson of the NBF.

The joint business hub will:

- ♦ ensure the private sector's role in the development of economic growth in the region.
- ♦ address the current challenges in conducting business in the region.

♦ promote trade and investment flows.

♦ reinforce the role of the private sector for relevant trade and economic policies.

♦ strengthen regional integration. □

Inflation hits double figures in most SADC countries

INFLATION FIGURES during the third quarter hit double digits in most SADC countries, mainly due to an increase in electricity, oil, food and housing costs.

South Africa's main inflation rate rose to 13 percent in August, a little above forecasts by the South African Reserve Bank. The annual rise in inflation accelerated from 11.6 percent in July.

A similar trend affected Zambian inflation, recording 13.2 percent in August, 0.6 percent higher than the July rate of 12.6 percent. Compared

with the same period last year, the annual rate of inflation increased by 2.5 percentage points, from 10.2 percent.

Botswana's inflation accelerated to a year-on-year rate of 15 percent in August as transport and food costs increased. According to the Central Statistics Office in Gaborone, the inflation rate rose from 14.5 percent in July.

A few countries in the region, including Angola, Malawi, Namibia and the United Republic of Tanzania, still enjoy single digit inflation figures. □

Feasibility study on Zambia-Angola railway link

THE ZAMBIAN government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with local and international firms to revamp the connection to the Benguela railway line.

The China Railway Engineering Corporation, AYR Group of Australia and Trans-Zambezi Railways Ltd., a Zambian company, are to undertake a feasibility study on the construction of a 750-kilometre stretch of railway line from Chingola to Solwezi to link to the Benguela railway line at Jimbe in Angola.

The chairperson of Trans-Zambezi, Kapembe Nsingo, said the feasibility study would start in the last quarter of 2008.

The MoU is intended to mobilise finance for the construction of a railway line to run from the Copperbelt through North-Western province to Jimbe. Government withdrew the licence for the construction of the rail line from North-West Railway because of the alleged slow pace in starting the project. □

Southern Africa Environment Outlook 2008

A NEW regional report soon to be published by SADC will provide an in-depth integrated analysis of southern Africa's environment.

The Southern Africa Environment Outlook assesses the current state of the environment in the region, and reflects on trends over the past decade.

The report highlights key emerging environmental issues in southern Africa, and also presents a set of future scenarios for the region.

"SADC recognises that natural resources are critical to regional development and poverty eradication and hence enshrined 'sustainable utilisation of natural resources and effective protection of the environment' in the revised SADC Treaty," the SADC Executive Secretary, Tomaz Augusto Salomão, says in his foreword to the book.

"In line with the Treaty, the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) calls for regular environmental assessment, monitoring and reporting for purposes of analysing regional trends.

"The importance of environmental sustainability in the SADC region is also reflected in the many regional and international agreements to which Member States are signatory. Furthermore, the critical nature of natural resources to economic, social and political integration was also recognised at the Rio Earth Summit of 1992."

The preparation of the Southern Africa Environment Outlook was coordinated by the Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC) through its Musokotwane Environment Resource Centre for Southern Africa (IMERCSA), as part of the Communicating the Environment Programme (CEP), in collaboration with

the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and IUCN-The World Conservation Union.

SARDC IMERCSA is the regional collaborating centre for UNEP on environmental assessment and reporting for southern Africa, and provides the regional assessment for the Africa Environment Outlook and the Global Environment Outlook.

Preparation of the Southern Africa Environment Outlook was based on a wide consultative and participatory process, during which consensus

African governments commit to reducing environmental threats to health

A RECENT gathering of environment and health ministers in Libreville, Gabon, saw the signature and adoption of the Libreville Declaration which commits governments to take measures to stimulate policy, institutional and investment reforms to optimise synergies between health, environment and other relevant sectors.

The Gabon meeting highlighted the need to address health, environment and economic development issues in an interrelated manner to generate new synergies in poverty reduction and social equity.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) website quoted Luis Sambo, the Regional Director of WHO Regional Office for Africa, as saying "The signing of this landmark declaration is the first step towards saving the lives of millions of people from the harmful effects of changes in the environment.

"We will work together to promote strategic alliances between health and environment. I am delighted that we have managed to secure politi-



Interactions between the atmosphere and the land surface cause variability in climate patterns.

around regional perspectives and priorities was built over a 10-year period.

The Southern Africa Environment Outlook (SAEO) is published almost 15 years after the first comprehensive State of the Environment in Southern Africa, produced by CEP in 1994, and six years after a major report on water, *Defining and Mainstreaming*

Environmental Sustainability in Water Resources Management in Southern Africa, launched at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002.

SADC plans to produce environmental reports more often in line with the RISDP targets for five-yearly intervals. The next report is expected to review the period 2005-2010. □

cal commitment to catalyse institutional changes needed to improve the health and well-being of communities in the region."

It is estimated that a quarter of the total burden of diseases in developing countries is associated with environmental risk factors.

According to a WHO report, in Africa 23 percent or 2.4 million of all deaths in 2006 were attributed to environmental risk factors.

The environmental risk factors to which Africa is exposed include inadequate water supply, sanitation and hygiene, as well as poor water resource management and unsafe water environments.

Africa's coverage of safe drinking water and safe sanitation stands at about 56 and 37 percent of the population, respectively.

While there has been an overall improvement in the coverage of water supply in Africa since 1990, the regional projected coverage in 2015 still falls well below the MDG target of 75 percent. As such the

vast majority of Africa's population will continue to rely on unsafe water sources, which themselves are exposed to increasing contamination and pollution.

About 90 percent of the global burden of malaria and of schistosomiasis affects the population of sub-Saharan Africa. Cholera is also an important water-related, vector-borne disease which is prevalent in some parts of Africa.

The impact of air pollution on health is seen in the increasing cases of respiratory illnesses such as asthma, bronchitis and tuberculosis.

According to the fourth Global Environment Outlook (GEO-4) report, Africa also faces challenges associated with chemical safety. African farmers use large amounts of chemical pesticides, and there are as much as 50,000 tonnes of obsolete stockpiles of pesticides contaminating soil, water, air, and food.

The Libreville Declaration acknowledges that Africa is one of the most vulnerable regions to climate change. □

SADC Gender Protocol: From commitment to action

by Patience Zirima

APPROVAL OF the groundbreaking Protocol on Gender and Development by 12 southern African countries brings with it the need to take action by all stakeholders so as to accelerate the empowerment of women in the region through speedy implementation.

Signed by 11 Member States at the 28th SADC Summit held in South Africa in August 2008, the protocol is widely regarded as historic and groundbreaking insofar as empowerment of women in the region is concerned.

Madagascar and Mauritius had not immediately signed, but have since appended signature to the protocol. Botswana and Malawi are yet to sign.

Planned initiatives towards implementation of the agreement include meetings organized by the SADC Gender Unit and its partners such as one to develop a regional monitoring tool that will monitor and track implementation of the gender equality commitments made by SADC Member States and another to develop guidelines for the implementation of the 50 percent target representation of women in politics and decision making.

The Southern African Gender Protocol Alliance, consisting of gender and women's non-governmental organizations (NGOs), has parallel complementary actions outlined in a consolidated plan still in draft form. Actions include activities on tracking, monitoring and evaluating progress towards achieving goals set out in the protocol.

Legal and gender experts who participated in the Southern African Protocol Alliance meeting held prior to the SADC Summit, described the protocol



Gender machineries in the region remain committed to realizing the speedy ratification and implementation of the SADC Gender Protocol.

“as the most far-reaching of any sub-regional instrument for achieving gender equality.”

Participants said it was time for southern Africa to move from being “a region of commitments to one of action.”

Former South African President, Thabo Mbeki, who assumed the SADC chair on behalf of his country during the summit, said the signing of the protocol was one of the most important decisions that the regional organisation took this year.

“This protocol is important because it consolidates all the important SADC policies and programmes dealing with gender equity. The protocol will help our region to advance the process of women's emancipation through policies, laws, programmes and projects which all Member States have to implement,” Mbeki said.

Now that the protocol has been signed, the next stage is to ensure ratification by Member States for the protocol to enter into force.

Ratification of the protocol implies readiness by Member States to begin implementation, which involves domestication of the regional policy into national legislation and policy. To formalize ratification, a Member State is required to deposit legal papers known as Instruments

of Ratification with the SADC Secretariat.

The ratification process, however, can take several years before the protocol receives the requisite two-thirds majority for it to have legal force. This brings into prominence the need for gender movements in

the region to work closely together with national gender machineries in Member States if early ratification is to be achieved, just as they did in preparation for the historical Beijing conference in 1995.

In Article 40, the gender pact says, “The protocol shall be ratified by the signatory states in accordance with their constitutional procedures.” SADC Member States, however, have different constitutional requirements for ratification.

In some countries, the protocol has legal force once the president has signed the document whereas others require parliamentary approval before the head of state or government can pass an international agreement as ratified. □

SADC joins “16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence” campaign

THE YEAR 2008 marks the 18th edition of the global campaign widely known as “16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence”.

The campaign links issues concerning violence against women and human rights and emphasises that all forms of violence, whether perpetrated in the public or private sphere, are a violation of human rights.

The dates chosen for the campaign symbolically make this link - 25 November marks the International Day Against Gender Based Violence and 10 December is International Human Rights Day.

This year's campaign activities have been extended for 365 days for the purpose of highlighting the organising efforts of a broader movement for women's human rights and to provide others with examples of activities and strategies

used by individuals and organisations during the campaign.

For this year's campaign, the SADC Gender Unit has mobilised men-to-men groups to form a strong male force to support the campaign and to create teams of male supporters to participate in the ongoing campaign in various countries in the region.

The presence of men in the struggle to combat gender-based violence is gradually creating new voices aimed at addressing other men and encouraging them to re-think their attitudes and behaviour, tackling critical issues about masculinity and male responsibility.

This year's theme is “Human Rights for Women - Human Rights for all: Universal Declaration for Human Rights 60 years after.” □





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EVENTS DIARY December 2008

November
12-14, Tunisia

African Economic Conference

Organised by the African Development Bank, the conference brings together government and the private sector to discuss implementation of better economic policies in light of the global financial crisis. The conference seeks to encourage research and information dissemination on economic issues of interest to the continent.

18 - 19, Botswana

Groundwater in the SADC Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) Initiative Conference

The conference will discuss groundwater-related issues in the SADC Region and strategise on how to replicate the SADC Groundwater Management initiative into continent-wide processes on groundwater utilisation and management. It is jointly organised by SADC, the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW), and Germany Agency for Technical Co-operation (GTZ).

29 Nov- 2 Dec,
Qatar

International Conference on Financing for Development

The Conference aims at assessing progress made in 2008 in the financial sector in developing countries. The conference brings together government representatives from developing countries and hopes to reaffirm goals and commitments, share best practices, lessons learned and identify obstacles and constraints encountered by most developing countries.

December
1, Global

World Aids Day

On 1 December every year, SADC and the rest of the world comes together to commemorate World AIDS Day. The theme for this year is "Stop AIDS. Keep the Promise."

8-12, Belgium

Joint SADC-EC EPA Technical and Senior Officials meeting

Representatives from SADC and the European Union will meet to negotiate the Economic Partnership Agreements that failed to bring any positive aspects in the last round in August.

10, Global

International Human Rights Day

International Human Rights Day is marked every year worldwide with activities led by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The day marks the anniversary of the Assembly's adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.

15-17, Libya

High-level Conference on Water for Agriculture and Energy in Africa

The conference aims at unlocking the potential of water for development in Africa. More specifically, it will assess the challenges faced by the agricultural sector in Africa taking into account the strong linkages with energy and climate change. The conference will carefully examine how investment in the rural space can reverse trends to obtain well-balanced sub-sectors that offset production risks.



21 years

22 December 1987

Zimbabwe Unity Accord



MORE THAN two decades ago, on 22 December 1987, the two liberation parties in Zimbabwe – the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) signed the historic Unity Agreement that ensured peace and political development.

The then Prime Minister and First Secretary of ZANU, Robert Mugabe and the leader of ZAPU, Joshua Nkomo, signed the Unity Agreement effectively stopping the political instability that had erupted since the early 1980s.

The Unity Agreement was significant in that it showed that the leaders of the dominant parties had the capacity to resolve their ideological and political differences for the nation and the region in general.

Speaking after the signing ceremony, Mugabe remarked that: "Today is a great day. It is great because we have seen the coming together in body, mind and spirit of our two parties.

"What we are witnessing is a tremendous blow to the forces of negation, the forces of division, the forces of destruction...let them be murdered and laid to rest for eternity."

Nkomo went on to say that the accord was "the beginning of unity, for unity is not just the signing of documents, unity is what follows."

The historic agreement of 1987 was not the first attempt to achieve unity in the country; the first united front was achieved in 1896, during the First Chimurenga War against white domination and colonial bondage when the Shona and Ndebele leaders collaborated to resist colonial domination.

The accord was described by Nathan Shamuyarira, a historian and nationalist leader, as "the final and successful effort" to unite ZANU and ZAPU.

The road towards achieving unity was potholed by many impediments and credit must be given to Mugabe and Nkomo for their remarkable fortitude and determination in the face of vicissitudes of the liberation struggle and negotiations in the early years of Zimbabwe's independence.

The Patriotic Front was a child of the liberation struggle, and was formed by the two parties in 1976 to provide a joint front at the Geneva talks.

This followed the coming together of the parties under the banner of the African National Council to give a resounding "No" to the Pearce Commission on constitutional change.

As remarked by Kenneth Kaunda, the then President of Zambia, the benefits that accrued from such a sacrifice outweighed the sweat and toil occasioned by the thorny path towards the agreement.

The talks were by no means achieved over night, to the contrary they broke down along the way and a remarkable feat of balancing and compromise was required of all concerned.

That the leaders who effected the Unity Agreement could actually understand and accommodate the other's demands is worthy of praise.

The extension of the hand of peace was an act replete with sincerity and the acclaimed virtue of forgiveness.

Mbeki's legacy: Toward empowerment of Africa and countries of the South

THABO MBEKI'S legacy was established even before he became the President of South Africa when, as deputy president, he laid out his vision for the continent and inspired a new generation of Africans throughout the continent with his leadership. Speaking on behalf of the African National Congress on the occasion of the adoption by the Constitutional Assembly of the Republic of South Africa Constitution Bill in May 1996 in Cape Town, he made a commitment and a speech that has become both a road map and a classic. It begins and ends as follows:

"On an occasion such as this we should, perhaps, start from the beginning. So let me begin. I am an African. I owe my being to the hills and the valleys, the mountains and the glades, the rivers, the deserts, the tree, the flowers, the seas and the ever-changing seasons that define the face of our native land. ...I know what it signifies when race and colour are used to

determine who is human and who subhuman. I have seen the destruction of all sense of self-esteem, the consequent striving to be what one is not, simply to acquire some of the benefits which those who had improved themselves as masters had ensured that they enjoy. I have experience of the situation in which race and colour is used to enrich some and impoverish the rest. I have seen the corruption of minds and souls as a result of the pursuit of an ignoble effort to perpetrate a veritable crime against humanity. ... I am born of a people who would not tolerate oppression. ...The thing that we have done today, in this small corner of a great continent that has contributed so decisively to the evolution of humanity, says that Africa reaffirms that she is continuing her rise from the ashes. Whatever the setbacks of the moment, nothing can stop us now! Whatever the difficulties Africa shall be at peace! Whoever we may be, whatever our immediate interest, however much we carry baggage from our past, however much we have been caught by the fashion of cynicism and loss of faith in the capacity of the people, let us say today: Nothing can stop us now! (Thabo Mbeki, Africa ~ the time has come ~)

The continent strengthened its governance with the establishment of the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and the leading countries of the South strengthened their collaboration, notably India, Brazil and South Africa, to contribute to "further empowerment of the countries of the South".

Public Holidays in SADC December 2008 – February 2009

8 December	Immaculate Conception Day	Seychelles
8 December	Eid-ul-Adha	Tanzania
9 December	Independence Day	Tanzania
10 December	International Human Rights	Namibia
16 December	Incwala Day	Swaziland
16 December	Day of Reconciliation	South Africa
22 December	National Unity Day	Zimbabwe
25 December	Christmas Day	SADC
26 December	Boxing Day	Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Malawi and Zimbabwe
26 December	Family Day	Namibia
26 December	Day of Goodwill	South Africa
1 January	New Year's Day	SADC
3 January	Public Holiday	Botswana
4 January	Marty's Day	Angola, DRC
12 January	Zanzibar Revolutionary Day	Tanzania
15 January	John Chilembwe Day	Malawi
16-17 January	Patrice Lumumba Day	DRC
18 January	Kabila Hero Day	DRC
26 January	Chinese Spring Festival	Mauritius
1 February	Abolition of Slavery	Mauritius
3 February	Heroes Day	Mozambique
4 February	National Armed Struggle Day	Angola
5 February	Chama Cha Mapinduzi Day	Tanzania
8 February	Thaiposam Cavadee	Mauritius
23 February	Maha Shivratrie	Mauritius

* Depends on visibility of the moon