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2010 One Team – 15 Nations

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THE WORLD is watching southern Africa this year as the region prepares to host the World Cup finals, set for South Africa in June-July.

A coordinated approach has been adopted to manage activities related to sports in a bid to deepen regional integration in this period, and to ensure that all countries in the region benefit from the international exposure.

The theme is "One Team – 15 Nations – For Sustainable Development".

Neighbouring countries have been actively engaged in upgrading facilities, and refurbishing hotels, roads and airports to cater for an anticipated surge in visitors.

A "SADC 2010" investment promotion programme pro-

vides a framework for seizing this opportunity to market the region's assets, and to guide, inform and coordinate activities in preparation for the World Cup.

This coordinated approach is expected to help the region to attract tourists and investment through strengthening joint projects such as Trans Frontier Conservation Areas.

As many as 90,000 fans and officials, mainly from qualifying countries, are expected to come to the region for the finals, according to the world football governing body, FIFA. This is in addition to more than 400,000 tourists from all over the world who are expected to visit southern Africa during the tournament.

The year started with a major continental event, the African Cup of Nations, hosted by Angola, showcasing some of Africa's best footballers.

The impact of new stadia in four different cities and the drama of the opening display were marred by the ambush of the buses carrying the Togo national team from their camp in Pointe Noire, Congo, to Cabinda in Angola.

This attack took place in a remote part of the region and does not reflect on preparations for the main event in faraway South Africa, but it cast a shadow sending a sharp reminder of the need to prepare for the unexpected.

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2010 One Team - 15 Nations

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Four southern African countries qualified for the competition – Angola, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia – which was won by Egypt for the third time in a row. For the World Cup later this year, the only qualifier from southern Africa is South Africa.

Another defining moment for the region is the expected launch of the SADC Customs Union this year, to promote the movement of goods, services and capital across borders.

The launch of a Customs Union would usher in one of the largest free trading zones in Africa with a combined population of more than 250 million. Two years ago, SADC launched a Free Trade Area (FTA), one step before a Customs Union, which allows Member States to trade among themselves without such restrictions as tariffs or quotas on goods originating from within the region.

The year 2010 marks one year after the global financial crisis whose negative effects were felt across the region. Most of the regional economies have since shown signs of recovery, and hope to benefit from the World Cup and the Customs Union.

The drive to promote regional cooperation through a wider FTA with the Common Market for East and Southern Africa and the East African Community is expected to further improve SADC's trade and investment environment.

SADC, COMESA and EAC have started a process of creating a single FTA by 2012 combining a market straddling 26 countries and intended to lead to a single Customs Union.

Regarding energy development, 2010 should be a crucial year for the region as the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP) intensifies the imple-

mentation of short-term generation projects to ensure full energy recovery by 2013.

A total of 2200 megawatts (MW) were expected to be added to the SAPP grid in 2009, while 1000 MW are expected this year.

SADC Member States are expected to increase the uptake of clean energy sources that result in low carbon emissions in line with the new trends in the global energy sector.

Clean energy has emerged as the most lucrative source of "carbon financing" and SADC has the potential to boost power generation if various energy resources such as wind, solar and hydro are harnessed.

The SADC Energy Ministers meeting set for April in Angola should provide further impetus for the region to fast track any rehabilitation work and promote efficiency, coming as it does ahead of the World Cup tournament, a period when the region, especially the host nation, can least afford power disruptions.

A comprehensive plan is expected to be approved by the ministers to ensure that South Africa and the rest of the region have adequate power supply during the World Cup finals.

On the environment front, southern Africa together with the rest of Africa will continue

to negotiate on a better climate deal after failing to reach a consensus at the recent Copenhagen Summit held in Denmark.

Africa favours an approach in which developing countries will be beneficiaries of technology transfer, capacity building and funding to the tune of US\$200 billion a year by 2012, instead of the proposed US\$100 billion a year by 2020. (See page 3)

The year 2010 will also see southern Africa prepare for the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

The long-running global debate over African elephants focuses on the benefits that income from ivory sales may bring to conservation and to communities living side-by-side with the elephants, especially in countries that have a surplus elephant population such as Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

Member States are still preparing ratification and domestication of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development approved by Summit in 2008, and will join the rest of the world in reviewing the Beijing + 15 Platform For Action (PFA) that aims to advance gender equality.

The last review in 2005 showed that, despite impor-

tant milestones, SADC governments still face challenges in meeting the PFA targets, although significant progress has been made.

The African Union, at its Summit last year, declared the African Decade on Gender starting 2010, and SADC will join the rest of the continent in celebrating achievements made by women over the years as well as accelerating implementation of policies that promote equality.

On the political field, 2010 brings elections in at least two SADC Member States. The United Republic of Tanzania is set to go to the polls in October while Mauritius is to hold its National Assembly election in July and Local Government polls in October.

The SADC-brokered agreement in Madagascar which requires the country to hold elections this year is on shaky ground as the parties have failed to honour their commitments.

In Zimbabwe, a major target for this year is the drafting of a new Constitution to replace the 30-year-old, much-amended document that came as part of the independence negotiations in 1979. The constitution-making process is provided for in the SADC-brokered Global Political Agreement signed in 2008 leading to an inclusive government in 2009.

Angola has written its own piece of history when parliament passed its first home-grown Constitution on 21 January 2010.

The President of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Joseph Kabila, the current SADC Chairperson, will hand over the rotating chair to Namibian President Hifikepunye Pohamba at the annual Summit to be held in Windhoek later this year. (sardc.net) □

Mutharika to chair African Union

MALAWI HAS been elected to chair the African Union, taking over from Libya at the Summit in Ethiopia in January.

The AU chair rotates according to regions and SADC leaders endorsed the candidacy of Malawi's President, Bingu wa Mutharika, ahead of the Summit. He said Malawi's term will focus on food security, infrastructure and energy.



Expectations not met in Copenhagen

EXPECTATIONS FOR southern Africa and the continent were not met at the Copenhagen conference on climate change in December.

The conference on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change ended without a legally binding agreement but rather a political agreement, the Copenhagen Accord.

Southern Africa expressed dissatisfaction with the contents of the Accord as expectations were not met, especially regarding binding emission targets and financial contributions to tackle the impacts of climate change due to rise in global average temperatures.

While the Accord states that developed countries committed themselves to jointly mobilize US\$100 billion a year by 2020 and an additional US\$30 billion for the period 2010-12, for adaptation and mitigation in vulnerable countries, this fell far short of Africa's expectations.

The Accord makes reference to 50 percent reduction of emissions by developed countries by 2050 compared to 1990 levels with no immediate 2020 commitments.

"It does not give legally binding commitments for industrialized countries and has no mid-term targets," said Zambia's Environment Minister, Cathrine Namugala. Africa and the rest of developing countries wanted the rich nations to cut emissions to at least 40 percent below the 1990 levels by 2020.

Africa also wanted deeper cuts by developed countries to reach at least 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.

While the Accord recognizes the need to keep global temperature rises below 2 degrees, Africa says new climate studies show the dangers are even greater than thought just a few years ago.

Increased rates of melting glaciers including those on Mount Kilimanjaro – faster than recorded by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) – provide evidence to this effect. As such, Africa argues global temperature rises should be kept below 1.5 degrees.

The agreement also falls short of providing a credible pathway for reaching the objective. The Accord left domestic pledges on emissions to be submitted by end of January 2010.

In an attempt to appease the demands of the developing nations and small island states, the Accord, which is set to be reviewed in 2016, would include possible strengthening of the long-term goal to limit the increase in global average temperature to 1.5 degrees.

The Accord also commits developing countries to emission reductions, but only in the context of future development. These countries would have to report on their emission cuts every two years.

"The developed countries will give percentage of emission reduction while developing countries will give nationally appropriate mitigation action. By February (2010) we will have a fair idea of what countries are willing to commit," the IPCC Chairman, Rajendra Pachauri, said.

He also said action will be taken soon after, to use the submissions as a basis for creating a legally binding agreement within a reasonable period of time.

While the Accord is voluntary, there is an incentive that might encourage many developing nations to join as it promises funding to help poor nations deal with climate change.

Batilda Burian from the United Republic of Tanzania

said the conference reached promising stages and has laid a good foundation for the climate summit which will be held in Mexico in December 2010, although it failed to agree on most of the African recommendations.

Dr Burian said apart from the money, African countries requested that they should be empowered technologically so that they could effectively deal with the effects of climate change, but nothing was agreed upon.

While South Africa, India, Brazil, China and USA contributed in drafting the Accord, South Africa's negotiator Alf Wills said the resulting agreement was limited in the number of nations that accepted it, the 28 represented at the late-night negotiations.

He however, said the Accord did have positive elements that can be built upon at the next round of talks.

South Africa is negotiating to reduce its emissions by 34-42 percent by 2020, depending on the amount of aid given.

The Accord also recognized the need to provide funds to save forests as carbon sinks and to create market mechanisms – a reference to carbon trading systems – to promote emissions reductions.

This commitment was confirmed by the formation of the Copenhagen Climate Change Fund to sponsor environmental projects such as those for reforestation.

The Accord states that only developing countries that accept financial support for their reduction projects have to accept international monitoring and verification of their reductions.

While the Copenhagen outcomes were not satisfactory, some delegates to the conference say outright failure to agree on anything at all would have been very much worse.

The Parties agreed to "take note" of the Accord rather than formally adopt it and resolved to meet again in Bonn, Germany, around June for a preliminary meeting as a build-up to the next Conference of the Parties (COP 16) to be hosted by Mexico in December 2010. □

Main points of Copenhagen Accord

- Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time.
- Deep cuts in global emissions are required according to science, and as documented by the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report with a view to reduce global emissions so as to hold the increase in global temperature below 2 degrees Celsius, and take action to meet this objective consistent with science and on the basis of equity.
- Adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change and the potential impacts of response measures is a challenge faced by all countries.
- Annex I Parties commit to implement individually or jointly the quantified economy-wide emissions targets for 2020,
- Non-Annex I Parties to the Convention will implement mitigation actions, including those to be submitted to the secretariat by non-Annex I Parties.
- The crucial role of reducing emission from deforestation and forest degradation was recognized.
- There is need to pursue various approaches, including opportunities to use markets, to enhance the cost-effectiveness of, and to promote mitigation actions.
- Scaled up, new and additional, predictable and adequate funding as well as improved access shall be provided to developing countries... including substantial finance to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD-plus).
- Copenhagen Green Climate Fund to support projects, programmes, policies and other activities in developing countries related to mitigation including REDD-plus, adaptation, capacity building, technology development and transfer. □

Africa-EU negotiations on EPAs hobble on

NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN African, Caribbean and Pacific countries and the European Union on Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) are still underway albeit with challenges over a number of issues.

The EPAs are being negotiated by the European Commission (EC) on behalf of the European Union (EU), with six groups of African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. Four of the groups are in Africa.

These are SADC, Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) or the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA), Economic Community of Central African States (CEMAC), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

The membership in these negotiating African groups is not exactly the same as the membership of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) known by these names.

For example, the SADC group is not made up of all Member States of the REC. The SADC negotiating group consists of Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland and the United Republic of Tanzania – now commonly referred to as the “SADC Seven” by the EC negotiating team.

South Africa participates in the same group as the “SADC Seven”, however, only as an observer as the country already has trade agreements with Europe.

Malawi, Mauritius, Madagascar, Zambia and Zimbabwe are negotiating under the ESA/COMESA group while the Democratic Republic of Congo is in the CEMAC group.

Some members of COMESA are not negotiating the EPAs, such as Egypt and Libya who also have trade agreements with Europe.

Experts have attributed this fragmented approach to the EPAs as a major stumbling block to the negotiation process. They argue that a deal could be reached if Africa negotiates as a single block.

They further argue that the EPAs must support regional and continental integration among African countries and not undermine them.

Initiated in a few years back, the EPAs are designed to promote free trade between the EU and ACP countries.

The EPAs offer duty free, quota free, access

for all exports from Africa, with transition periods for such goods as rice and sugar. In return, the continent should also liberalize its market to EU imports.

A number of countries from Africa, including southern Africa, such as Mauritius and Zimbabwe, have signed interim EPAs, indicating that

they would endorse a full agreement when outstanding issues are addressed.

These issues include trade coverage of the agreement, non-discrimination clauses, export taxes, safeguards and rules of origin.

Negotiations on Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary Standards (SPS) and Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), as well as those on trade facilitation are close to an agreement.

Significant progress has been made on agriculture and services. Discussions on other trade-related areas such as investment, intellectual property, government procurement, sustainable development or competition are ongoing. □



Botswana share of SACU revenue plummets

A REDUCTION in imports by Botswana has led to a drop in its annual revenue share from the Southern African Customs Union (SACU). Though Botswana has maintained its status as the second biggest economy after South Africa, its annual share has plummeted to R5.6 billion.

Minister of Finance and Development Planning, Kenneth Matambo, has since indicated that the money, though not enough, will be used to finance the country's 2010/2011 budget.

A ministry official said the actual SACU revenues for recent fiscal years such as 2008/09 collections were lower than forecast, hence there is a deficit in the Common Revenue Pool.

South Africa is said to have proposed a review of the SACU-sharing formula raised during last September's Council of Ministers meeting.

The formula shows that the country with the biggest economy gets the biggest share when the revenue is distributed.

SACU, whose main objective is to facilitate the cross-border movement of goods between the Member States as well as to promote conditions of fair competition, was reported to be under threat of collapse after South Africa threatened to withdraw.

This came after Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland initialed an interim Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the

European Union (EU) in which the EU will offer the SADC-EPA states duty- and quota-free market access for all products. South Africa and Namibia have delayed the signing of the accord.

According to a recent study by the Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis (BIDPA), the EPA has a potential of dissolving SACU as all SACU members are also members of SADC.

This came after the SADC Free Trade Agreement came into force in January 2008 with an estimated 85 percent of all trade in goods having been liberalised, and the remaining tariff lines expected to be phased out by 2012. (*Botswana Gazette*) □

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) Southern African state seeks ivory auction

SOUTHERN AFRICAN countries have set the tone ahead of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) scheduled for March in Doha, Qatar.

CITES has provided a long-running global debate over African elephants with focus on the benefits that income from ivory sales may bring to conservation and to communities living side-by-side with the elephants.

The debate also centres on concerns about whether limited ivory sales encourage poaching. At the last CITES meeting, four southern African countries with ballooning elephants populations – Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe –



Elephant population needs to be kept to manageable levels

were given rights to restricted trade in ivory products as an alternative to a total ban, in recognition of their conservation efforts.

Speaking ahead of the convention, Namibia, the United Republic of Tanzania and

Zambia have said that they too should be allowed to trade in ivory. Trading is restricted to a one-off ivory auction.

“We will support Tanzania and Zambia’s proposal because it is in line with our philosophy of utilizing our natural resources sustainably,” Namibia’s permanent secretary for Environment

and Tourism, Kalumbi Shangula said.

The three countries have urged CITES to consider down-listing their elephant populations from Appendix I to Appendix II.

Appendix I prohibits all trade in animals and plant species, while Appendix II allows trade if it is monitored.

As in previous meetings, some African countries such as Kenya and Mali are expected to oppose the proposal for Africa to trade in ivory, arguing that any resumption of ivory trade could result in more elephants being slaughtered.

If southern African countries manage to have a one-off sale, it would be the third time since the world ban came into force in 1989, after the wholesale killing of elephants in East Africa in the 1980s. □

Mauritius economy to grow by 4.5 percent this year

THE MAURITIUS economy is expected to grow by 4.5 percent in 2010, according to the country’s central bank.

This is up from an earlier government forecast of 4.3 percent, and should be accurate barring any policy change or major external shock, the head of the central bank has said.

Governor Rundheersing Bheenick said an upward revision for the global economy by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) will provide the Indian Ocean island’s almost US\$10 billion economy with an “upwards pull”.

“It seems like the (global) recovery will be robust and we can only benefit from that,” Bheenick said.

“Although there are some worries about the timing and coordination of exit strategies in major markets, we do not believe there is any risk of a double dip or prolonged stagnation.”

Gross domestic product growth slowed to 2.8 percent in 2009 from an above 5 percent average for the previous three years, as demand for key exports dropped and local consumer demand crumpled.

The Indian Ocean Island, which exports textiles and sugar, is a popular tourism destination for visitors from Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

It also has a thriving offshore financial sector. (*Allafrica.com*)

Debswana targets 20 million carats in 2010



BOTSWANA’S DIAMOND mining giant, Debswana Diamond Company, says it is targeting to produce at least 20 million carats of diamonds which levels to around 60 percent of its normal production in the year 2010.

Group Manager for Public and Corporate Affairs, Esther Kanaimba-Senai said despite the fact that the diamond market continues to reel from the global economic downturn, the company is ready to respond to market demand and would ramp up production accordingly.

She said the company produced approximately 17.1 million carats of diamonds in 2009 which is equivalent to around 50 percent of its normal levels as compared to the 33.6 million carats it produced in 2007, and is ready to respond to the market demand.

She indicated, however, that, based on current trends, production might reach full capacity only in the year 2012. (*Mmegi*) □



Region open for investment

SADC HAS said it is open to initiatives of investors from the private sector to build basic infrastructure such as transport corridors, projects for water and energy supply, information technology, and communication and border conservation areas.

Speaking at an investment meeting in Luanda, the SADC Deputy Executive Secretary, João Caholo, said those who want to invest in one of the 15 countries of the community should visit the SADC Secretariat in Botswana to get more information on the projects.

He said the region has the potential to be a surplus producer of electricity and other

sectors, but there is need to create suitable legal conditions to attract investments.

With regards to tourism, Caholo said work is being done to attract tourists com-

ing to Africa for the African Cup of Nations in Angola and the World Cup in South Africa.

The investment meeting was part of the "SADC 2010"

programmed aimed at ensuring that the region benefits from the international exposure associated with hosting two major events in 2010. (*Angola Press*) □

African Union to create investment bank

THE AFRICAN Union has announced plans to create an investment bank to finance private sector developments within the continent, as part of efforts to put the continent on a sound growth path towards its industrialization.

AU Commissioner for Economic Affairs Maxwell Mkwezalamba said talks on the formation of the continental development bank

were underway to give the continent's investors access to much-needed capital to finance development initiatives.

"Africa's industrialisation dream would be unthinkable in the absence of the private sector," Mkwezalamba said at the opening session of the AU-sanctioned Africa Private Sector Forum, convened to explore continental initiatives to industrialise Africa.

Africa's leading business minds, including bankers, financiers, mobile phone company chiefs, airline executives and security experts, gathered at the AU hub to discuss available investment opportunities in Africa.

The forum aimed to sensitise the African populace on anti-graft efforts needed to push the industrialisation process, in addition to seeking to put the economic integration of Africa on a fast-track while creating working relationships with Africa's private sector.

Mkwezalamba said the continent's private sector firms were incapable of competing on a global scale because of their inability to produce industrialised goods on a massive scale.

In addition, he said, African industries are often bogged down by poor investment policies.

"The private sector has a key role in Africa's industrialisation. The potential for

the private sector to push Africa's industrialisation through investments in infrastructure and education can make Africa more competitive."

He said Africa stands to benefit from the right investment policies, targeted investments in preventing climate change impacts such as drought, and fighting corruption, if the continent's private sector players target their social responsibility investments on climate change.

Ethiopia's industry minister, Tadesse Haile, said the private sector was Africa's only hope for industrialisation, because of the growing budget shortfalls that most African states face, leaving little or no funds for extra investments in roads, electricity and education.

"The budgetary constraints make it more difficult for Africa to invest in infrastructure, that is why we require the private sector to work with us in the private-public partnerships," the Ethiopian Minister told the delegates.

He said Africa's private sector, in its current form, was "weak and fragmented" and unable to compete, adding this could be addressed if the governments worked together to eliminate tedious taxation procedures and ensure non-discriminatory investment rules. (*Africanews*) □

Gautrain test-run set for March

SYSTEM TRIAL operations of the Gautrain are set to begin in March on the section between Sandton station in Johannesburg and the OR Tambo International Airport.

According to spokesperson Dr Barbara Jensen, the Bombela consortium is expected to complete 10-week trial runs in May.

Although, in terms of the contract, the completion date for the first phase is 27 June, Bombela hopes to bring this date forward by a month, so as to have the line in public service in time for the Soccer World Cup kick-off in June.

All electrical and mechanical installation work has been completed, with only some automatic fare collection equipment outstanding.

The Gautrain feeder bus depot at Midrand is to be finished in February. Stations at the airport, Rhodesfield, Marlboro and Sandton are planned for completion before the end of May.

Track installation for phase two should be finished by the end of 2010, as well as power supply and distribution work.

The whole of the line from Park station in Johannesburg to Hatfield in Pretoria together with all infrastructures is scheduled for completion in 2011. (*Railways Africa*) □



Rainfall forecast points to improved season

by Eglina Tauya

THE JANUARY to March 2010 climatic projections just released show more rainfall for most parts of southern Africa than in the first half of the season, October to December 2009.

The predictions are still largely consistent with the forecast of the 13th Southern African Regional Climate Outlook Forum (SARCOF-13) held in August 2009.

As forecast in SACORF 13, normal to above-normal rainfall is expected across the northern half of continental SADC, Madagascar and Mauritius, with some areas receiving above normal-to-normal rainfall.

This covers the northernmost parts of Angola, western Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, southern Lesotho, Malawi, northernmost parts of Mozambique, easternmost parts of Namibia, southern portions of South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, and northern half of Zimbabwe.

Climate experts in these regions have already provided warnings of the likelihood of floods.

However, below-normal to normal rainfall with longer than normal dry spells are likely in the remainder of the subregion.

In line with the earlier forecast, this covers eastern Botswana, northern Lesotho, southern Mozambique, northern South Africa, Swaziland, and southern Zimbabwe.

Areas with a high likelihood of below-normal to normal rainfall include southwest Angola, western Namibia, and south-western South Africa.

From a farming perspective, the long dry spells usually come when rainfall is most required by crops, particularly cereals, thus negatively affecting crop production.

Climate experts point out that this update is relevant only for three-month timeframes and relatively large areas.

Local to month-to-month variations may occur and users are strongly advised to contact their national meteorological and hydrological services for interpretation of the outlook (*shown in detail in the map below*).

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

In developing the outlook, experts take into account the prevailing and expected sea surface temperature anomalies over the Pacific, Indian and Atlantic Oceans as well as other factors that affect the climate of the SADC region, including the Indian Downpour and atmospheric circulation processes that bring moisture into the region.

In view of these factors, the wetter than normal conditions in some parts of the region and the drier than normal in the other parts are linked to the effects of the *El Niño* phenomenon.

The impact of *El Niño* in the SADC region has varied significantly in its severity, though it generally has a greater impact in the southern half.

El Niño events have historically produced extreme weather conditions in southern Africa, that is, floods and drought.

Warmer than average conditions have persisted in the tropical Pacific since June 2009 and *El Niño* conditions are well established with models projecting persistence through April/May 2010.

Sea surface temperature anomalies became positive since 2009, consistent with *El Niño* years.

El Niño refers to the warm phase of a naturally occurring sea surface temperature oscillation in the tropical Pacific Ocean, while *La Niña* refers to the cooling phase of the same sea surface temperature oscillation.

Studies of historical climate data show that the recent *El Niño* variation is most likely linked to global warming.

Records provide evidence that during the last four decades the number of *El Niño* events increased while the number of *La Niña* events decreased.

The former phenomenon is known to occur approximate-

ly every four to seven years, but the last four *El Niños* including the current one, have occurred every two to three years.

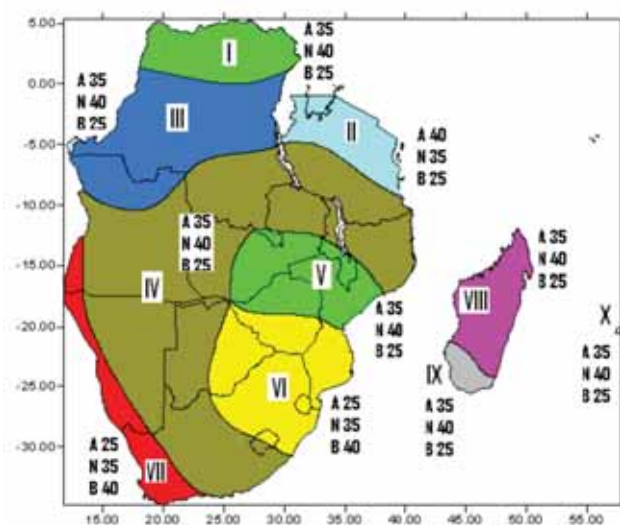
While well-established, climate experts note that the current *El Niño* condition is rather weak and does not necessarily point to a drought in southern Africa.

Also forecast is a decrease of the *El Niño* conditions from 90 to 50 percent up to June 2010, when the *La Niña* conditions are forecast to start to increase.

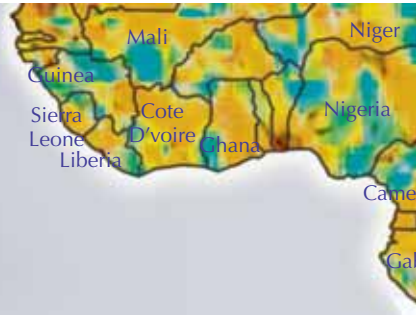
Climate experts note that below-normal rainfall does not translate to a drought, neither does above-normal translate to floods. There are many climatic factors which come into play.

Above-normal rainfall is defined as being within the wettest third of historically recorded rainfall amounts while below-normal is within the driest third of rainfall amounts and normal being the middle third. (*sardc.net*) □

January-February-March 2010 SADC rainfall outlook



The numbers of each zone indicate the probabilities of rainfall. The top number indicates the probability of rainfall occurring in the above-normal category, the middle number is for normal and the bottom number is for below normal. As such the phrases "normal to above-normal" and "above-normal to normal" cannot be used interchangeably.



Expanding access to energy in east and southern Africa

Namibia, Angola to build hydro plant

NAMIBIA AND Angola plan to build a joint US\$7 billion hydro power plant on a river that runs along their common border to produce 400 megawatts of electricity, a senior government official has said.

Namibia's deputy director for electricity in the Ministry of Mines and Energy, Daniel Zaire, said the construction of the proposed Epupa Hydro project on the Kunene River should start this year.

He said the project is likely to be constructed by a Brazilian state firm and three other companies from the South American country. He said

bids to build the facility have come in from other firms in South Korea and Germany.

The plant would be built on a 50/50 basis by Namibia and Angola, which would share the electricity produced.

"The construction will take between five to eight years, and may kick off in March once all feasibility studies are completed," he said. (*The Namibian*) □

Botswana, Zimbabwe to build fuel pipeline

BOTSWANA AND Zimbabwe are planning to build a fuel pipeline linking Harare with Francistown.

"Our Ministers of Energy met in Francistown last year (2009) and agreed to work together within the regional thrust of co-operation. The Harare-Francistown pipeline is one of the projects that are being looked at," the Zimbabwean Ministry of Energy and Power Development said.

The Ministry's Permanent Secretary, Justin Mupamhanga, was quoted in local media as saying "An inter-governmental memorandum of understanding is being finalized and will give a framework on the implementation of the project."

The Harare-Francistown pipeline is expected to be a continuation from the existing Harare-Beira pipeline for importation of fuel to Zimbabwe.

"Botswana is considering transporting its fuel supplies through Beira as an alternative to South Africa, necessitating the construction of the pipeline," Mupamhanga said.

"There is also serious consideration on their (Botswana) part to bring in the fuel through road and rail pending the finalization of the pipeline project," he said. □

Zimbabwe woos energy investors

ZIMBABWE IS opening up its doors to investors for its energy sector, Energy and Power Development Minister Engineer Elias Mudzuri has said, adding that the government is considering offering tax holidays for investors willing to participate in the development of large power projects in the country.

Mudzuri told delegates at the Southern African Energy Week conference, in Johannesburg, South Africa, that the government is hoping to attract investors to participate in the development of the energy sector through public-private partnerships or any other joint venture model, as well as participation from independent power producers.

The country is producing about 1,100 megawatts of electricity on average, with a peak demand of about 2,100MW.

Mudzuri said that the government has come up with short-term measures to try and mitigate current shortages, noting that this included the rehabilitation of a number of power stations and transmission and distribution systems.

There are also plans to expand the Hwange coal-fired power station by 600MW and the Kariba hydropower station by about 300MW. There is further potential to expand power generation capacity through hydropower projects, which could deliver an additional 5,000MW.

This includes the Batoka gorge project on the Zambezi River, involving Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Other smaller hydropower projects that could be constructed near small rivers and dams could add more than 200MW to the country's generation capacity.

Mudzuri noted that Zimbabwe is looking for independent power producers to help to develop or set up these projects, saying that producers did not necessarily have to export the power to the national grid.

Zimbabwe is also looking at renewable energy sources, such as solar, wind, biomass and bagasse. The national electricity supply company requires about US\$385 million to upgrade and replace vandalized equipment, while the World Bank has put the cost of rehabilitating the Hwange Thermal Power Station at US\$135 million. (*The Herald*) □

Gas-to-electricity project adds to South Africa's renewable energy

A LANDMARK project that converts gas from household waste into electricity has been officially launched in South Africa.

A first for Africa, the project will produce enough electricity for thousands of medium-income homes.

It will also inject tens of millions of Rands into the city coffers through the sale of electricity and certified emission reduction credits, also known as carbon credits.

But the real winner will be the environment. Millions of cubic meters of greenhouse gases that would otherwise have escaped into the atmosphere each year, contributing to global warming, will now be converted into clean electricity.

The project is currently operating at the Marianhill and La Mercy landfills and will be extended to the larger Bisasar Road landfill.

Speaking at the official launch ceremony, the Minister of Energy, Dipuo Peters, said the project will accelerate the use of renewable energy and deal with energy challenges, adding that it is an important part of the government's strategic vision to be more sustainable and to tackle climate change.

She said government recognizes that renewable energy will significantly contribute to energy supply security by increasing diversification of energy sources, expanding access to energy services and contributing to sustainable development through the optimum use of cleaner energy resources.

"A number of renewable energy sources and technologies are available in South Africa, but most still need to be developed to their full potential."

Peters said that while the project will address the waste management and energy demand, it is also expected to reduce poverty by creating



Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia power link on course

TANZANIA AND Kenya have reached agreement with Norway to carry out a feasibility study for the construction of a transmission line to connect the two countries.

The joint project, which also involves Zambia, is estimated at US\$860 million. Zambia has authorized the other two countries to take the lead in formally presenting the project to potential lenders and donors.

When operational, the project is expected to create a power exchange market among the three countries and form the backbone for a regional power exchange with what should result in low-cost power supply and optimization in the use of energy resources.

The interconnector would also strengthen trade in electricity within the Southern African Power Pool through the Zambia-Tanzania interconnection and the East African Power Pool through the Ethiopia-Tanzania interconnection).

SAPP and EAPP are regional bodies that coordinate the planning, generation, transmission and marketing of electricity on behalf of the utilities in Member State in their respective regions.

In a statement released by Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania following the signing of a grant agreement with Norway in December, the countries said feasibility studies and environmental impact assessments will be carried out in May.

The Royal Norwegian Embassy in Tanzania will finance the studies, expected to run for 15 months, at a cost of US\$3.4 million.

"The interconnection will start from a proposed 400kV substation at Isinya, about 40km south of Nairobi to Singida in Tanzania, where a 400kV substation is planned by Tanesco through Arusha," said the statement, adding that the line will be 510 km long.

The interconnector is expected to be linked to future interconnections among Burundi, eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda, expected to be operational in 2014 under the Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Programme (NELSAP).

The action programme aims among other things to promote investment in power development, power transmission and trade in the Nile Equatorial Lakes. Countries under the NELSAP are Burundi, Egypt, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Sudan.

The interconnector will also connect to other future interconnectors that are planned in the SADC region by SAPP.

These include the Central Transmission Corridor Network that involves Botswana and Zimbabwe, the Mozambique Transmission Backbone and the Zimbabwe-Zambia-Botswana-Namibia (ZIZABONA) transmission project.

The SADC region is moving towards constructing more transmission interconnections across Member States to ensure countries benefit from new generation capacity installed in various parts of the region.

SADC is not fully interconnected as Angola, Malawi and the United Republic of Tanzania are not yet connected to the regional power grid.

This means that any surplus generation capacity installed in any of the three countries cannot be realized by the nine SAPP members, namely, Botswana, DRC, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Building interconnections in the region will also create new corridors that can support industrial development and improve energy security in other parts of the region without necessarily being stifled by overloads on the existing transmission lines. □

First stone laid for solar panel factory

MOZAMBIQUE AND India are investing US\$10 million in building a factory to manufacture solar panels in the Belulune Industrial Park on the outskirts of Maputo.

Energy Minister Salvador Namburete laid the first stone for the new factory in December 2009. Construction is expected to take one year. When operational, the factory will employ 70 people, including 15 engineers trained in India.

He said that initially the raw materials for assembling the solar panels will be imported from India, but he hoped that later, Mozambican companies can be identified to manufacture some of the components.

Currently, Mozambique imports the solar panels used to provide electricity for schools, health posts and other public institutions that are not linked to the national electricity grid.

Namburete said that the initiative to build the factory arises as part of the government's strategy to use all available energy resources, including solar power and other renewable energies, for the country's development.

This is only the first factory, he added, since it could not possibly serve the entire country. "We want this initiative to be repeated in other parts of Mozambique." (AIM) □

employment opportunities, improving health status and air quality through reducing the release of harmful greenhouse gases, and contributing towards the country's skills development plan.

The landfill gas project received R17.3 million through the Department of Trade and Industry's Critical Infrastructure Programme.

Total project income revenue is estimated around R4.5 million per month realized from the sale of carbon credits and the sale of electricity. (BuaNews) □

Soccer fans scramble for tickets to World Cup finals

TWO-THIRDS OF the available tickets have been sold for the World Cup Finals in South Africa after three of the five ticket sales phases.

The third phase of ticket sales, which concluded with a random draw for oversubscribed matches on 1 February, saw a total of 1,206,865 applications received from 192 countries.

Swaziland prepares for 2010 finals

SWAZILAND HAS intensified efforts to attract tourists coming to the 2010 Soccer World Cup Finals in South Africa this year.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Swaziland Local Organizing Committee, Apollo Maphalala, said issues such as security have been strengthened to improve safety.

He said efforts are underway to facilitate a 24-hour operation at all borders to ensure smooth movement of people during the finals.

He said Mozambique, South Africa and Swaziland are working closely on tourism packages to lure more visitors. They will be able to have "Breakfast in Swaziland, Lunch in Mozambique and Dinner in South Africa," as part of the package.

Director of the Swaziland Millennium Projects, Llyod Dlamini, said the government is "putting finishing touches to the Sikhuphe International Airport" to accommodate bigger aircraft.

Swaziland has also launched the local "Football Friday Campaign," an initiative which promotes the wearing of soccer jerseys.

The South African World Cup mascot named "Zakumi" launched the campaign in 2009. The visit to Swaziland was Zakumi's first foray outside South Africa.

Swaziland is home to numerous attractions and is a suitable venue for training and camp as its venues are less than a 90-minute flight from Johannesburg. □

Six matches are oversubscribed, among them the semi-finals and the final match. In total, 55 matches are oversubscribed in at least one category.

There was huge interest from South African residents, who accounted for 79 percent of the total applications received (958,381) in this phase.

This represents an increase of 24.9 percent in applications from South African residents in the third sales phase when compared to the earlier ticketing stages.

Apart from the host country, the United States led the ticket



standings for the third phase with 50,217 applications, followed by the United Kingdom (41,529), Australia (15,523), Mexico (14,804), Germany (14,647) and Brazil (10,767).

Increased interest was also noted in the neighbouring coun-

tries in southern Africa—Botswana leading with 2,519 ticket applications, followed by Mozambique (1,795) and Namibia (1,191).

The next phase of ticket sales is set to be later in February and should end in April. During this period, more than 400,000 tickets will be made available on a first-come, first-served basis.

From April onwards, ticketing centres will be open in each host city where fans will be able to buy tickets over the counter and also collect their confirmed tickets.

To further enhance the service, ticketing call centres will be open during the fourth sales phase—both internationally and in the host country. □



The Soccer City stadium in Johannesburg, venue of the World Cup opening and final matches. The South African mascot, Zakumi will be prominent at the matches.

Angola benefits from AFCON

THE CONSTRUCTION of new hotels and stadia, the improvement of roads and other transport networks, and staff training are some of the many benefits derived from the hosting of the 2010 African Cup of Nations in Angola.

These remarks were made by the chairperson of the Angolan Association of Hotels, Restaurants and Similar Places (Ahoesia), João Gonçalves.

Gonçalves said that with the holding of the African Cup tournament, the country opened itself to the world and, therefore, showed that it is able to promote development.

He said it is now vital for the country to build on this achievement to promote growth in Angola and the entire southern African region. (*Angola Press*)

Egypt lifts 2010 African Cup for third time in a row

EGYPT HAS made history by becoming the first team to win the African Cup of Nations tournament three times in a row. Their latest victory in Angola in January also saw the north African nation increase its tally to a record seven since the tournament was inaugurated in 1957. Egypt beat Ghana by one goal to nil in the finals. However, Egypt did not qualify for the World Cup Finals in South Africa, losing out to Algeria in a tightly fought contest.

The next African Cup of Nations is scheduled for joint hosting by Benin and Equatorial Guinea in 2012. □

SADC aviation industry ready for 2010 World Cup finals

THE AVIATION industry in southern Africa is actively preparing to move thousands of visitors to and from the 2010 Soccer World Cup finals in South Africa this year.

More than 90,000 soccer fans and officials mainly from qualifying countries are expected to come to South Africa for the finals, according to the world governing body, FIFA.

This is in addition to as many as 400,000 tourists from all over the world that are expected to visit Africa during the tournament.

To ensure that this huge turnout is catered for, and visitors travel smoothly across the region, SADC Member States have been refurbishing international airports and building new ones ahead of the event set for June-July.

Angola, which hosted the 2010 Africa Cup of Nations in January, spent more than US\$270 million on rebuilding airports to ensure the smooth movement of visitors to both the African finals and the World Cup.

At the new International airport in Luanda, refurbishment included three new and modern escalators, and the check-in

desks that have been increased from 12 to 26.

In Botswana, renovation of the Sir Seretse Khama International Airport is at an advanced stage to handle bigger aircraft.

The new airport building, designed in a diamond shape is intended to introduce Botswana to every visitor as a world leader in diamond mining.

Estimated at a cost of US\$65 million, the airport is set for completion just in time for the World Cup.

Mozambique is also spending about US\$80 million on the Nacala airport to turn it into a commercial entry point and ensure that the country is able to accommodate more aircraft during the month-long soccer showcase.

In Swaziland, plans are underway to construct a new airport at Sikhuphe at a cost of US\$67 million.

The new airport, with a bigger runway, will allow international airlines to fly directly to Swaziland from destinations such as Europe and Asia instead of going through South Africa.

South Africa, as the host nation, has invested millions of

dollars in refurbishing and constructing new airports. These include the OR Tambo, Cape Town and Durban International Airports.

Zambia and Zimbabwe are also refurbishing their airports ahead of the world finals. Zambia is renovating the Ndola International Airport while Zimbabwe is upgrading the Victoria Falls Airport to international status.

Southern African countries have huge potential to attract many tourists during the finals as the region is endowed with numerous attractions that include the pristine coastal beaches, national parks and reserves teeming with wildlife, dramatic scenery and the rich traditional culture.

Maradona: South African people are loving and friendly

THE ARGENTINEAN head coach, Diego Maradona, says security is not a threat to 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa.

Speaking to reporters at Soccer City in Johannesburg, the football legend said he will tell his players not to worry about security when he got back to his country after concluding his recent five-day visit to South Africa.

"I have only stayed five days in South Africa, but I've realized that the impression about this country was wrong. People are loving and friendly.

"I have no doubt that the Soccer World Cup will be a success and I will also tell my players not to worry about security, but to remain focused on playing football," he said.

Asked about his impression about the newly revamped Soccer City stadium, Maradona said: "I would have liked to

Director of the Swaziland Millennium Projects, Llyod Dlamini, said the government is "putting finishing touches to the Sikhuphe International Airport" to accommodate bigger aircraft.

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Swaziland is home to numerous attractions and is a suitable venue for training and camp as its venues are less than a 90-minute flight from Johannesburg. □

play, but now that my time is over, I will use my efforts to get my team to the final of the tournament.

Before going to Soccer City, Maradona visited a local secondary school, where he donated his national team jersey to the school soccer team. He also gave the school caps, sports shoes and two computers.

At Soccer City, he juggled with a ball shortly after he exchanged his number 10 jersey with the Chief Executive Officer of the Local Organizing Committee, Danny Jordaan.

Maradona concluded his visit at Orlando West High School, a few meters from former President Nelson Mandela's house.

The Argentinean coach arrived in the country to assess sports facilities in Pretoria to be used by his team during the Soccer World Cup. (BuaNews) □

UNIVISA will promote tourism in SADC

SOUTHERN AFRICA is working towards the creation of a single visa system, UNIVISA, for travellers in the SADC region.

Initiated a few years ago to promote the free movement of people across borders, the launch of the UNIVISA had been scheduled before the start of the 2010 Soccer World Cup finals in June to allow thousand of tourists that will visit SADC for the finals to move freely across borders between Member States.

Outstanding issues that still need to be addressed include administrative and coordination issues such as policy agreements, procedures and requirements for issuing the visa.

A UNIVISA has many advantages that include increasing the market share for the region, easing congestion at border posts, and creating employment. □

Modest progress towards Beijing commitments

by Patience Zirima

THIS YEAR marks the 15-year review of the Beijing Platform for Action and provides an opportunity for southern Africa to take stock of its achievements since the Platform for Action was signed in 1995.

Recent reviews have shown that despite important milestones being reached, African governments still face challenges in meeting the targets set in the Platform for Action (PFA).

Different regions in the world have been undergoing regional reviews and southern African countries participated in the Africa regional review meeting which took place from 16 - 20

November 2009 in Banjul, The Gambia.

In March 2010, the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will undertake the global 15-year review of the implementation of the PFA.

The CSW will place emphasis on sharing experiences and good practices so as to overcome the remaining challenges.

The Banjul review noted progress in some areas. For example, southern Africa has put in place the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development signed in 2008.

The Protocol encompasses regional, global and continental instruments for achieving gender equality, including the PFA.

The protocol is expected to accelerate progress in achieving targets towards gender equality as it sets specific, measurable targets towards gender equality and women's empowerment.

It will also ensure accountability at the sub-regional level as well as provide a forum for sharing best practices, peer support and review.

Progress has also been highlighted in legal reforms and policies for gender equality as well as in primary school enrolment and for southern Africa, an increase of women in decision-making positions.

The Year 2010 is also significant as it begins the decade that has been declared the African Decade on Gender by

the African Union, at its summit in January 2009.

The Banjul report, however, cited the lack of statistics, particularly disaggregated data that helps governments in reporting gender differentials in several critical areas of concern. Where statistics are available, they are not disaggregated by gender.

There are still limited resources available for gender equality. The report noted that there is need to increase financial and human resources in order to support the implementation of the PFA and translate national political will into concrete actions.

The Beijing PFA identified 12 critical areas of concern that need redress for gender equality and called for concrete action and measures in this regard.

Most countries and sub-regions adopted country- or region-specific action plans to facilitate implementation.

SADC identified six of the critical areas of concern as regional priorities and these are:

- Institutional mechanisms for mainstreaming gender;
- Economic access;
- Protection of the human rights of women and children;
- Power-sharing and decision-making;
- Women in the context of armed conflict and peace building; and
- Gender capacity-building, training, networking and information dissemination.

Implementing the PFA is mainly the responsibility of governments but progress towards these targets is the result of efforts by all stakeholders including the private sector and civil society. (*sardc.net*) □

First woman speaker for National Assembly in Mozambique

THE NATIONAL Assembly in Mozambique has elected Veronica Macamo to the post of Speaker of Parliament (President of the Assembly).

She becomes the first woman speaker in the history of the National Assembly, signalling another step towards gender equality in Mozambique and the SADC region.

Macamo was the deputy speaker prior to this appointment. She replaces Eduardo Mulembue, who had occupied the post for the past 15 years.

The new government announced by President Armando Guebuza is made up of 29 cabinet ministers, of which 7 are women.

Women occupy the ministries of environment, labour, public service, state adminis-

tration, mineral resources, women's affairs and social welfare, as well as the Minister in the President's Office for Parliamentary, Municipal and Provincial Assembly Affairs.

The list of 22 deputy ministers includes only three women, one of them in the key economic ministry of planning and development, as well as environment, and education. Three women were also included in the new list of 11 provincial governors.

Although the new cabinet falls short of regional targets for representation of women in government at 24 percent, the National Assembly should have a higher profile and representation of women.

The electoral system in Mozambique is based on



party lists and the Frelimo party has a policy of presenting a woman candidate as one of every three names on its list. Therefore, women will occupy at least one-third of seats on the government bench in parliament. □

Food security tops African agenda for 2010, Mutharika

THE NEW African Union chairperson, President Bingu wa Mutharika of Malawi has boldly set his priority saying, "no child in Africa should die of hunger and malnutrition".

Addressing African leaders at the recent AU Summit in Ethiopia, Mutharika said the continent is endowed with vast fertile soils, favourable climate and water basins, which if utilized could lead to a green revolution that has the capacity to boost production and improve food security.

"Our agenda for Africa should focus on Agriculture and Food Security," Mutharika said in his acceptance speech.

"Africa must share this dream so that five years from now no child in Africa should die of hunger and malnutrition. No child should go to bed hungry."

Mutharika, who is also Minister of Agriculture and Food Security, said this ambitious dream is achievable as Malawi embarked on a similar project in 2005 and has greatly benefited from that approach.

"We can grow enough food to feed everyone in Africa," he said, adding, "We have done it in Malawi."

Since the introduction of various agricultural interventions such as grain subsidies in 2005, Malawi has trebled maize production from about 1.2 million tonnes to 3.4 million tonnes in the 2007/08 farming season.

The country has moved from being food deficit to one producing surplus grain. This phenomenal increase in production has saved the country a yearly budget of more than US\$120 million that it had spent on importing food.

Mutharika, who won the inaugural regional food security policy award presented by the Food Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN) in 2008, said the first step toward achieving the desired goal is to urgently embark on an extensive regional food security programme.

These include allocating substantial budgets to agriculture and investing in technology such as irrigation and improved seeds, fertilizers and pesticides.



"Our slogan should be 'feeding Africa through new technologies: let's act now'," he said, noting that developments in Information Communication Technology are vital in the current global market.

The Malawian president said there is need for SADC Member States to invest in the construction of infrastructures such as food storage facilities, roads and railways to support food security. Improvements in infrastructure will also promote the smooth movement of food surplus to deficit areas more efficiently and cheaper.

Mutharika urged Africa to first feed itself before exporting as "we have a situation where we produce and export food to the rest of the world while Africa is

starving."

He said the continent must also come up with a comprehensive database on what the major staple foods of the African people are, and which countries grow such crops. Africa's major staple crops include maize, rice, millet, wheat, cassava and yams.

Mutharika said such a database will encourage countries that do not eat these staple food crops to export to those that consume them. The information should also play a major role in the development of agriculture and food security in Africa as it would allow farmers to access vital data on agricultural products, advanced technologies, research findings, as well as markets.

"I firmly believe that if we could agree that food security at the Africa level is a priority, then other priorities such as climate change, transport and infrastructure development will also become a necessity to enhance flow of information, movement of people, goods and services including the production and supply of agricultural inputs within and among nations, regions and the continent at large," he said.

With regard to economic development, Mutharika, a former World Bank economist, said he will strive to strengthen the foundation for socio-economic growth in the continent and ensure that Africa speaks with a single voice at the Doha Round of Talks, the Economic Partnership Agreements negotiations, climate change commitments, and debt relief initiatives.

He said Africa must also work together in attaining the UN Millennium

Development Goals (MDGs) and the objectives of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). He urged the continent to utilize its resources such as minerals, timber, fisheries and human resources to address its challenges.

"Africa cannot and must not live in the past. Africa must look to the future," he said.

"The way forward is for the AU to recognize that: 'Africa is not a poor continent; but the people of Africa are poor'. This is a very important paradigm in determining the future of Africa."

He said Europe and much of the western world has not developed through resolutions and declarations but through concrete action.

"I, therefore, appeal to you all for action, action and more action. Although Africa faces enormous challenges, I believe that if we tackle them collectively, rather than individually, we can overcome them," he said.

"We need to go beyond decisions, resolutions and declarations. We must begin to act and implement our decisions."

Mutharika took over the rotating AU chair from Libyan President Muammar Gaddafi at the 14th AU Summit held on 31 January to 2 February in Addis Ababa. SADC had endorsed the candidature of Malawi as the next AU chair was supposed to come from southern Africa.

The next AU Summit that was scheduled for June in Uganda has been moved to July to accommodate the 2010 Soccer World Cup finals set to take place in South Africa from mid-June to mid-July. The AU Summit is held twice

Zambia to hold constitutional referendum

by Patson Phiri

ZAMBIA'S CONSTITUTION-MAKING process is being delayed by a proposal stipulating that a presidential candidate should garner 50-plus-one percent of the total votes cast to be declared the winner.

The National Constitutional Conference (NCC), a body that has the mandate to consider proposed changes to the current constitution, has referred the matter to the National Referendum.

The National Referendum is expected to call for an election in which Zambians will vote on the proposal.

NCC delegates, who met recently to consider the changes, voted for the proposal but failed to attain the mandatory two-thirds required to pass the proposal into law.

A total of 446 delegates took part with 260 voting for while 184 voted against. The remaining votes were rejected.

The deadlock is expected to affect government's planning as the country is this would mean organizing two national elections within a year.

Zambia is scheduled to hold presidential elections next year. The Constitutional referendum is expected to be held before the presidential polls.

Zambia is amending its constitution following recommendations of a national report that called for changes in the country's electoral laws.

The 2004 report recommended that a winning presidential candidate should receive at least 50-plus-one percent of the total valid votes cast to be declared the winner, or a rerun must be opened



Zambians to vote on a crucial constitutional change

within 30 days between the two candidates who would have received the highest number of votes.

In the event of a tie in the rerun, the team recommended that the Speaker of the National Assembly should summon parliament to elect a president between the two candidates with the highest number of votes.

The Speaker or Presiding Officer shall cast a determining vote should there be a tie in parliament.

Currently, the candidate with the highest number of votes cast is declared the winner. Political analysts say this electoral system has aided minority parties and candidates to win elections.

For example, the presidential elections in 2001, 2006 and 2008 were won on minority votes of 29 percent, 43 percent and 42 percent, respectively.

The majority of seats in Parliament were also secured on less than 40 percent of the registered votes cast. A total of 13 out of 150 seats were won by more than 50 percent in 1991 elections. In the 2006 polls, 17 seats were secured by over 50 percent.

Effectively, the electoral system in Zambia makes it possible for a small number to be winners and a bigger number to be losers, as happened in 2001 when about 70 percent of the voters had voted against

the ruling Movement for Multi-Party Democracy which won on a simple majority.

The ruling party has opposed the 50-plus-one percent clause saying it would be costly to hold two elections within a year.

Opposition parties such as the Patriotic Front and the United Party for National Development support the changes.

Zambia is reviewing its constitution for the fourth time since independence in 1964. Past reviews were conducted in 1973, 1991 and 1996.

Between 1964 and 1991, Zambia used the First-Past-the-Post electoral system. In 1991, the system was changed to the 50-plus-one percent, which was later reverted in 1996 to the simple majority system. □

Quiet year for elections in the region

THE YEAR 2010 is a relatively quiet period for the region in terms of elections with only two countries expected to have polls, compared to five in 2009.

The two countries are Mauritius and the United Republic of Tanzania.

Mauritius is set to hold National Assembly elections in July and Local Government polls in October. The Tanzanian polls are held in October.

The last legislative election in Mauritius, in June 2005, was won by the main opposition alliance, the Social Alliance comprising Mauritius Labour Party (MLP) and the Mauritian Social Democratic Party (MSDP).

In the United Republic of Tanzania, President Jakaya



President Jakaya Kikwete

Kikwete of Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) is expected to seek re-election for his second and last term in office.

Zanzibar, a semi-autonomous part of the union, also elects a local president and parliament. □

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2009 / 2010 EVENTS DIARY

25 Jan - 2 Feb, Ethiopia	14th Ordinary Session of the African Union Summit Heads of State and Government will gather for the 14th Ordinary Session of the African Union, preceded by technical and Council of Ministers meetings. The Summit will run under the theme "Information Communication Technologies (ICT) in Africa: Challenges and Prospects for Development".
February 4, South Africa	Meeting of the SADC Ministerial Task Force on Regional Economic Integration The purpose of the meeting is to discuss and provide political and strategic guidance in view of the new challenges confronting the SADC region in pursuing its integration agenda.
5, DRC	Meeting of SADC Ministers responsible for Agriculture and Food Security The meeting has been convened in order to consider the establishment of a regional centre for coordination of agricultural research, review the regional food security situation and sign a memorandum of understanding for the implementation of the SADC harmonized seed regulatory system.
15-19, Zimbabwe	1st International Conference on Investment Opportunities in Tourism and Related Sectors in Zimbabwe A total of 14 African ministers, international bankers, chief executive officers of international and investment financiers will discuss tourism strategies, investment opportunities and infrastructure development to ensure Africa benefits from the 2010 Soccer World Cup finals set for South Africa in June-July.
25-26, DRC	SADC Council of Ministers SADC Council of Ministers meets twice a year to review progress in implementation of various programmes on regional development, integration and trade among Member States. This year the focus will centre on the 2010 Soccer World Cup finals to be held in June-July, and the SADC Customs Union 2010 to be implemented this year. Council is preceded by a meeting of Senior Officials on 23 and 24 February.
March 1-12, USA	54th Commission on the Status of Women The 54th CSW will undertake a 15-year review of implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the 23rd Special Session of the UN General Assembly. Emphasis will be on the sharing of experiences and good practices, with a view to overcoming remaining obstacles and new challenges, including those related to the MDGs.
23-24, Mozambique	SADC Energy Thematic Group Meeting Officials from the SADC Secretariat, International Cooperating Partners, the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP) and the Regional Electricity Regulatory Authority (RERA) attend this thematic coordinating meeting to plan support for SADC programmes and projects.
April 12-16, Mozambique	Meeting of SADC Labour Ministers SADC Ministers responsible for labour and employment will meet to discuss pertinent issues, joined by representatives of employers and works councils, and the International Labour Organization.
27-18, Angola	Meeting of SADC Ministers responsible for Energy SADC Ministers responsible for Energy will meet to review the regional energy planning programme to compliment the energy recovery roadmap established to address the power shortages facing the region.

20 years since 11 February 1990 Celebrating Nelson Mandela's release from prison

THE SOUTHERN Africa Development Community (SADC) today joins millions of peace-loving people from all walks of life, particularly the people of South Africa, in celebrating the 20th anniversary of the release of former President Nelson Mandela.

February 11 marks an important landmark in the history of the South African people's struggle for self-determination, freedom, democracy, economic and social development.

On this day, 20 years ago, Mandela walked out of the Victor Verster Prison a free man. His first steps outside the confines of a prison in 27 years of incarceration heralded the beginning of a new epoch in South African history.

SADC proudly joins South Africans and the world in celebrating the release of the icon of the struggle against apartheid domination.

On this historic occasion, SADC would like to pay tribute to and salute President Mandela and the heroic sons and daughters of South Africa who spearheaded the struggle for freedom and democracy.

We wish to also honour all those who were imprisoned with Mandela, whose mission was primarily cemented by a common aspiration towards decolonization, liberation, equality, justice, progress and the unity of the African people.

The legendary vision and leadership of Mandela, and indeed that of the liberation fighters in the SADC region, to seek a peaceful solution to the dichotomy that faced the region up to the late 1990s, inspires us today to further achieve greater unity, cooperation and integration.

The celebration of the release of President Mandela from the shackles of apartheid imprisonment highlights the important role and participation of the people of the SADC region in the democratization of the region in general and South Africa in particular.

It is important that as we celebrate this historic day in the history of the region, we must rededicate ourselves to the ideals of deeper regional integration.

Issued by SADC Secretariat, 11 February 2010

Angola remembers the start of the armed struggle

4 FEBRUARY is an important date in Angola's long walk to freedom. The day is commemorated as the beginning of the armed struggle for national liberation and democracy, against the Portuguese colonial regime.

This was a landmark in the African struggle against colonization that eventually brought independence to Angola on 11 November 1975.

At dawn on 4 February 1961, a group of men and women armed with sticks, machetes and other weapons attacked the São Paulo and Casa da Reclusão prisons in Luanda, to free political prisoners who had been threatened with death by the regime.

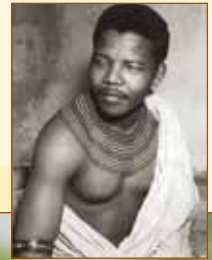
The colonial regime reacted crudely with repressive action throughout the territory.

The arrests, tortures and murders of this period led some nationalists, such as the Angola's first President Agostinho Neto to organize for the liberation struggle. His party, the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), had been established in 1956 with the objective of freeing Angola from oppression. The MPLA called for resistance against colonial rule and independence for the country.

Angola has set aside this date each year to remember its fallen heroes and heroines as well as to sensitize the society about the active engagement in the tasks of consolidating peace, national reconciliation and reconstruction of the country.

To mark this year's 49th anniversary of the start of the armed struggle for independence, celebrations are planned to take place in the northern Zaire province from 1-10 February.

The theme of the event is, "In Memory of the Heroes, More Efficiency, Rigour and Responsibility."



PUBLIC HOLIDAYS IN SADC

February - April 2010

1 February	Abolition of Slavery	Mauritius
3 February	Heroes Day	Mozambique
4 February	National Armed Struggle Day	Angola
5 February	Carnival Day	Angola
	Chama Cha Mapinduzi Day	Tanzania
14 February	Chinese New Year	Mauritius
3 March	Martyrs Day	Malawi
8 March	International Women's Day	Angola, Zambia
11 March	Moshoeshoe Day	Lesotho
12 March	National Day	Mauritius
	Youth Day	Zambia
21 March	Independence Day	Namibia
	Human Rights Day	South Africa
22 March	Public Holiday	Namibia, South Africa
29 March	Martyrs Day	Madagascar
2 April	Good Friday	Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe
3 April	Holy Saturday	Zambia
4 April	Day of Peace & Reconciliation	Angola
	Heroes Day	Lesotho
5 April	Easter Monday	Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Seychelles, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe
	Family Day	South Africa
	Lundi de Pâques	Madagascar
7 April	Women's Day	Mozambique
	Sheikh Abeid Karume Day	Tanzania
18 April	Independence Day	Zimbabwe
19 April	Public Holiday	Zimbabwe
	King's Birthday	Swaziland
25 April	National Flag Day	Swaziland
26 April	Union Day	Tanzania
27 April	Freedom Day	South Africa
30 April	Youth Day	DRC