SADC TODAY

Southern African Development Community

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Five member states begin implementing trade protocol

Five SADC member states have set the pace in implementing the Trade Protocol, launched in September last year.

By January this year, Botswana, Lesotho, Mauritius, South Africa and Swaziland had deposited their instruments of implementation with the Secretariat, a crucial requirement stipulated in the Trade Protocol, and one that countries need to fulfil as the first stage for bringing down trade barriers over the agreed eight-year period.

It is hoped that the other countries would follow suit soon, as the deadline for submission of the instruments is February.

Countries are also expected to give full progress reports during the SADC Ministers of Trade and Council meetings in South Africa this month. Council meets in Midrand, from 18-24 February 2001.

Although member states were given the six months from September to February to deposit instruments of implementation with the SADC Secretariat, "they have until August 2001 to implement the Trade Protocol," according to information from the Secretariat in Botswana.

However, a number of outstanding issues still remain such as agreement on certain rules of origin for sensitive products, but it was agreed that these would not delay the implementation of the protocol. The second phase of the process of tariff reduction was also set for 1 January 2002.

Meanwhile the Trade Implementation Unit (TIU), the institutional mechanism approved by trade ministers in September has been set up at the SADC Secretariat. The unit's mandate includes coordinating the day-to-day operations of the implementation of the Free Trade Area.

The nucleus of the unit is composed of three experts in trade, customs and trade-related legal matters. These have, however, not been appointed yet.

As an interim measure, three countries – Lesotho, South Africa and Zimbabwe – have seconded staff to the Secretariat to carry out the work of the TIU.

By the end of January, the three seconded officials had taken up their assignments and were already communicating with all stakeholders in an effort to monitor the progress made by individual members in implementing their commitments under the Trade Protocol.□

Tragedy strikes as Kabila is killed by lone assassin

by Kondwani Chirambo

The cold hand of death crept across Africa's third largest country once again, claiming the life of its President Laurent Desire Kabila on Tuesday 16 January. Three shots from the gun of his personal bodyguard wounded the DRC leader, leading to his death.

News of the assassination was conflicting, often confusing. The circumstances of his death were murky and highly contradictory as foreign missions and media tried to piece the story together.

President's office - Zimbabwe

Soldiers carry the body of President Kabila to his final resting place in Kinshasa

Confirmation of Kabila's demise was not to come until two days after the shooting, when the Congolese government officially announced that Kabila had died of his wounds in Zimbabwe where he had been flown soon after being shot. Leaders of the 14-member SADC, of which DRC is part, worried about the future of The Lusaka Peace Accord they had pursued for two years without much success.

The DRC is at the centre of what some have called "Africa's First World War". Six foreign armies are locked in defensive and offensive positions in the Congo's most complicated scenario yet. Zimbabwe, Namibia and Angola have supported the DRC government against rebel forces backed by Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi. Elements of Angola's rebel Unita movement are also said to be part of the rebel forces.

Diplomatic initiatives at regional and international levels have failed to decisively end the fighting in the Congo, despite the signing of a ceasefire agreement in Lusaka in July 1999. Violations

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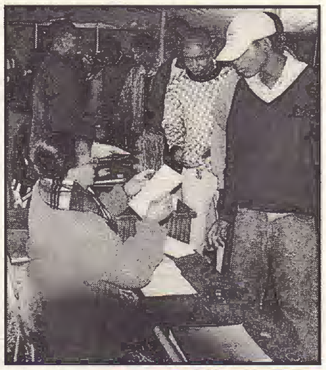


SADC on restructuring mission; sectors to be merged

The SADC Council of Ministers meet in Midrand, South Africa, 18-24 February to endorse a proposal that seeks to overhaul the organization's structures to improve its ability to mobilize resources as well as enhance its operational performance.

Council, SADC's second highest decision-making structure after the Summit, met in November last year to adopt a proposal that will reorganize SADC's programmes and activities around four core clusters of sectors, down from the current 21 coordinated by its 14 member countries.

The sectors will be moved from the member states into an enlarged secretariat where they will be under the jurisdiction of directorates who will receive support from national committees.

The proposal says committees of relevant ministries will be set up to oversee operations of the clusters, and will be given authority to make decisions on project implementation without reference to the full council.

The four core clusters are:

- trade, industry, finance and investment;
- infrastructure and services;
- food, agriculture and natural resources; and
- social and human development.

A decision was made at the 1998 Maputo summit to restructure all SADC structures including the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security. The terms of reference for the restructuring committee were later approved by Council in Mbabane last year.

It was not clear at the time of writing what would happen to the Organ, as well as the Commissions – the Energy Commission in Angola and the Southern African Transport and Communications Commission in Mozambique.

The restructuring exercise was "an outcome of the realization of the fact that our organization is not moving at the pace that is desirable for our regional integration," said Mozambican Foreign Affairs Minister Leonardo Simão, then chairperson of Council when he addressed an Extraordinary Session of the Council of Ministers last year.

"One of the main problems, which impedes the organization from moving at the pace that member states would like to see, is the fact that there is not a definition of a common agenda, goals, priorities, deadlines as well as a regional development plan.

"The current integrated development based on the sectoral strategy is limited by an inadequate management framework, which does not respond clearly with regard to the articulation of the objectives, policies, priorities and deadlines."

The current decentralized system, where sectoral staff are mostly seconded from, and essentially under the control of national governments, has been criticized for poor coordination among some sectors and failure to recognize the critical synergies that exist between and among the sectors.

The different capacities of the member states in terms of human, material and financial resources have resulted in sectors functioning differently, and often impacting negatively on operational performance.

Simão said while the existing structure is effective as far as it creates a sense of ownership of SADC by member states, its main weakness "is related to the level of performance and implementation of the activities of different sectors, which vary considerably as a result of the capacity of the host country to sustain them."

The current recommendation is expected to be approved by an Extraordinary SADC Summit due to meet in March to look specifically at this issue, as well as the appointment of the head of the secretariat.

SADC portfolios

Country	Sector coordinated
Angola	Energy
Botswana	Agricultural Research; Livestock Production Animal Disease Control
Lesotho	Environment and Land Management Water
Malawi	Inland Fisheries; Forestry; Wildlife
Mauritius	Tourism
Mozambique	Culture, Information and Sport; Transport, Communications and Meteorology
Namibia	Legal Affairs; Marine Fisheries and Resources
South Africa	Finance and Investment; Health
Swaziland	Human Resources Development
Tanzania	Industry and Trade
Zambia	Employment and Labour; Mining
Zimbabwe	Crop Production; Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources

NB: The DRC and Seychelles have no sectoral responsibilities

AIDS prevention remains a priority for SADC

by Renato Pinto

Although major efforts have been mobilized to combat AIDS throughout southern Africa, the pandemic is still raging and poses a growing threat to regional economic development.

The challenges of AIDS to development on the continent was the main issue during the Africa Development Forum 2000 in Addis Ababa last December, when African leaders reiterated their commitment to fight the pandemic.

On the last day of the meeting, leaders stressed the important role of a national campaign of morality, involving all social sectors under government leadership. President Festus Mogae of Botswana called upon his colleagues to deal with the HIV/AIDS epidemic as an emergency and respond with measures that a crisis deserves.

Mogae also suggested that an appeal be made to developed countries to convince major pharmaceutical countries to reduce the cost of anti-AIDS drugs.

President Festus Mogae of Botswana

However, Graça Machel warned African governments not to allow the scarcity of resources to impede efforts.

She said the continent must mobilize its own resources to fight AIDS.

"The truth of the matter is that over the past decades we have heard many promises from the international community to provide billions of dollars to assist the development efforts of Africa.

Only too often those promises have not been kept or the assistance has been given in ways that undermine rather than support us," Machel said.

The scourge has caused serious setbacks to national economic growth in some southern African countries. The Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey (ZDHS) Report for 1999 recently released in Harare by the Central Statistical Office shows that one child in 10 born after 1995 will not reach the age of five because of the worsening economic conditions and the impact of AIDS.

"The truth of the matter is that over the past decades we have heard many promises from the international community to provide billions of dollars to assist the development efforts of Africa."

This report concluded that increased poverty has exposed many children to malnutrition and infectious diseases, such as diarrhea and malaria. AIDS is the aggravating circumstance to the already vulnerable state of this age group.

AIDS and its related diseases are blamed for the increasing number of deaths among adults, especially in the 15 and 49 age group, which strikes deeply at the most productive sectors.

In Botswana, AIDS is likely to carve 20 percent off government's budget and reduce the income of the poor by 13 percent. Life expectancy at birth is now estimated to be 44 instead of the average of 69 before AIDS became the country's greatest killer.

In South Africa, a report by the department of education reveals that one in four university undergraduate, one in eight postgraduate and one in five technical students is HIV-positive.

The report urges renovation of the education system, including hiring back retired teachers to replace those who have died.

AIDS has also affected the private sector through lost productivity and the need to spend more on hiring inexperienced workers and retraining others as their labour force becomes sick. Companies must also pay more for insurance and medical care.

However, the World Economic Forum's Africa Competitiveness Report 2000/1 reveals that HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns are not creating sufficient impact on the private sector.

According to this report, a majority of business leaders surveyed in 30 African countries believed AIDS will have an impact on productivity in such areas as training, health care, lost-time due to illness and funeral attendance.

According to the latest joint United Nations Programme on AIDS (UNAIDS) the pandemic could cut South Africa's GDP 17 percent by 2010.

In Botswana, UNAIDS estimates the HIV prevalence rate to be 36 percent of the working age population.

The UN figures also show that 3.8 million people became infected with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa last year, bringing the total number of people living with AIDS to 25.3 million. At the same time, 2.4 million people died of AIDS in Africa.

African countries have battled the secretive, western-dominated pharmaceutical industry to make drugs affordable to African national budgets.

However, the industry and many western governments argue that those companies sell drugs at high prices in order to recover research and development costs.

Many of the drugs, critics charge, have been improperly tested or are being tested on humans for the first time in Africa.

Some of them are known to have serious, sometimes fatal, side effects and are not effective to the strains of HIV prevalent in the sub-Saharan Africa.

Lack of resources nourishes the pandemic in the region, making any poverty eradication programme have, as its highest priority a strategy to deal with AIDS.

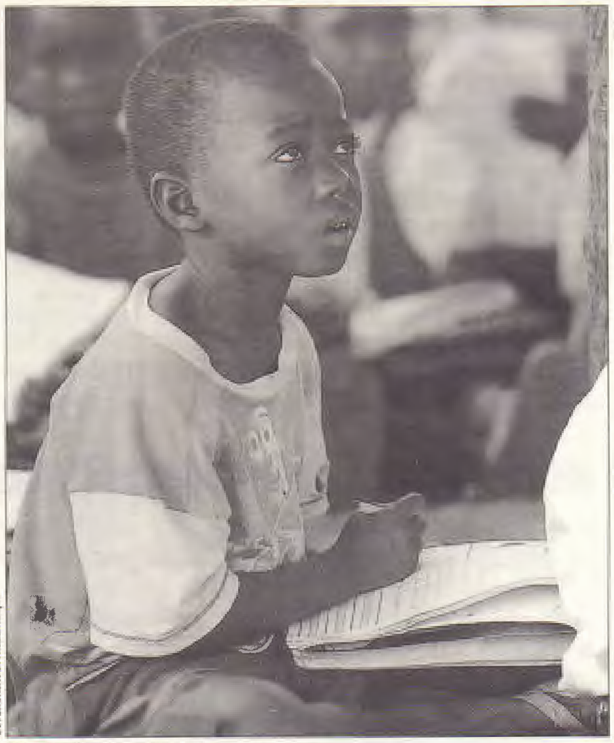
Because there is no cure yet for the fatal disease, this strategy must focus on effective prevention. □

'Speed up debt cancellation or face repudiation'

by Munetsi Madakufamba

The search for solutions to end the crushing debt problem in developing countries has reached a new pitch as NGOs embark on a campaign to lobby governments to form "debt cartels" as a way of strengthening their negotiating power with northern creditors.

Civil society, fed up with the evasive and contradictory efforts of rich countries in their handling of the debt crisis, say their past efforts to persuade creditor countries and institutions to extend debt relief have at best been manipulated, and at worst completely ignored. Instead of complete write-offs, which are crucial to releasing vital resources towards essential services such as health and education, developed countries have often only managed to reschedule (defer) the debt.



Hoping for a debt-free future

"Arrogant!" is how activists have described the behaviour of northern governments and the international financial institutions — led by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund – in which they are majority shareholders.

Activists have for the past decade advocated debt cancellation, a solution that creditors have some control over. Now the creditors risk outright repudiation, that is, a unilateral termination of debt repayments by the South.

In 1997, South Africa cancelled the debt that it was owed by Namibia. Many rich countries have taken similar action but usually on a piece-meal basis.

Evidence suggests efforts to solve third world debt problems have so far not been sufficient, prompting civil society groups to call on affected countries to "stop paying now".

Debt-related figures in poor countries are shocking. The UN estimates that 19,000 children die each day as a result of the social impact of debt. Millions of women and men are dying every year of preventable diseases, lack of clean water and sanitation – and millions of children are not in school, two-thirds of them girls.

And yet the G8 industrialized countries, which are due to hold their annual summit in Italy in July, hope to cut by half the number of people living in absolute poverty only by 2015.

"For every dollar that rich countries lend to developing countries $8 comes straight back in the form of repayment on debts owed to the rich countries," says Anglican Archbishop Njongokulu Ndungane of Cape Town, successor to the world-revered and now retired Desmond Tutu, who is championing the fight against apartheid-caused debt in South Africa.

"So wealth is not trickling down from the rich to the poor, as people like to think. Wealth is actually pouring from the South to the North," he says in a paper published by *Debtchannel.org*.

Countries of the South find themselves giving away, virtually for nothing, earnings from their precious commodities like coffee, copper, tea and sugar. This is a form of economics that denies the world humanity, rich and poor alike, says Ndungane, who is also one of South Africa's great Robben Island legends. (He served three years of hard labour on the notorious island as a political prisoner.)

The Bank and the Fund's much publicised Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative, which the two institutions claim is helping to spring poor countries out of the debt trap, has been criticised its many inadequacies. To qualify for this scheme, countries have to fulfil strict conditions designed to restructure the economy, many of which have a negative impact on the poorest people.

In Mozambique, one of the first "beneficiaries" of the 1996 HIPC scheme, the government was forced to open up its cashew nut industry and begin sending raw nuts abroad for processing instead of processing them locally, as part of the conditions qualify for debt relief. Today, the cashew nuts are fetching a lower price on the international market, while more and more Mozambicans are losing their jobs.

And to make matters worse, the debt relief plan will save Mozambique precisely US$10 million-a-year out of a debt burden estimated at US$5.5 billion – and this after the intervention of civil society which exposed many irregularities in the original plan. It could have been worse. To service the remainder will still cost Mozambique twice what it is able to spend on health care.

So far 22 of the 41 HIPC countries have "benefited" from the scheme, four of them from the region – Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia. But the 22 countries will still have to pay $2 billion-a-year to rich creditors, leaving the majority still spending far more on debt repayment than on than education and health.

Zambia, which was granted debt relief in December 2000, will still be paying US$170 million out of its annual budget of US$800 million.

JubileePlus – one of the official successor organisations to the highly successful anti-debt repayment Jubilee 2000 — says that in 2001-2005, Zambia will be

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Mozambique wins long battle over cashew nuts, sugar

by Joseph Hanlon

Mozambique has banned the export of unprocessed cashew nuts, ending a five-year struggle with the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Meanwhile, the IMF has allowed Mozambique to protect its expanding sugar industry — when directors overrode opposition from their own staff.

Allowing Mozambique to protect its two most important agro-industries is a remarkable reversal by the international financial institutions.

It results from intense pressure from the Mozambican government, trade unions and the business setor which was taken up by vocal international advocacy groups.

Cashew nut production became a symbol of mindless trade liberalisation when in 1995 the World Bank forced Mozambique to allow the unrestricted export of unprocessed cashew nuts to India. The World Bank argued that peasant producers would gain higher prices from the free market. But it did not happen — as a monopoly buyer, India pushed down the price.

Transfer pricing also lowered the price paid to Mozambique; and traders within Mozambique-pocketed larger margins.

So the peasants lost out, while nearly 10,000 industrial workers (half of them women) became unemployed.

For five years Mozambique has campaigned for the ban. Finally, on 18 December the IMF Executive Board agreed on a policy under which some cashew factories will be closed, but the rest will be protected.

Meanwhile, the IMF Executive Board rejected a demand from its own staff, and agreed that Mozambique can protect its sugar industry, which is now being rehabilitated with major foreign investment. IMF staff had argued that since Mozambique could import sugar cheaper than producing it, it should allow duty-free import of sugar.

> "The IMF Executive Board rejected a demand from its own staff, and agreed that Mozambique can protect its sugar industry."

Investors had demanded protection and were backed by the government. On 18 December, the IMF board agreed with the government. □

Rich nations urged to accelerate debt cancellation

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paying substantially more to the IMF and World Bank than other creditors under the "enhanced" HIPC debt deal. Jubilee, a coalition of churches and NGOs did sterling work in raising awareness around the world of the debt crisis.

Zambia was granted US$3.8 billion as total debt relief from all its creditors, but analysts say its debt payments obligations rise steeply from US$65 million in 2003 to US$119 million in 2004 when interim assistance from the IMF will end. "These disbursements will make it even more difficult for Zambia to release resources from its budget for poverty reduction initiatives," argues JubileePlus.

> "This is a human rights emergency!"

Adrian Lovett of Drop the Debt - another successor to Jubilee 2000 - says: "Rich creditors who have hugh gold reserves and untapped loan-loss accounts do not need Zambia's money."

The criticism levelled against inadequate debt relief plans for Mozambique and Zambia under the HIPC initiative is much the same for Malawi and Tanzania, the other so-called beneficiaries.

Tanzania, which owes foreign donors a staggering US$7 billion, will be paying US$150 million a year, compared to US$87 million allocated to health in the 1999 budget.

Like many African countries, Tanzania needed money at independence in 1961, to improve its infrastructure as well as to educate its illiterate society. At this time of need, the North moved in quickly to offer loans at extremely low interest rates and without many other options, Tanzania could not turn down the offers.

But interest rates started rising sharply in the 1970s, the same time that exports from developing countries (which were essentially primary products) slumped on the world market. Thus Tanzania was forced to borrow more to pay existing loans as well as spiralling interest, plunging itself into a debt crisis. Today the country owes US$7 billion, an amount which, like many other countries, it is unable to repay.

"This is a human rights emergency!" declares Ndungane.

The situation of Tanzania, and many more indebted poor countries, is what has prompted civil society to opt for debt repudiation.

Russia set the precedent in 1919, just after the Bolshevik Revolution. Without consulting any of its creditors, it unequivocally declared: "All foreign loans are hereby annulled without reserve or exception of any kind whatsoever."

And history is awash with examples of debts cancelled for purely political reasons. For instance, the US cancelled:

- large debts owed by Britain after the two world wars;
- (together with other Western countries) Germany's debt after the Second World War while providing exceedingly generous terms for the repayment of the remainder;
- one-third of Egypt's debt (amounting to US$14 billion) as reward for the north African country's support during the 1991 Gulf War; and
- half of Poland's debt as a contribution towards the country's efforts towards the restoration of capitalism.

If such large debts can be cancelled for political reasons why can't more be written off for social or at least moral reasons – to save the 19,000 children who are dying each day due to debt? □

Integrated approach needed in fight against gender violence

by Alice Kwaramba

Following on the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action, and the 1998 SADC Addendum to the Declaration on Gender and Development some countries – Botswana Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland – identified gender violence as a priority.

In almost all the SADC countries, violence has been narrowly defined as illegal and criminal acts of force. However, a closer look indicates that gender violence is much more complex. For instance, there is widespread violation of one's psychological and emotional wellbeing, and other related threats and arbitrary deprivations of liberties in both private and public sectors.

At a conference held in Maseru, Lesotho from 11-16 December 2000 to review the implementation of the SADC Addendum on the Prevention and Eradication of Violence Against Women and Children, it was reported that governments have taken some measures to eradicate gender violence.

Many countries have done a great deal of work in education, training and awareness building, including training of service providers such as police, prison, and justice officers among others.

Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles, Tanzania and South Africa have undertaken some legal reforms. The Namibian government last year passed a bill to combat rape, which proposes a minimum six-year sentence. The bill also redefines rape to reflect the reality that boys and men can be raped too.

Seychelles has passed the Family Violence Protection of Victims Act, which aims to prevent domestic violence and seeks to empower the Family Tribunal established under the Children's Act, to entertain applications for protection orders.

Mauritius passed the Domestic Violence Act in 1997, which has since been amended, to protect women from domestic violence. Other acts introduced in that country include the Child Protection (Miscellaneous) Act, the Criminal Code (Amendment) Act and the Criminal Code Supplementary (Amendment) Act enacted by the National Assembly in 1998.

Tanzania enacted the Sexual Offences Provision Act in 1998. The Act contains special provisions regarding rape, unnatural sexual offences, prostitution, trafficking of persons for the purposes of trading in sex, child sexual abuse, sexual harassment and female genital mutilation.

South Africa's Domestic Violence Act of 1998 allows battered spouses to obtain a court order against a partner and recognises rape in marriage. The country has also created a more user-friendly system for victims of gender violence, by simplifying procedures.

UNICEF

Domestic violence is prevalent in the family and marriage institutions.

Zambia and Zimbabwe have also created such systems, especially for child victims of rape and abuse, to sensitise policy makers and law enforcement agents on the effects of domestic violence among other forms of violence on women.

Civil society has also played a critical role in the region in raising awareness and lobbying and advocating for violence free societies and communities. In Angola, for instance, centres have been established by the Angolan Women's Organisation to give battered women legal assistance. In Mozambique, organisations involved in gender issues have come together under the name "All Against Violence" to run a programme covering civic education, support for victims of gender violence, and lobbying for the reform of laws that violate women's rights.

In Lesotho, civic groups marked the Rape Alliance Day with a peaceful march to the office of the Minister of Justice and Human Rights to present a petition calling for speedy disposal of rape cases.

Consequently, the Sexual Offences Bill 2000 was drafted. In Swaziland, the Action Group Against Abuse launched a white ribbon campaign.

A media workshop ran parallel to the Maseru conference. Its aim was to raise awareness on violence against women and how to report it to ensure maximum coverage in the mainstream media. It concluded that there is need for the media to be active participants in the struggle against gender violence.

The conference also recommended the need to transform the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development and the Addendum on Violence Against Women and Children into a protocol that binds SADC member states.

An integrated approach by all stakeholders to gender violence was also recommended to ensure efficiency in programmes. □

SADC's Year 2000 in retrospect

by Munetsi Madakufamba

Regional integration is a multidimensional process. It is not only subject to different levels of commitment by member countries, but is dependent on divergent socio-economic and political interests at the national, regional and international levels.

For SADC, the year 2000 provided many developments that can serve to explain the complex nature of regional integration.

On the economic front, SADC's long-conceived free trade area eventually edged closer to being a reality. The Trade Protocol, signed by heads of state and government in 1996, attained the requisite two-thirds ratification in January 2000, allowing it to come into force.

The free trade area was launched on 1 September 2000. Five countries – Botswana, Lesotho, Mauritius, South Africa and Swaziland – had, as of January, 2001, deposited their instruments of implementation. Other countries are reported to be at various stages of fulfilling this crucial requirement, which is the first stage in bringing down trade barriers over the agreed-upon eight-year period.

The stage has, however, been set for deeper market integration, despite the slow start to lifting tariff and non-tariff barriers by some member countries.

And with international forums such as the Smart Partnership Conference (in Maputo) and the *International Herald Tribune* Trade and Investment summit (in Windhoek) continuing to bring to dialogue governments and the private sector in SADC, the gap in interests between politicians and business is bound to narrow.

Through the four-year old Smart Partnership concept — revisited at the September Summit in Maputo — government, private sector and labour representatives use this Malaysia-borrowed model to nurture development ideas. The concept is based on the premise that the three – government, private sector and labour — are indispensable partners in national development.

Malaysia, which experienced devastating race riots in the 1960s, and the financial turmoil of 1997, has relied on the model and the resilience of its people, to return sanity to the economy. Thus with such a sterling example of how radical home-grown recovery programmes can put flagging economies on a sound footing, that southern Africans have every reason to emulate the Malaysians.

President's office - Zimbabwe

Trade and Investment Summits such as SAID 2000 were an opportunity to sell the region's potential

And home-grown programmes have become even more important especially in view of how the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have, by their own admission, mishandled economic crises, particularly those in Africa. Over the last two years, the IMF surprised many, especially in southern Africa with its decision to sell off gold reserves on the pretext that it would finance debt relief for countries such as Mozambique and Tanzania.

First, the IMF misled the world. Mozambique's debt, under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) scheme, has not been cancelled but postponed – Mozambique will still repay at some stage. Second, the gold sale by the IMF and other countries of the Group of Seven industrialised countries has plunged far more people into misery than it has helped – international gold prices have tumbled, turning many mining operations, including some of those in SADC, unviable.

Many gold mines, especially in South Africa and Zimbabwe — two of SADC's major gold producing countries — have shut down, and more are threatened by the falling bullion prices.

This paradox has served as a sharp reminder of why civil society has always questioned the secrecy and sincerity of the Bretton Woods institutions, especially on the back of worsening poverty among countries "benefiting" from their programmes.

But the globalisation crusade, championed by the Fund, the Bank and the World Trade Organisation, seems to be in troubled times. Mass protests against what are increasingly seen as arrogant and archaic policies have intensified in the past year, disrupting all their key meetings.

Relations between the European Union and ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific) countries as manifested through the Lomé Agreement, and more recently, the Cotonou Agreement, have shown that developing countries can only win the battle against globalization if they fight as a group.

SADC countries, along with other ACP states, successfully lobbied for continued preferential access to the EU market, which was granted in June 2000 with the signing in Benin of the Cotonou Agreement, which succeeded Lomé.

The Cotonou Agreement, named after the Benin city in which it was signed, runs for 20 years. It has four far-reaching components relating to trade, financial and technical cooperation, political dimensions and the involvement of non-state actors.

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The question of which facets of democracy are applicable to which countries dominated election observation in the region this year. In the Zimbabwe June election, African observers including those representing the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the SADC Parliamentary Forum (an association of 12 parliaments in southern Africa) held sway over their European counterparts.

In a historic development, the African observer teams declared the Zimbabwe election free and fair while those from Europe and America had a different opinion. The ruling Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) narrowly beat the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in an election characterized by pre-poll violence.

Mauritius, which held its election on 11 September 2000, displayed its own brand of democracy. The Indian Ocean island uses an unusual system of choosing its 70-member parliament, modelled on the British first-past-the-post electoral system but with block-vote modifications.

Sixty-two members are elected from 20 constituencies where each voter casts three votes for three candidates from each constituency. The island of Rodriques retains two members also by block vote. Eight members are then picked from a list of best losers.

The Mauritius election, which was held peacefully and declared free and fair by the SADC-PF, was won by an alliance of the Militant Mauritian Movement and the Militant Socialist Movement, ousting the ruling Mauritian Labour Party.

In Tanzania, the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi led by President Benjamin Mkapa consolidated its position with a convincing victory over its rivals. Mkapa increased his popular vote from 61.8 percent in 1995 to 71.7 percent this time.

While the election on mainland Tanzania was generally smooth, the same could not be said of Zanzibar, where elections in 16 constituencies were postponed for a week after ballot papers went missing. Zanzibar is a semi-autonomous group of islands and its people choose their own president and legislature as well as voting for the Union President and Parliament. The elections on the islands were finally held, confirming CCM candidate Amani Abeid Karume as president.

The three elections however, were criticized by the gender movement in the SADC region, for failing to consolidate gains achieved in previous elections in terms of women's representation in parliament. In all three cases, the number of women members of parliament either declined or remained stagnant.

Cognisant of the need to increase the number of women in positions of power, the SADC-PF, in partnership with other institutions, has embarked on a far-reaching programme to engender the institution of parliament in the region. At its plenary assembly in Malawi last October, the Forum set aside time to appraise MPs about the situation of women and men in the region, the same situation that had led to the executive committing itself to the 1997 Gender and Development Declaration.

While the successful holding of elections in Mauritius, Tanzania and Zimbabwe has helped buttress democracy in the SADC region, thus help improve waning investor confidence, events in Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo have worked in reverse.

In Angola, the peace process remains stalled on a backdrop of declining regional and international interest. Similarly, in the DRC, the UN has failed to complement regional efforts and is yet to send in a full strength peace-keeping force, almost 18 months after the Lusaka Peace Accord was signed.

The need for a speedy resolution of the two conflicts was once more underscored at the SADC Summit in Windhoek, and subsequent extra-ordinary summits, especially on the DRC.

The DRC peace process, it appears, has been further delayed by the belligerents who in the past year have been trading accusations and counter accusations of violation of the shaky Lusaka Accord.

But while politicians have some measure of control over the existing conflicts, which inevitably have put a serious dent on the region's investment outlook, they will keep their fingers crossed there is no repeat of events that shook the region at the beginning of 2000 – the devastating floods.

Hugh McCullum

SADC consolidated its democracy with three elections in Mauritius, Tanzania and Zimbabwe

So severe were the floods that Mozambique, the worst hit in the region, had to shelve its post-war reconstruction programme to concentrate on provision of emergency aid, as well as rebuilding damaged roads and other social facilities.

SADC, which has been cited on many occasions as one of the few regions that have the potential to succeed, stood firm during the difficult time, providing material and moral support to the affected countries.

And as more and more of its sectoral protocols come into force, SADC is set to consolidate its efforts toward regional integration in the year 2001, and reclaim its rightful position as a vibrant economic community of 14 countries. □

Tragedy strikes as Kabila is killed

continued from page 1

occur regularly. Each side accuses the other of breaking the very peace agreement they have all signed. The volatile environment probably accounts for the violent end of another of its leaders.

Kabila is the second prominent Congolese leader to die by the assassin's bullet; Patrice Lumumba, the country's only elected prime minister, in 1961, was killed by pro-western forces, his body dissolved in acid as the forces of the late dictator, Marshall Mobutu Sese Seko assumed control of the vast territory.

A complex nation, with a complex ethnic mix embracing more than 200 language groups and 55 million people spread over 2.5 million sq km, the Congo is one of the potentially wealthiest countries on Earth. Its history is riven with foreign interventions: For most of its independent existence, the country has been a theatre for interventionist politics, causing many thousands of lives to be lost.

The 1960s secessionist crises in which Belgian paratroops (ostensibly there to protect foreign citizens), hordes of mercenaries and UN peacekeepers pitted ideological foes mobilized along the Cold War divide against each other, culminating in civil war, the rise of Mobutu and death of Lumumba.

This time around, the revolution of 1997 led by Kabila with the backing of Rwanda, and Uganda drove the ailing Mobutu from the country he called Zaire to seek refuge in a number of countries and he ultimately died of cancer in Morocco.

Kabila is said to have agreed to guarantee the security of the Rwanda-Uganda borders once he was assisted into power. His forces were backed, trained and directed from these countries. However, after succeeding with the revolution, Kabila fell out with his old allies who accused him of not honouring their agreement.

His disgruntled Rwandan and Ugandan allies turned on him and marched on Kinshasa to almost create another major upheaval when, in 1998, a besieged Kabila sought the help of Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe, all of whom sent troops, with Zimbabwe contributing the largest contingent.

The three countries secured Congo's survival under Kabila but Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi, which supported several rebel factions, still control nearly a third of the country in its eastern provinces. The war has driven millions of refugees into neighbouring countries, over a million are reported dead or missing. The urgency for peace was hence reflected in the frequency of missions to and from the Congo by SADC leaders.

When the various warring parties were finally brought to negotiations it was after months of efforts by SADC and the Organization of African Unity. Once they were at the table, it took several more months of hard bargaining by Zambia's President Frederick Chiluba, the

Patrice Lumumba was also assassinated

chief negotiator, along with several Heads of State and foreign ministers from SADC as well as UN and international officials, to try and resolve differences beforee signing of the peace accord in Lusaka in 1999.

According to the cease-fire document, cessation of hostilities should come into force within 24 hours of the peace agreement by all parties including the rebels (rebels signed the accord almost two months later.)

The Security Council, acting in collaboration with the OAU, was to constitute, facilitate and deploy an appropriate peace-keeping force in the DRC to ensure the implementation of the agreement and keep the fragile peace.

The inter-Congolese political dialogue and negotiations were placed under a neutral facilitator – former Botswana president Ketumile Masire — who unfortunately was later accused of favouring the opposition and rejected by Kabila, stalling the peace process further.

Uncertainty was rife when news of Kabila's death was announced. Many political analysts did not know what to expect.

Two scenarios — complete collapse of a fragile nation-state or the ascendancy of new leadership committed to a firm resolution of the DRC problem were put forward amongst a host of others.

The SADC Secretariat condemned the killing of Kabila saying it did not "augur well for the process of bringing peace and stability to the DRC. This assassination also flies in the face of the principles of democracy and the rule of law to which the SADC region strictly adheres".

SADC was quick to point to a need for continuity in the peace process and urged the people of the DRC "to seize this moment to intensify the search for a lasting and democratic solution to the situation in their country."

After burying his father, General Joseph Kabila, 31, eldest son of the assassinated leader, was sworn in as the new president.

Signals so far from the DRC suggest that the government is to re-examine the status of Masire as facilitator, probably with a view to accepting his role in the negotiations.

The road ahead will be difficult for the young leader and he must face many uncertainties. Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe have all pledged their continued support for the DRC, after consultations which will help the government to stabilize the situation and ward off the threats from the rebels.

Another grueling round of careful diplomacy is necessary by SADC and the international community to facilitate inter-Congolese dialogue and lead this troubled country to democracy.

While much of it depends on how far the powerful forces behind the two opposing sides are willing to resurrect and respect the Lusaka Accords, some of the responsibility to accommodate one another, will fall upon the Congolese people themselves.

Another fiasco would have grave consequences for Africa. □

Worries over food security as low rainfall is recorded

by Tinashe Madava

Halfway through the 2000/2001 rainy season, the average rain fall situation looks bright for much of southern Africa, but food security remains uncertain as the region expects some cereal deficits in the current marketing year.

Earlier in the season, weather experts at the Southern Africa Region Climate Outlook Forum (SARCOF) in Botswana predicted normal to above normal rainfall for most parts of the region between October 2000 and March 2001.

According to SARCOF, there will be normal to below normal rainfall in northern Tanzania; normal to above normal rainfall in central Zambia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, central and southern Mozambique, much of Botswana and Namibia, southern Malawi, Lesotho, Mauritius and Swaziland.

Above normal rainfall was forecast in Angola, Botswana's north-eastern corner, southern Tanzania, DRC, northern Malawi, northern Mozambique, Namibia's Caprivi strip and northern and western Zambia.

At the climate outlook forum in Botswana last September, participants reviewed the state of the global ocean-atmospheric system and its implications for the region.

Among the principal factors taken into account were the current state of the *La Nina* and the sea-surface temperatures over much of the tropical Indian and Atlantic Oceans.

La Nina occurs when a cold phase is experienced across the Pacific. It results in unusually heavy rains in southern Africa. At this time the Pacific is cooler than the Indian Ocean and wind moves toward the latter.

The phenomenon has been dying down and sea surface temperatures are currently near average and should remain normal until February.

Normal to above normal rainfall was experienced over much of the sub-region for the period of November to December. Northern Tanzania, however, has received below normal rainfall. There was an erratic onset of the short rains in Tanzania, similar to last year. This resulted in food shortages in some parts of the country.

However, with a seasonal forecast of normal to above normal rainfall across most parts of the region, combined with a high water-table following last season's heavy rains, there is still concern about flooding, especially in low-lying areas.

Following two wet seasons and unprecedented flooding in the eastern and southeastern countries of Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe, there are fears of possible further flooding in low-lying areas where the water tables are high and soils have remained saturated.

According to SARCOF, flooding could occur in these areas, even from normal rainfall conditions. Flooding was experienced early in the season in parts of South Africa especially KwaZulu-Natal, and Mozambique's central and southern provinces during the first half of the rainy season.

There have also been fears for some food shortages in some countries in the region following reports that areas planted by December were less than the same period last year due to input shortages, both seeds and farm implements.

According to the *SADC Food Security Bulletin* published by the Regional Early Warning Unit (REWU), lack of resources to purchase, and the unavailability and inaccessibility of commercial input supplies to many smallholders were reported in Angola, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe, despite the input subsidy programmes put in place by the respective governments.

Cereal availability in the SADC region excluding the DRC and Seychelles for the current marketing year assessed at 28.51 million tonnes has been described as insufficient to cover domestic and strategic reserve requirements of 28.81 million tonnes, leaving an overall cereal deficit of 293,000 tonnes.

The current deficit is significantly lower than the 2.19 million tonnes during the 1999/2000 marketing year. All major staples except maize show shortfalls during the current marketing year.

REWU predicts that only Malawi, South Africa and Zambia will have an overall cereal surplus during the 2000/2001 marketing year.

The rest of the regions face overall cereal deficits ranging from 109,000 tonnes in Swaziland to about 1.17 million tonnes in Tanzania.

An overall regional maize surplus of 1.71 million tonnes is predicted for the current marketing year, an increase from the 1.33 million tonnes assessed last July. The increase is attributed to an expected increase in maize output in South Africa. □

The effects of El Nino last year contributed to a cereal deficit especially in flood-stricken countries

Enhancing rural development strategies and policies

The development of the rural sector is critical to SADC's strategy to reduce poverty and food insecurity amongst its 200 million people. In order to spur growth and reduce poverty, SADC must adopt bold innovative measures. A new multi-donor project called the Food Security and Rural Development Hub, is an important framework for dynamic SADC-donor partnership meant to tackle rural poverty and food insecurity, writes Clive Bepura of the FANR sector in Harare.

The project, coordinated by the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Sector, is in a three-year pilot phase which started last year. The strategy is to start small, scaling up activities later based on lessons learned.

The hub's key objective is timely technical and financial support for the development, implementation and monitoring of jointly-determined SADC and donor supported programmes in the food, agriculture and natural resources sector of member countries. It will focus on:

- providing active and timely support to member states in preparing and refining their rural development strategies and policies aimed at promoting growth and reducing poverty;
- providing assistance to SADC member states in preparing national projects as well as donor-financed projects and programs in states;
- providing key implementation support to national ministries and agencies, including monitoring of implementation;
- supporting capacity building activities of member states in various areas through attachments, internships, workshops, seminars and conferences. The hub would also function as a sub-regional centre of excellence in capacity-building through various activities including attachment and internship programs for staff of rural development ministries; and
- promoting regional partnership and collaboration in rural development, the hub would also serve as a centre for networking among various multilateral and bilateral agencies for seeking and leveraging resources and technical assistance given the limited resources of member states.

The guiding principles of this SADC-donor partnership include: regionalism/ multi-sectoralism: The multi-donor Hub will have regional representation and multi-sectoral focus cutting across countries and themes. Support to member states will lead to clearly-defined country programmes.

Economic and sector studies will be designed to enrich policy deliberations of the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Ministers' meetings. Such studies will seek to incorporate private sector participation. SADC ownership: the multi-donor Hub would be owned by SADC as a special project within its Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Sector Development Unit.

Autonomy and flexibility: Within the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Sector Development Unit, the Hub will operate with greater flexibility and autonomy in responding to the development problems of member states.

Shared resources and knowledge: The multi-donor Hub would act as a stimulus for creating and sharing knowledge and optimizing the impact of development resources through a core group of international and regional experts, linked to SADC and the ministries of food, agriculture and natural resources. The guiding principles of this SADC-donor partnership include:

- **Regionalism/multi-sectoralism**: The multi-donor hub will have regional representation and multi-sectoral focus cutting across countries and themes. Support to member states will lead to clearly-defined country programmes.
- **Economic and sector studies** will be designed to enrich policy deliberations of the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Ministers' meetings. Such studies will seek to incorporate private sector participation.
- **SADC ownership:** The multi-donor hub would be owned by SADC as a special project within its Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Sector Development Unit.
- **Autonomy and flexibility:** Within the hub will operate with greater flexibility and autonomy in responding to the development problems of member states.
- **Shared resources and knowledge:** The hub would act as a stimulus for creating and sharing knowledge and optimizing the impact of development resources through a core group of international and regional experts, linked to SADC and the ministries of food, agriculture and natural resources. The hub will function within the governance framework of SADC, its committee of Ministers of food, agriculture and natural resources and their permanent secretaries.

Steering committee that this Steering Committee will set operational guidelines and policies, oversee implementation of programmes, and ensure adherence to the rural development priorities set by the Ministers of Agriculture and Natural Resources and the permanent secretaries.

The hub and its spokes (linkages) fall under the management of the rood agriculture and Natural resources director, with support from a full-time World Bank-seconded Regional Coordinator and Administrative Officer.

Both have already been recruited. Other support staff will come on board as required in consultations with the nit.

The project will seek to aggregate rural development priorities identified in each SADC member state.

At national level, the work programme will be jointly determined by specific ministries of food, agriculture and natural resources, staff of the spokes, and the donors within the country.

Sources of funds for the Hub and its projects include participating donors and SADC member states. Such funding covers operational costs, overheads, and the cost of technical assistance and capacity building activities.

The cost of operating the Hub is estimated at US$9.7 million over the initial 3-year pilot phase.

The targeted beneficiaries of the project are various government institutions and structures in member states whose capacity to handle the demands of food security and rural development will be enhanced.

The ultimate beneficiaries are the food insecure households of the SADC region who will benefit from improved analysis, funding and implementation of food security policies, strategies and programmes.

Various FANR sectors will benefit through greater cohesion and cooperation amongst themselves.□

Southern Africa loses millions to audio-video piracy

by Jabulani Sithole

Southern African countries are losing millions of dollars every year as a result of music piracy and illegal audio and video music cassettes. Now strategies are being put in place to vigorously combat this problem which is affecting not only the region but the international arts industry.

The case of Tanzania highlights why so many talented artists have not realised their full potential. Tanzania is reported to be loosing an average of US$9.4 million every year to piracy.

Tanzania's Music Copyright Association (TMCA) Secretary General Francis Kaswahili said over six million audio music cassettes and 2.5 million video cassettes were illegally duplicated and sold on the country's streets last year.

"Pirated goods have raised much concern, particularly in the area of music recordings as the authors and producers have lost considerable amounts of revenue because of pirating," said Daniel Kwelagobe Botswana's minister of commerce and industry.

The magnitude of piracy has necessitated co-operation of SADC states, the private sector and civic society in a bid to alleviate the problem. Coordinated mechanisms at the regional level have been identified to assist in dealing with the problem.

They include exchanging information and data on piracy and copyright matters, and developing cooperation with other national, regional and international organisations.

Different countries have also realised the flaws of their Copyright and Neighbouring Rights Acts. Botswana and Zimbabwe recently updated their laws. Botswana's new law was passed in April 2000 and replaces an old 1965 law.

Zimbabwe's new Copyright and Neighbouring Rights Act passed in September 2000 repealed the old of 1976. The act protects literary, music, artistic and audio-visual works.

Malawi and Zimbabwe have also gone a step further by establishing anti-piracy agencies to effectively combat piracy.

Top on the agenda of these agencies is to educate and to assist in the apprehension and prosecution of the offenders.□

Women launch radio station in Mozambique

The Association of Women in the Mass Media (AMCS) in Mozam bique recently launched a community radio in Maputo that seeks to deal with issues important to women, the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) announced recently.

The new station, "N'tyana", broadcasts in Portuguese and Shangaan.

Julieta Langa, chair of the Supreme Mass Media Council of Mozambique, said broadcasts would deal with education, the new family law currently under nationwide debate, domestic violence and health, particularly the spread of HIV/AIDS.

The station is sponsored by Oxfam-America. Nine people have been trained and initially it will broadcast 13-hours-a-day.*(IRIN)*□

Top South African jazz artists campaign against drug abuse

Internationally renowned South African musician, Hugh Masekela, has launched a drug and alcohol rehabilitation programme to assist musicians and artists who face addiction.

Masekela, a recovering alcoholic and drug-addict, in early February spoke out against the "culture of addiction" in South Africa, which has affected hundreds of thousands of people.

The project called the Musicians and Artists Assistance Programme of South Africa (MAAPSA) is a partnership between several South African celebrities, including musicians Jabu Khanyile and Family Factory, actress Connie Masilo and television personality Felicia Mabuza-Suttle.

A three-day fund raising concert to launch the campaign has been set for 26-28 February at the Johannesburg Civic Theatre.

Masekela who has admitted to using cocaine, barbiturates, amphetamines and marijuana for 40 years, said his life has become "miraculous" since he cleaned himself up.

The campaign will be taken to political rallies, communities and schools.

Identified addicted artists will be approached and encouraged to go for counselling.

MAAPSA's headquarters will be in Hillbrow where drug abuse, prostitution and crime are rife. Musicians and doctors will run the office.*(PANA)*□

Angola prepares for national carnival 2001

Angolan government has stepped up preparations for the 2001 National Cultural Carnival slated for 24-27 February.

Official sources said some US$250,000 has been made available for the organisation of the event, as against US$340,000 spent in 2000.

National Arts and Culture Director, Vieira Lopes, said some changes are envisaged in the programme this year based on available financial resources.

The budget for organisation committees in the provinces would be cut by about 80 percent, Lopes said, adding, however that despite the financial constraints the citizens would enjoy a big festival.

More than 150 groups, including 44 from Luanda have been registered for the national carnival. *(PANA)*□

UN involved in developing gender policy in Swaziland

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Swaziland, in collaboration with UNESCO, UNIFEM and the World Bank, intends taking an innovative approach to assist the country in examining gender issues and formulating a national gender policy.

The initiative, known as "An Integrated Approach to Gender Equality in Swaziland," was launched in August 2000 with the endorsement and participation of the government and is already showing results, UNDP claims.

It has led to a greater understanding of gender issues among government agencies and highlighted the importance of incorporating gender concerns in all planning activities. There is increasing use of culture as an entry point for addressing gender issues, since cultural norms often affect social practices and policies.

The UN agencies have also developed a core group of trainers with skills in key areas, including social and economic gender analysis, gender focused responses to HIV/AIDS, gender and development communications, and rural communications. *(IRIN)*□

Leaders unfold MAP for united African development

African leaders outlined at the World Economic Forum, held in Switzerland end of January, the Millennium African Programme (MAP) to give their countries greater control over the direction of internationally backed economic reform programmes.

The programme, which South African President Thabo Mbeki said was a firm declaration by African leaders to take ownership of sustainable development in the continent, would try to force a rethink in relations with the developed world and a radical review of the West's multibillion-dollar African aid programme.

The plan seeks to restore private sector confidence in Africa, to spur investment and a mutual respect for regulations, Mbeki said.

African finance ministers would meet in May in Nigeria, where a more formal structure for MAP would emerge.

The plan is not a matter of looking for money or aid but for increased investments in infrastructure and development projects, Mbeki said. The new initiative must lay to rest the perception that Africa is "a hopeless continent."

Mbeki, President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria and President Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria had been tasked by the Organisation of African Unity to seek a common African commitment to the continent's economic development.

MAP's priorities would include peace and stability and the development of human resources, infrastructure and telecommunications. Another high priority would be to develop a finance mechanism. Mbeki said the European Union, the Group of Eight industrialized countries, the World Bank and the United Nations had all given their support to the new initiative. The private sector would also be approached.

Obasanjo said Africa needed a plan that could serve the whole continent as well as specific countries – "something that all of our people can feel they can endorse." *(Business Report)*□

Namibia to speed up land reform

Namibian President Sam Nujoma has said his government would speed up its efforts to give land to people but reiterated the state would stick to its willing-buyer, willing-seller policy.

"Starting this year increased efforts will be made to resettle our landless people in a speedy manner," Nujoma said at the first cabinet meeting of the year. "In the same vein, I also call on those who own excess land to cooperate with the government in its efforts to address and resolve the present imbalances in land redistribution," he said. Reports said that an estimated 34,000 people have been resettled on commercial farm land since independence from South Africa in 1990.

The government wants to resettle a further 243,000 people and has said it wants to acquire 9.5 million hectares of land for its programme.

White farmers numbering just over 4,000 own nearly 30.5 million hectares, with 2.2 million hectares held by an estimated 200 black commercial farmers. *(IRIN)*□

World recognition for Seychelles' eco-tourism

Cousin Island in Seychelles has obtained world-wide recogni tion for eco-tourism and coastal management after being the first nature reserve in Africa to feature in the International Biodiversity Observation Year.

Cousin Island Special Reserve was recognised as the best example of how eco-tourism is practised as well as for coastal and marine management in two recent publications released by international organisations.

The special reserve, managed by BirdLife Seychelles, is the only example in the book *Sustainable Development of Tourism Compilation of Good Practices from East Africa and the Western Indian Ocean Region.*

In a letter to the Seychelles Tourism and Civil Aviation Minister Simone de Comarmond, WTO Secretary General Francesco Frangialli said: "I am sure it (the book) will add prestige to the tourism industry in Seychelles."

The second book — *Marine and Coastal Protected Areas - A Guide for Planners and Managers* — is published by The World Conservation Union. *(PANA)*□

Tourist arrivals up in Mauritius

Official figures released by the Tourism ministry in Port Louis indicate a 23 percent growth in the number of tourist arrivals in December 2000 over the same month the previous year.

The figures reached 64,760 compared with 52, 860 in December 1999.

The ministry also indicated that the total figures for 2000 stood at an all-time record of 656,450 or a 14 percent increase over the 578,090 recorded in 1999. *(PANA)*□

Biodiversity in southern Africa

Southern Africa's forests and woodlands are prominent and extend from the desert margin scrub forests to open woodlands bordering more humid ecosystems.

"When compared to the region's other ecosystems, they (forests and woodlands) support the largest number of people and livestock, making them central to food security." In the Foreword to the just-published *Biodiversity of Indigenous Forests and Woodlands in Southern Africa*, Dr. Yemi Katerere, regional director for IUCN, says woodlands offer the greatest potential for expansion of agriculture.

Biodiversity, defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is "the variability among living organisms from all sources, including terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems."

The book, a thematic update of *State of the Environment in Southern Africa* published in 1994, acknowledges forests and woodlands biodiversity management are not just technical in nature but can also contribute significantly to poverty eradication.

Well-illustrated and designed, the book calls for an urgent need to improve the forest and woodland biodiversity knowledge base in southern Africa. Such an endeavour includes correcting past failures in policy and ensuring that conservation and sustainable use and equitable sharing of benefits are an integral part of socio-economic development.

Biodiversity of Indigenous Forests and Woodlands in Southern Africa is written by a number of regional biodiversity professionals and meets the varying needs of the different levels and sectors of the region's inhabitants.

In all chapters, the writers and researchers have provided additional information with a human face provided by journalists and biodiversity experts in the region. These cover a wide spectrum from events which occur in the widespread forests and woodland of SADC, some of which can be controlled and others which cannot.

The book notes that national economies of the region have started moving away from traditional state policing of woodland resources and moved instead towards participatory management practices.

As communities are encouraged to participate in their environment, they again become involved in its management and grow to appreciate its value, both materially and culturally. And thereby ensuring future conservation. *(Reviewed by Tinashe Madava, SARDC)*□

***Biodiversity of Indigenous Forests and Woodlands in Southern Africa** is published by SADC Environment and Land Management Sector Coordination Unit (SADC-ELMS), the World Conservation Union's Regional Office for Southern Africa (IUCN-ROSA), and the Southern African Research and Documentation Centre's Musokotwane Environment Resource Centre for Southern Africa (SARDC-IMERCSA). Its production is funded by USAID through the Networking and Capacity Building (NETCAB) initiative.*

Recent publications and acquisitions

Beyond Inequalities: Women in Angola
—dos Santos, Naiole Cohen and Ducados, Henda (reviwer).- 2000
Available from: ADRA, Praceta Farinha Leitao-No.27, IDTO, CP 3788, Luanada, Angola Email: adra@ebonet.an ; DW, rua Rei Katyavala, 113, CP 3360, Luanda, Angola Email: dwang@ebonet.an ; SARDC-WIDSAA, PO Box 5690, Harare Email: widsaa@sardc.net or sardc@sardc.net

Beyond Inequalities: Women in Mozambique
—da Silva, Terezinha; Andrade, Ximena; Banze, Luisa and Pinto, Renato (trans).- 2000
Available from: Centre for African Studies, University of Eduardo Mondlane (UEM), CP 1993, Maputo. Email: ufics@zebra.uem.mz Forum Mulher, CP 3632, Maputo, Mozambique Email: forum @zebra.uem.mz and SARDC-WIDSAA, PO Box 5690, Harare, Zimbabwe. Email: sardc@sardc.net or widsaa@sardc.net SARDC Maputo PO Box 957, Maputo, Mozambique
Email: sardc@maputo.sardc.net

Netherlands Institute of Southern Africa Annual Report 1999
—Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa (NIZA).- 1999
Available from: NIZA Prins hendrikkade 33 PO Box 10707 NL-1001 ES Amsterdam

"Peace, Progress and Prosperity in SADC in the Millennium": Proceedings of the SADC Consultative Conference held in Mbabane, Swaziland 20-22 February, 2000
—SADC Secretariat.- 2000
Available from: SADC Secretariat 0095, Gaborone, Botswana
Internet: www.sadc.int

SADC Annual Report 1999 - 2000
—SADC Secretariat.- 2000
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Internet: www.sadc.int

SADC Sector Annual Reports for Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources; Culture Information and Sport; Employment and Labour; Energy; Environment and Land Management; Finance and Investment; Health; Human Resources Development; Gender; Industry and Trade; Mining; Tourism; Water 1999/2000
—SADC Secretariat.- 2000
Available from: SADC Secretariat 0095, Gaborone, Botswana
Internet: www.sadc.int

Zimbabwe Directory of HIV Counselling Services 2000
—Southern Africa AIDS Training (SAT) Programme.- 2000
Available from: Southern African AIDS (SAT) Programme, 3 Luck Street, PO Box 390 Kopje, Harare, Zimbabwe

SADC diary

2001		Event	Venue
Feb	5-9	Health economics and HIV/AIDS	South Africa
	5-9	Ministerial Conference	Kenya
	7-9	Southern African Water Network Meeting	South Africa
	18-24	SADC Council of Minister Conference	South Africa
March	4-6	The Globalization of Education	Costa Rica
	5-8	1st Regional SADC Community Home-based Care Conference	Botswana
	8	45th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women	USA
	12	Commonwealth Day Theme: "A New Generation"	All Commonwealth countries
	14	Young Professionals of the Commonwealth Meeting	UK
	18-22	2nd International Conference on Children's Rights in Education	Brazil
	23 – 26	The 3rd World Summit on Media for Children	Greece
	23	World Meteorological Day	all
April	4 – 7	AIDS-in-Context Conference	SA
	15	World Dance Day	all
	18	World Day of Sites and Monuments International Copyright Day	all

Currency checklist

Country	Currency	(US$1)
Angola	Kwanza (100 lewi)	18,2458.00
Botswana	Pula (100 thebe)	5.46
DRC	Congo Franc	698.00
Lesotho	Maloti (100 lisente)	7.76
Malawi	Kwacha 79.65	79.65
Mauritius	Rupee (100 cents)	27.79
Mozambique	Metical (100 centavos)	16.52
Namibia	Dollar 100 cents)	7.76
Seychelles	Rupee (100 cents)	6.37
South Africa	Rand (100 cents)	7.77
Swaziland	Lilangeni (100 cents)	7.73
Tanzania	Shilling (100 cents)	802.00
Zambia	Kwacha (100 Cents)	3,650.00
Zimbabwe	Dollar (100 cents)	55.00

Source: Standard Chartered Bank, Zimbabwe Ltd, 6 February 2001

Public Holidays in SADC for the period Feb - April 2001

Date	Holiday	Country
3 February	Heroes Day	Mozambique
3 March	Martyrs' Day	Malawi
12 March	Independence Day	Mauritius
12 March	Youth Day	Zambia
21 March	Independence Day	Namibia
21 March	Human Rights Day	South Africa
7 April	Mozambican Women's Day	Mozambique
13 April	Good Friday	all SADC
14 April	Easter Saturday	all SADC
16 April	Easter Monday	all SADC
16 April	Family Day	South Africa
18 April	Independence Day	Zimbabwe
19 April	King's Birthday	Swaziland
25 April	National Flag Day	Swaziland
27 April	Freedom Day	South Africa