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2011 Strengthening regional integration

SOUTHERN AFRICA will move another step closer to becoming a regional community in 2011, as one of the building blocks of a united Africa with its African Economic Community.

This has been the vision of the continent's leaders for the past 60 years, and was agreed in writing 20 years ago when the AEC Treaty was approved by African Heads of State and Government in 1991.

Southern Africa is expected to take this step towards deeper regional and continental integration when three Regional Economic Communities (RECs) encompassing 26 countries in eastern and southern Africa – almost half of all African countries – approve a plan this year to establish a Grand Free Trade Area (GFTA).

A draft plan of action on the GFTA has been approved by the tripartite secretariat, involving the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the East African Community (EAC), and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA).

The three RECs have endorsed the roadmap individually as separate economic blocs at their Summits held in 2010.

This sets the stage for the historic GFTA agreement, expected to be approved at the Tripartite Summit of Heads of State and Government set for early this year. South Africa is expected to host the summit, and implementation could begin as early as next year, in 2012.

The creation of a GFTA with a combined population of about 570 million people and a Gross Domestic Product of US$625 billion would open borders to literally half of the continent, spanning the entire southern and eastern regions of Africa, from Cape to Cairo.

This would facilitate the smooth movement of goods and services across member countries, boosting intra-regional trade and expanding business options and trade opportunities. .

SADC leaders are also expected to chart the way forward to the launch of the much-anticipated SADC Customs Union when they meet in August at their annual Summit of Heads of State and Government set for Luanda, Angola.

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South Africa to champion continent's relations with emerging markets

THE RECENT invitation to South Africa to join the BRIC group of emerging economies comprising Brazil, Russia, India and China will strengthen South Africa's trade position in the world, and offer opportunities for Africa to strengthen ties with the group.

South Africa, which was invited to the BRIC group in December 2010 following its application in November, will be officially incorporated into BRIC at the forthcoming Heads of State Summit set for China in April.

The inclusion of South Africa – the first African country to be admitted to the group -- would see the acronym changing to BRICS.

The BRICS group is regarded as the fastest emerging market in the world. Studies show that by the year 2050, the combined economies of BRICS could eclipse the combined economies of the current richest countries of the world.

The five countries, together, account for more than a quarter of the world's land area and more than 40 percent of the world population.

South Africa's International Relations and Cooperation Minister, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane said the country would be a good ambassador for Africa when it joins BRICS.

"We will be a good gateway for the BRICS countries. While we may have a small population, we do not just speak for South Africa, we speak for Africa as a whole," she said.

Economic analysts concur and say South Africa has a lot to benefit from BRICS if the country represents the interests of Africa.

The chief executive officer of Frontier Advisory, Martyn Davies, said South Africa as a country is small "but if we go there as a regional market, we are much bigger."

"For South Africa to be treated as part of BRIC is a bit complicated," added Jim O'Neill, who coined the BRIC term in 2001. "But South Africa as a representative of the African continent is a different story."

Nkoana-Mashabane acknowledges this and says, "We bring the most diversified and most advanced economy on the continent."

"We may not be the same size, but we can open up opportunities for them in the region and through that, we can complete our economic integration on the continent."

South Africa has an economy of about US$290 billion, which is less than a quarter of that of Russia, the smallest of the BRIC nations. Its population is estimated at about 49 million compared to China's 1.3 billion, India's 1.2 billion, Brazil's 191 million, and Russia's 142 million. ❒

2011 Strengthening regional integration

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The Customs Union, expected last year, was deferred to a later date to allow Member States to fully implement the SADC Free Trade Area (FTA) launched in 2008.

SADC Executive Secretary Tomaz Salomão said at the last Summit that "launching the Customs Union in 2010 is not possible. The question is what we can do as the way forward."

A Customs Union is a higher level of economic integration compared to a FTA. In contrast to a FTA, which has a common tariff regime internally but allows each country to maintain its own tariffs with non-SADC members, a Customs Union requires all members to have a common external tariff.

The COMESA and EAC already have FTAs and customs unions. The establishment of a single FTA by 2012 would result in the three groupings coalescing into a grand FTA with the ultimate goal of a single Customs Union to set joint tariffs and regulations for external trade.

In terms of regional projects development, southern African is expected to experience significant investment this year, particularly along the North-South Corridor following the approval of development funds.

The North-South Corridor traverses eight countries in east and southern African and is a combination of two traditional corridors – the Durban Corridor and the Dar es Salaam Corridor, linking the port of Durban and others in southern Africa with the eastern port of Dar es Salaam.

COMESA, EAC and SADC identified the corridor for the Aid for Trade programme because it is the busiest in the region in terms of values and volumes of freight.

Over US$1.2 billion was raised to upgrade road, rail and port infrastructure as well as to support trade along the North-South Corridor.

Tripartite Taskforce chairperson Juma Mwapachu, who is the EAC General Secretary, has announced that preparations are at an advanced stage to launch a second One Stop Border Post at the Namanga crossing between the United Republic of Tanzania and Kenya.

The Chirundu border post between Zambia and Zimbabwe was the first One Stop Border Post, officially opened for business in November 2009, and plans are well advanced for a similar initiative at Beitbridge on the North-South Corridor between South Africa and Zimbabwe.

The One-Stop border initiative is planned for implementation across all major border posts in the enlarged community to facilitate the smooth movement of goods and services among the 26 Member States.

Under the one-stop scheme, travellers are cleared just once for passage into another country in contrast with the current situation when they have to be processed on both sides of the border, addressing issues of delays experienced at most border posts as well as the often perceived "restrictive" operational procedures at borders. sardc.net/sanf ❒

Tracking the
Dar es Salaam Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security

SEVEN YEARS ago, SADC leaders met at an extra-ordinary summit in Dar es Salaam, in the United Republic of Tanzania, to adopt a strategy to advance the development of agriculture and food security in the region.

The Dar es Salaam Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security adopted in 2004 identified a number of priority areas on which southern Africa should focus in the short-term (2004-2006) and medium-to-long term (2004-2010) to achieve food security in the region.

Both the short-term and medium-to-long term strategies have now lapsed, and SADC is expected to review the implementation process.

Short-term measures include the availability and access to key agricultural inputs for farmers, consisting of improved seed varieties, fertilizers, agrochemicals, tillage services and farm implements.

In the medium-to-long term, southern African leaders agreed to meet the African Union target to allocate at least 10 percent of their national budgets to agriculture and rural development.

The leaders also identified the need to develop a regional food reserve facility, improve infrastructure such as roads and rail to promote trade and open up the market, as well as construct dams for irrigation purposes.

A recent progress report prepared by SADC Ministers responsible for Agriculture and Food Security said the implementation of the declaration has significantly contributed to food security in the region with some countries experiencing bumper harvests in the last few years.

However, the ministers also noted that a number of SADC countries still lag behind in implementing the plan – a development that could derail efforts to boost production and make the region self-sufficient.

For example, many key targets such as the construction of irrigation schemes and the establishment of the regional food reserve are well behind schedule, although research on the modalities and strategies for the development of the reserve facility was carried out in 2006.

With regard to the allocation of 10 percent of national budgets to agriculture, most SADC Member States have yet to fulfil this pledge.

This situation has made it even difficult for farmers to prepare for the farming season, particularly in the last few years when the region was affected by the global financial crisis and droughts.

Malawi and Zimbabwe were among the first SADC countries to allocate 10 percent of their budgets to agriculture, and this is credited as one of the factors in Malawi's bumper harvests in recent agricultural seasons.

As a result of this robust turnaround in the agricultural sector, Malawi has moved from being a food deficit country to one producing surplus grain for export to other SADC countries.

Maize production in Malawi trebled from about 1.2 million tonnes in 2005 to 3.4 million tonnes in the 2007/08 season. This phenomenal increase in maize production has saved the country US$120 million annually that it had spent in 2005 importing food aid.

In 2008, Malawian President Bingu wa Mutharika was awarded the inaugural FANRPAN Food Security Policy Leadership Award for his efforts to promote food security in the region.

SADC Ministers for Agriculture and Food Security noted that a number of countries have shown significant progress in submitting regular and timely reporting on implementation of the Declaration.

These countries include Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Madagascar, Mauritius, Tanzania, Swaziland and Zimbabwe.

The ministers urged countries to strengthen efforts to implement the agreement to enable the region to be food secure.

Agriculture is the backbone of most economies in southern Africa and SADC has identified the sector as a priority area for development. ❒

Highlights of the Dar es Salaam Declaration

THROUGH THE Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security, SADC leaders agreed on a range of short and medium-to-long term measures that require urgent attention by Member States in order to improve agriculture and ensure food security.

The broad short-term measures for Member States to develop and promote are:

- Provision of key agricultural inputs
- Agro-industrial development and processing to encourage value addition
- Revitalising national control measures for crop and livestock pests and diseases
- Crop, livestock and fisheries production including increased aquaculture and marine farming
- Water management to strengthen capacity in irrigation.

The broad medium-to-long tem measures for Member States are to ensure:

- Sustainable use and management of natural resources
- Disaster preparedness including developing a regional integrated agricultural information system
- Research, technology development and dissemination to enhance development of crop varieties and animal breeds
- Private sector involvement in agriculture and rural development
- Market access and agricultural financing and investment. ❒

Stable food security forecast for SADC

THE OVERALL food security situation in southern Africa is set to remain stable this year as most SADC countries are expecting good harvests in the 2010/2011 agricultural season.

Assessments by the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET) project that a good harvest recorded from the previous season is sufficient to meet the region's requirement until March and even beyond.

FEWSNET say improved harvests in SADC countries over the last few years is due to favourable rains as well as various agricultural interventions by national governments to boost production.

"Food security conditions over most parts of the region remain generally stable, and are expected to remain so throughout October 2010 to March 2011," FEWSNET said in its assessment.

FEWSNET added that most parts of the region including Malawi, Mozambique, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia will not experience any "acute food insecurity" in the first quarter of the year while some parts of Angola and Zimbabwe might require additional imports.

However, the situation is likely to be manageable as most SADC countries are predicting a bumper harvest this season.

South Africa estimates a maize surplus of about 6 million tonnes which can be exported to neighbouring countries that may require additional imports.

Swaziland, though not a major crop producer, has reported an improved season with the President of the National Agricultural Farmers Union, Jabulani Tsabedze, saying "although it is too early to be certain, indications are to the effect that the country would receive a bumper harvest this season."

"Farmers believe they will get a bumper crop this season mainly because they have gone all out and planted this year, as well as the fact that the country has been blessed with good rainfall since the start of the planting season," Tsabedze told the local media.

In Zimbabwe, the harvest is expected to be good following improved rains and increased hectares of planted crops in the resettlement areas.

Agriculture Minister Joseph Made announced that the area planted with maize was up from 530,000 ha in 2009-2010 to 660,000ha in the 2010/2011 season.

Malawi, which since 2005 increased its production to record levels, has predicted a bumper harvest. The country has forecast to produce about 2.35 million tonnes of maize, just over the annual requirement of 2 million.

Malawi was the first SADC country to allocate 10 percent of its budget to agriculture, and this is credited as one of the factors in Malawi's bumper harvests in its recent agricultural seasons.

As a result of this robust turnaround in the agricultural sector, Malawi has moved from being a food deficit country to one producing surplus grain for other SADC countries. The phenomenal increase in maize production has saved the country as much as US$120 million per year that it had spent in 2005 importing food.

While other countries are still to make more comprehensive predictions, estimates suggest that production levels would be better than, or the same as, those achieved in the previous season.

The overall food security situation in southern Africa for the 2009/10 marketing year was favourable, with a regional cereal surplus of 476,000 tonnes compared to a deficit of 1.78 million tones registered in 2008/09.

However, there have been concerns that despite having a good surplus of cereals, many people are still failing to access food due to various challenges such as low income and high food prices. ❒

Some of SADC main staple foods : sorghum, barley and maize

Rainfall patterns confirm forecasts

THE RAINFALL patterns received up to January 2011 for most of SADC are still largely consistent with the forecasts of the 14th Southern Africa Regional Climate Outlook Forum (SARCOF 14) released last year.

SARCOF 14 predicted that between October-December 2010, southern and western parts of SADC are expected to receive normal to above-normal rainfall.

Between January-March 2011, most parts of the region would have increased chances of normal to above-normal rainfall with some parts having above-normal to normal rainfall.

This chance of normal to above-normal has spread across the central and northern portions of the region, according to latest forecasts.

Colder than average conditions have also persisted in the tropical Pacific since last year, so a basin-wide La Niña has become well established. Key climate outlook highlights for December 2010 to February 2011 are as follows:

- Above-normal to normal rainfall is expected over south-westernmost parts of continental SADC and western Madagascar. The bulk of contiguous SADC will be normal to above-normal
- Normal to below-normal rainfall conditions are likely over Mauritius and eastern Madagascar. ❒

Cancun Agreement: A small step forward

by Egline Tauya

SOUTHERN AFRICA will host a global climate conference this year that is expected to produce an international agreement to address climate change.

Talks will continue throughout the year with the objective of finalizing a global accord at the 17th Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 17) to be held in Durban, South Africa in November.

The draft agreement reached late last year in Mexico represents a small step towards a global deal. However, the progress is still far from satisfactory for developing countries as it does not address their position on a number of issues including carbon emission levels, as well as increased finance, technology and capacity for adaptation and risk management.

The draft Cancun Agreement includes the development of a Green Fund, formally pledging carbon emissions cut including reducing emissions from deforestation and land degradation, making decisions about the future of the Kyoto protocol, supporting technology transfer as well as monitoring, reporting and verification of emission cuts.

Most significant for Africa is the decision to set up a Climate Green Fund with a board that will have equal representation from developed and developing countries.

The Climate Green Fund is intended to raise and disburse US$100 billion a year by 2020 starting with US$30 billion by 2012 for fast-track financing, although there is some scepticism about the magnitude of these figures.

The funds are pledged to assist developing countries to adapt to floods and drought to enable a reduction greenhouse gases and to adapt their economies and infrastructure to a changing climate.

Climate experts note that Africa is already experiencing frequent floods and droughts due to rising temperatures, even though its combined share of carbon emissions is insignificant.

The Green Fund is in line with the vision of an Africa Green Fund, a channel through which development partners will support adaptation as part of the allocation of climate change funds.

Speaking at a panel discussion on progress on the Green Fund project in Cancun, the UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the UNECA, Abdoulie Janneh, argued that "since Africa's ability to deal with impacts of climate change depends essentially on the availability of financial resources, the mobilization of resources for the Africa Green Fund should be done in a sustainable manner, bearing in mind that it cannot be a one-year affair."

Janneh urged the Parties to use at least 60 percent of the fast-track fund meant for financing climate change adaptation and mitigation activities in developing countries to kick start the future Africa Green Fund.

"We want resources that are sustainable. That is why Economic Commission for Africa will work closely with the Green Fund through the African Climate Policy Centre (ACPC) to ensure that it succeeds," Janneh said.

While there are already more than 20 climate funds operating internationally, Africa has access to only a few and has only a handful of projects registered under Kyoto's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM).

Most of the African CDM projects are concentrated in South Africa. Latin America and Asian countries, particularly India and China already boast hundreds of CDM projects.

Architects of the Africa Green Fund claim that Africa's unique challenges and the huge financing gap on the continent were among the reasons for creating the Fund.

Other significant outcomes from Cancun were that pledges made by developed countries to cut emissions were formally put into the UN documentation. The countries are to develop low-carbon development plans and are to report their inventories annually.

While the text adopted recognises that deeper cuts in carbon emissions are needed, they are not legally binding and analysis suggests the pledges would lead to a 3.2°C rise in temperature, far higher than the 2°C generally considered to be a level of safe warming by the Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change.

This explains why Africa insists that the developed countries must cut emissions to at least 40 percent below the 1990 levels by 2020, and reach at least 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050 since they are the biggest emitters.

Developing counties also agreed to look at how they can cut emissions in future. A registry is to be set up to record and match developing country mitigation actions to finance and technology support from industrialised countries. The countries are to publish progress reports every two years.

It is also significant that Parties agreed to boost action to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries-known as the REDD scheme.

Under the scheme developed countries pay developing countries for not cutting down forests, thereby locking carbon emissions.

Details about when this will happen exactly and in what form are still vague, particularly whether developed countries will be able to use it to offset their emissions rather than make cuts at home.

The Cancun agreement also supports the idea of transferring knowledge of clean technology between countries. *sardc.net* ❐

SADC Infrastructure Master Plan to guide regional development

THE LONG-AWAITED launch of the SADC Regional Infrastructure Master Plan later this year is expected to guide development in key infrastructure such as road, rail and ports.

Ultimately, the master plan should allow the region to come up with an efficient, seamless and cost-effective trans-boundary infrastructure network that would promote socio-economic growth in Member States as a thriving economy depends on a reliable infrastructure base at both the national and regional levels.

A vibrant transport network is needed to boost regional integration as well as ensure that the SADC Free Trade Area (FTA) launched in 2008 and the impending SADC Customs Union are successfully implemented through addressing delays at border posts and promoting the free movement of goods and services across southern Africa.

The regional infrastructure master plan initiated in 2007 by SADC leaders would focus on key areas such as energy, transport, telecommunications, water infrastructure and tourism.

Some of the programmes that the plan would target include the Kazungula Bridge, which would link Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe; the proposed Zimbabwe-Zambia-Botswana-Namibia power transmission line which links the four respective countries, dubbed ZiZaBoNa; and the Benguela railway line between Angola and Zambia.

Other projects are along development corridors such as the Dar es Salaam Corridor, Shire-Zambezi Waterway, Walvis Bay Corridor and the Trans-Caprivi Corridor.

SADC Executive Secretary Tomaz Salomão said, with determination, the region would accomplish its plans and provide seamless infrastructure network to its people.

He said experience has shown that SADC Member States are up to the task despite various challenges such as limited resources.

"Our scorecard represents a mixed bag, that is both achievements and challenges," he said in the foreword to a report on SADC Infrastructure Development Status that was presented at the 2010 SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government.

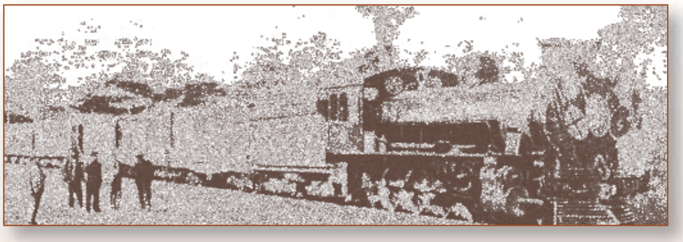
"The region has, however, demonstrated over the years that it is always equal to the task as it has always overcome hurdles through collective efforts."

He cited the programme of power generation and transmission through which the region commissioned various projects that have delivered about 5,300 Megawatts (MW) to the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP) between 2007 and 2009.

Regarding information communication technology, comprehensive inter-state connectivity has been achieved, including undersea cable connectivity with the rest of the world.

However, a number of other regional infrastructure programmes still lag behind due to various challenges, chief among them lack of funds and will to implement the programmes.

The SADC Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan is part of the broader regional infrastructure development agenda for SADC that aims to strengthen infrastructure development in the region. Southern African leaders are expected to launch the plan at their forthcoming summit scheduled for Luanda, Angola in August. ❐



Railway is one of the reliable forms of transportation.

Tanzania to build its first wind plant

THE UNITED Republic of Tanzania will early this year start construction of a US$120 million wind power project to curb chronic energy shortages in the country.

Industry and Trade deputy minister Lazaro Nyalandu said the first-ever wind power station in the country would add some 50 Megawatts (MW) of electricity to the national power grid. The station will be located in the Singida region.

"The financiers of the project have already given the go-ahead after looking at all the relevant studies. We expect the construction work to start at the earliest in February," he said.

The National Development Corporation (NDC) would hold a 51 percent stake in the project and a privately owned company, Power Pool East Africa Limited would retain the rest.

"It is a 15-month project, so we expect the first 50 MW of electricity to start being generated by the year 2012," he said.

The country produces most of its electricity from hydro dams and generates close to 300 MW using natural gas from a deposit on Songosongo Island off the coast. Its energy demand is close to 900 MW while it produces less than 800 MW.

"The project will start generating an initial 50 MW of electricity at a cost of around US$120 million but has the capacity of expanding to 300 MW in future."

"The financing facilities for the project will comprise both equity and debt financing. Shareholders in the joint venture have already agreed on the structure of the financing," he added.

He said studies have shown that wind resources in the Singida region along the national power grid could support wind farms with installed capacity of up to 500 MW.

"Wind power can be a source of cheap electricity in the country and thus help to considerably lower the current cost of power." he said. ❐

Angola plans more transmission infrastructure

ANGOLA'S NATIONAL power company, Empresa de Distribuição de Electricidade (EDEL) plans to build 25 new sub-stations in Luanda by 2012 as part of a programme to allow better distribution of electricity in the capital.

According to EDEL chief executive Fernando Manuel, the new sub-stations would distribute power to medium voltage stations, and permit residential connections in the nine districts of the province.

With the investment in the new infrastructure, EDEL plans to increase access to electricity from the current 280,000 households in Luanda to more than 500,000 by the end of 2012.

There are presently only 11 power sub-stations in Luanda, with a capacity of 530 megawatts.

The EDEL strategic plan includes improvement of the quality and regularity of power supply, increase access, efficiency and commercial effectiveness.

Currently, approximately 20-30 percent of Angola's population has access to electricity and an estimated 70 percent of Angolan businesses rely on backup diesel generators to compensate for chronic power outages.

To improve the accessibility and reliability of electricity, Angola is making significant investments in electricity generation, transmission and distribution infrastructure.

EDEL is responsible for electricity distribution in the provinces of Luanda and Bengo, where approximately 75 percent of all electricity in Angola is consumed. ❐

South Africa turns to green energy to supplement power supply

SOUTH AFRICA will this year start a much-awaited plan to buy electricity from green energy plants under a new subsidies programme to help boost private investment in renewable power.

Like other SADC Member States, South Africa's economy is struggling to meet fast rising demand for power, with the state-owned utility Eskom saying supply would remain tight until 2015.

Private producers and industry have long said they could meet the supply gap through green field projects or via co-generation at their plants, but have been discouraged by lack of power purchase deals.

"We are targeting the first quarter of 2011 for the release of the procurement documentation," Acting Deputy Director-General at the Department of Energy, Ompi Aphane announced in December last year.

Renewable energy feed-in-tariffs have long been anticipated to stimulate large-scale investment in the sector, but the country is yet to sign deals with some of the independent producers already putting money into renewable projects.

The tariffs set out the price per unit of electricity to be paid for energy from renewable sources. They cover the cost of power generation and allow for a reasonable profit to tempt private developers to invest in renewable energy.

South Africa is increasingly looking towards renewable energy sources to help plug a chronic power shortage and decrease its dependence on the coal-fired power stations that provide most of its electricity.

The country expects to have 7,200 megawatts of electricity supplied by renewable projects over the next two decades under a new energy resource plan currently under development.

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Construction of Tanzania backbone transmission line commences

THE UNITED Republic of Tanzania has commenced construction of a backbone 400-kilovolts (KV) power transmission line that will link the country with Kenya and Zambia.

The project would see Tanzania implement a new high-voltage transmission line on a 667-kilometre-long power line from Iringa to Shinyanga, linking existing and future generating sources in the south and southwest of Tanzania.

The project is expected to reinforce the power transmission line linkage between generating sources in the south and the load centres, including tourism and mining sectors in the north.

Funding for the project has come from the Japan government and the African Development Bank, which have both pledged US$100 million each.

Other development partners that will contribute to the project include the International Development Association that would provide US$150 million and the European Investment Bank which has offered US$134.5 million. The Export Bank of Korea has provided US$36.4 million. ❐

Transboundary energy security
Legal and Institutional Framework for E

1.0 Introduction

CROSS-BORDER cooperation in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) power sector is not a new phenomenon. Cooperation among Member States began as early as 1958, with the construction of a line between Nseke in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Kitwe in Zambia to supply electricity to the Zambian copper mines.

This laid the foundation for bilateral cooperative projects in the power sector and coincided with the construction of Kariba Dam in the late 1950s with its associated hydroelectric power stations (one each in Zambia and Zimbabwe).

Regional cooperation in the power sector has expanded over the past 50 years, especially during the last 15 years as southern Africa moved to restore energy self-sufficiency. The SADC region has experienced unprecedented economic growth during the last decade but investment in electricity infrastructure has sadly lagged far behind regional demand, necessitating greater regional cooperation to share the available power.

Cross-border power trading in SADC is facilitated by the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP) formed in 1995. The trading allows countries to buy and sell electricity through an existing network of transmission lines and relay substations. This enables the exchange of power from those countries that are energy resource-rich to those that suffer energy vulnerability.

Power trading will always be a priority among SADC Member States because of the uneven distribution of electricity resources within the region. There is a large reserve of low-cost hydroelectricity in the north of the region, especially the Inga reservoir in the DRC, the Cahora Bassa reservoir in Mozambique and Kariba Dam on the border between Zambia and Zimbabwe. The region also possesses cheap hydropower from other sites on the Congo and Zambezi rivers and large reserves of cheap coal in South Africa and Mozambique.

2.0 The present situation

SADC power trading platforms have evolved since SAPP's formation. During the pool's early years, trading was confined to bilateral contracts among member utilities. The bulk of cross-border trading in electricity is governed by fixed co-operative bilateral contracts, which account for between 90 and 95 percent of total regional energy trade.

The contracts generally cover a period from one to five years although they could be longer. They provide for assurance of security of supply but are not flexible to accommodate varying demand profiles and prices. The pricing of electricity depends on the consumption period – peak, standard or off-peak.

Recognising the importance of regional electricity trading, the SAPP then operated the Short Term Energy Market (STEM) from 2001 until 2007 when the region ran out of surplus capacity. The STEM market currently caters for about five percent of SADC energy trade. It comprises of daily and hourly contracts, mainly covering off-peak periods.

STEM was a precursor to the full competitive electricity market that was successfully developed for the region in the form of the Day Ahead Market (DAM). With support from Norway, the development of the DAM started in 2003 and the trading platform was delivered towards the end of 2006. From February 2007, the SAPP has been running market trials that enabled the SAPP members to gain much-needed experience to operate such a market. This market went live in December 2009.

The auction-type market allows for sellers and buyers to input their requirements for trade in the power pool a day ahead and trade or bid for excess capacity on a real-time basis.

It is hoped that the creation of a competitive market will help to optimise the use of regional electricity resources, assisting in determining the correct electricity price in the pool and sending signals for investments and real time utilization of existing assets.

It is also worth noting that the SAPP membership is no longer a preserve of national power utilities following the amendments to the Inter-Governmental Memorandum of Understanding (IGMOU) and the Inter-Utility Memorandum of Understanding (IUMOU) that allow Independent Power Producers (IPPs) to become members of SAPP. IPPs have taken advantage of this positive development to become members of the SAPP.

3.0 Institutional Arrangement

A unique feature of SADC's power trading architecture is that SAPP is based on agreements rather than on law. The pool was formed after the signing of the IGMOU by a majority of the SADC members. The IGMOU and its subsidiary agreements—the IUMOU, the Agreement between Operating Members and the Operating Guidelines —have now been signed by all the SADC members and their national power utilities.

The SAPP agreements incorporate the SADC Treaty, the SADC Tribunal, the SADC Energy Ministers and the Technical and Administrative Unit. The IGMOU establishes that the SAPP agreements must be interpreted in a manner consistent with the SADC Treaty and that the final and binding dispute resolution forum is the SADC Tribunal.

The SAPP is organized under an executive committee, which acts as the board of directors of the pool while a management committee oversees the administration of the pool.

Three subcommittees serve under the direction of the management committee: the planning subcommittee (which focuses on reviewing wheeling rates annually and developing an indicative SAPP expansion plan every two years), the operation subcommittee and its associated coordination centre as well as the environmental subcommittee.

The coordination centre is based in Harare, Zimbabwe, and is responsible for administering pool monitoring activities, carrying out operating and planning studies, determining transfer limits on tie-lines, administering a regional database, disseminating maintenance schedules, and providing technical advice.

The SADC Energy Ministers are responsible for resolving major policy issues in the SAPP and for admitting new members to the pool. The SADC Secretariat's Technical and Administrative Unit provides secretarial and other services to the SAPP executive committee, acting as liaison to SADC and seeking funding according to the recommendations of the executive committee.

Another important institution in the SADC energy sector is the Regional Electricity Regulators Association of Southern Africa (RERA). Formed in 2002 by the Ministers of Energy, the association's mandate is to harmonise the regulatory framework as well as provide an enabling environment for investment in the region's power sector.

4.0 Regulatory Environment

Although a regional energy market is operational through the SAPP, power trading within SADC presently takes place between utility members only.

Electricity Trading in SADC

Nine SADC Member States so far have national regulators which oversee energy issues in the respective countries and are members of RERA. These are Angola, Lesotho, Namibia, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

However, as the national regulatory agencies develop and begin to assert their authority there is a risk that they have not been sufficiently attuned to the needs of the regional market. Experience in other countries shows that although a pool can operate where regulatory regimes differ, as they do among SAPP countries, possibilities for gaming or unfair advantage created by differences in regulatory systems can undermine members' willingness to participate.

RERA has responded to regulatory impediments to cross-border power trading by developing "regulatory guidelines" that were approved by the SADC Energy Ministers in April 2010 to ensure that efficient cross-border deals are not constrained by unclear or complicated processes for making regulatory decisions. More specifically, the "regulatory guidelines" seek to:

- Clarify how regulators will carry out their powers and duties in regulating cross-border electricity transactions in order to minimise regulatory risks for power investors and electricity consumers;
- Promote efficient and sustainable cross-border electricity transactions that are fair to selling and buying entities, are consistent with least-cost sector development and help to ensure security of supply; and
- Promote transparency, consistency and predictability in regulatory decision making.

The regulatory guidelines represent a first concrete step towards harmonisation of national regulatory systems to encourage large cross-border transactions by ensuring that regulatory arrangements in the region are compatible.

The regulatory guidelines will only apply to long-term cross-border transactions. However, it is expected that regulatory review of small cross-border transactions (for example, those involving less than 20 megawatts (MW) of power and having agreements providing for trading for less than one year) would be more streamlined and less extensive than provided for in the guidelines. The rationale for focusing on larger and longer-term transactions is that such transactions are likely to have a more direct impact on decisions to invest in new generation and transmission facilities.

Similarly, given their focus on major, long-term cross-border transactions, the RERA guidelines do not apply to trading on the SAPP DAM.

They are also written in the form of principles, rules and procedures that could be adopted for reviewing major, long-term imports and exports of power. However, as a RERA document, they do not have a formal legal status over the decisions of individual national regulators. To give the regulations legal effect, national regulators will need to implement the guidelines in their respective countries.

5.0 Energy Trade Pricing

A key element in the operation of the SADC power pool is the SAPP pricing arrangement, set out in thirteen detailed schedules in the operating agreement. The schedules cover four broad types of transaction: firm power contracts of varying duration; non-firm power contracts of varying duration; mutual support contracts such as the operating reserve, emergency energy and control area services; and scheduled outage energy, energy banking and wheeling.

With support from Sweden, SAPP has developed the Ancillary Services and Transmission Pricing System whose implementation will be phased-in over a 3-year period starting in 2011. Ancillary services are essential to the reliability and security of power system operation in any competitive electricity market environment.

6.0 Emerging Issues

There are moves in some countries, particularly South Africa, to establish independent system operators (ISOs), separate from the national utilities. In most cases, the national utility is the generator of electricity and transmitter and distributor thereof. South Africa has said the procurement of electricity will in future be done by an independent and neutral entity. This is an important step to level the playing field for private producers of electricity because Eskom's "single buyer" position has up to now been a major deterrent to new investment in the generation market.

The lengthy negotiations for power purchase agreements (PPAs) have also been seriously affecting the speedy implementation of some of the important projects, thus affecting electricity trading in the region.

Reconciling regional versus national plans or interests is a challenge as some countries are placing more emphasis on policies of self-sufficiency rather than regional pooling.

7.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Conclusions

Power trading in the SADC region has come a long way since the early days of regional cooperation in the electricity sector. A lot more, however, still needs to be done to improve the legal and regulatory environment.

In addition, the need for a consistent approach to transmission access is becoming apparent as more IPPs express interest in investing in the region.

7.2 Recommendations

- There needs to be periodic reviews of regulatory compatibility as the SAPP evolves.
- National-level regulatory statutes should be carefully drafted so that the agency jurisdictions are properly defined, directed and restrained in order to avoid regulatory obstacles to trade.
- The monopolistic and anti-market role of most national utilities will need to be reviewed if the SADC power trading market is to deliver energy security to the region. ❐

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Africa emerges from global financial crisis

RISING INFRASTRUCTURE investment and agricultural productivity, and a growing demand for Africa's exports will help the continent's economy expand by 5 percent in 2011 and 5.1 percent in 2012.

Falling exports and weak commodity prices slowed the continent's growth to 2.3 percent in 2009, but improving global trade enabled Africa to rebound to 4.7 percent in 2010, according to the recent United Nation's *World Economic Situation and Prospects* report launched in Ethiopia.

However, the UN said the continent's overall growth has "masked" substantial disparities in economic performances by African countries.

Some countries have performed better than others due to various factors such as lack of conducive environment for investment and political instability.

Angolan economy to grow by 7.5 percent

ANGOLA HAS trimmed its 2011 economic growth outlook while forecasting a budget surplus for the year ending in March, Minister of State Carlos Feijo has said.

"Gross domestic product will grow 7.5 percent in 2011," Feijo told reporters in Luanda. "We will have a budget surplus of 3.5 percent of GDP."

The government's US$43 billion budget announced last year predicted that the oil-dominated economy would grow 7.6 percent this year. The World Bank early this year forecast growth of 6.7 percent.

The government wants to lower the rate of inflation to 12 percent from the December rate of 15.3 percent, Feijo said.

The minister said sub-Saharan Africa's second largest produce of crude oil would halt plans to launch a stock market, while repaying the remaining US$2.6 billion of an estimated US$6.2 billion in arrears owed to construction companies by March 31.

Total foreign debt stands at about $30 billion, he said. Angola also wants to resurrect plans to launch a sovereign wealth fund to invest its oil revenue. The country pumps about 1.9 million barrels a day, and last year surpassed Nigeria as the largest oil producer on the continent. *Business Week* ❐

Tanzania introduces new banknote

THE BANK of Tanzania has issued a new series of banknotes in a bid to address the technological advancement that has seen unscrupulous people producing counterfeits.

The family of banknotes that include the Sh2000, Sh5000 and the Sh10000 notes were introduced in January. The bank said the old notes will continue to circulate as they are still legal tender until further notice.

Central Bank Governor Benno Ndulu said: "There has been a tremendous change in technology that has caused counterfeiting incidents, so we have decided to produce banknotes with best security features to make our banknotes more authentic."

New notes are also meant to meet demand in banknotes caused by economical developments. The introduction of new notes is the seventh time that such a measure has been taken in the country.

The new notes have notable features that include portraits of the founding fathers of the nations -- Mwalimu Julius Nyerere and Sheikh Abeid Karume. *The Citizen* ❐

Malawi establishes new oil company

MALAWI HAS set up a National Oil Company in a move aimed at addressing the perennial fuel shortage in the country.

"We have registered a government-owned oil company," Energy and Mining Minister Grain Malunga told journalists, adding, "The National Oil Company of Malawi will address all oil and oil products hiccups we have been experiencing of late."

He said the new company would look at ways of establishing strategic fuel reserves. The company is also expected to build fuel stocks and building storage tanks in Nsanje, Blantyre, Lilongwe and Mzuzu.

The registration of the government-owned oil company follows the failure by a private sector consortium to satisfy Malawi's fuel needs. *Nyasa Times* ❐

China to double investment in Zambia in 2011

CHINESE INVESTMENT in Zambia is expected to more than double to US$2.4 billion in 2011, driven mainly by investments in mining and manufacturing, the Zambian Trade Minister has said.

"By the end of this year, Chinese investment in Zambia should be able to reach US$2.4 billion," Felix Mutati said in a statement.

The investment would equal about 20 percent of Zambia's economy. Chinese direct investment in Zambia exceeded US$1 billion in 2010 and created more than 15,000 jobs, Zambia's vice president said last year. ❐

2011 economic outlook looks good for South Africa

SOUTH AFRICA'S economic outlook rating has been revised from negative to stable, a move which has been welcomed by National Treasury.

Rating agency, Fitch Ratings, in January announced its revised outlook, affirming South Africa's long term foreign currency issuer default ratings at BBB+.

"Fitch indicated that the revised outlook reflects South Africa's smooth adjustment post the global crisis, and the reliance of the credit fundamentals, which are in line with or better than South Africa's rating peers," the Treasury said.

"The National Treasury welcomes the announcements, particularly in the current economic climate with rising fiscal risks elsewhere."

The rating agency's outlook reflects confidence in South Africa's credit position as well as future policy directions. *BuaNews* ❐

China, Africa relations poised for growth

THE HEAD of an influential Chinese think tank has said that China and Africa should continue working together to reform and reconstruct world affairs, which are usually biased towards a few selected countries at the expense of the majority.

The President of the Shanghai Institutes for International Studies (SIIS), recognized as one of the top ten global think tanks, Professor Yang Jiemian, said during a recent visit to Southern Africa that some powerful nations continue to dominate the world and set the rules for others to follow.

He said the challenge for China and Africa is to address this old order system and ensure that all countries are equal under international law.

Sino-Africa relations, he said, are better placed to lead this campaign and become a model for other partnerships to emulate because they are based on mutual trust and respect.

"I am afraid that nowadays people are preoccupied by goods and not thoughts," Professor Yang said. "As think tanks for China and Africa we should cry out for attention for thoughts and reform and reshape the international system to be more equal and fair."

He said for the past 400 years the "west has dominated the world and set the tune for others to follow."

Prof. Yang was addressing a seminar in Zimbabwe. His institute is located in China's commercial centre, Shanghai, which is rapidly emerging as a centre of global finance and international logistics.

Zimbabwe's former ambassador to China, Christopher Mutsvangwa said the emergence of China as a superpower has created an opportunity for Zimbabwe and the rest of Africa to participate in world affairs, adding that countries should be allowed to relate to each other on an equal footing.

Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi

"With the emergence of China as a partner, Africa is now able to enter into mutual agreements with other countries or continents where relations are based on equal terms," he said.

On strengthening China-Africa relations, Prof. Yang said this could be achieved by remodeling cooperation to include regional projects rather than solely bilateral country projects. However, this policy shift should be done gradually to ensure that it is a success.

He said for now China seems to be content in dealing with individual countries instead of regional economic communities mainly because this has been the focus of its past experience.

"One of the major challenges for China is defining a more flexible policy for Africa," he said. "However, there is no doubt that China and Africa should expand their bilateral cooperation to focus more on the region."

He said a regional approach would promote integration in Africa and boost relations and trade among member countries, adding that people must now "write, talk and present possible solutions to these challenges."

The Permanent Secretary in Zimbabwe's Ministry of Regional Integration and International Cooperation, T.T. Chifamba said this policy direction would fit well with Africa's priorities which are geared towards regional and continental integration.

He said while the shift could pose some challenges since individual countries are at different levels of development, China and Africa may adopt a strategy that identifies priority projects in selected countries and turns them into bigger regional projects.

He cited the TAZARA railway line that was built by China in the 1970s as a good example of regional integration. The railway line was built to carry Zambian commodities to the Tanzanian port of Dar es Salaam after Zambia closed its border with Southern Rhodesia before Zimbabwe's independence.

Tazara was built in the 1970's

This was an essential lifeline, built in record time of under three years and funded by soft loans, at a time when the northern development agencies refused to engage in this initiative.

"Africa recognizes China's efforts to develop the continent," Chifamba said, adding that more could be done to promote regional projects, particularly those located in the North-South Corridor between Durban and Dar es Salaam, an initiative of three regional communities, COMESA, EAC and SADC.

He said the recent Preferential Market Access granted to some African countries by China should be broadened to include other countries to promote development and ensure that least developed countries move quickly to expand their economies.

China and Africa share cordial relations that date back to the later colonial period when China supported African countries in their pursuit for national independence and liberation.

To cope with the challenges of economic globalization the two established the Forum on China Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in 2000 to chart the course of action for the development of China and Africa. The current three-year FOCAC Action Plan runs from 2010-2012.

The SIIS President and his five-member delegation visited partner research institutes and universities in Kenya, Namibia and Zimbabwe in January 2011. *sardc.net* ❒

South Africa to push African agenda at Security Council

SOUTH AFRICA has said it intends to use its position as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council to elevate the African agenda and advance peace and stability to the continent.

To achieve this, South Africa said it will work closely with fellow African members of the Security Council -- Gabon and Nigeria -- to advance the continent's development agenda and seek better handling of Africa's challenges by the world body.

International Relations and Cooperation Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane said the country will aim to strengthen its cooperation with Nigeria and Gabon to coordinate their efforts regarding the continent more efficiently.

"South Africa and Nigeria will, at the same time, be members of the African Union Peace and Security Council, presenting a unique opportunity to bring greater alignment to the work of these two bodies regarding conflict in our continent," she added.

South Africa began its second term as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the 2011/12 period on 1 January. The first term was in the period 2007-08.

It will serve alongside the permanent members – China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States – and other elected members – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Colombia, Gabon, Germany, India, Lebanon, Nigeria and Portugal.

In line with its foreign policy priorities, South Africa will chair the 1540 Committee dealing with weapons of mass destruction and the Working Group on Conflict Prevention in Africa.

It will also serve as the vice-chair of the Cote d'Ivoire and Liberia Sanctions Committees.

Nkoana-Mashabane noted that power configuration of the Security Council was not in favour of non-permanent members and that national interests sometimes override international commitments.

South Africa's tenure in 2011-12 "will be guided by its commitment to strengthening the multilateral system and its support for a broader multilateral approach to questions of international peace and security".

Nkoana-Mashabane said Security Council membership will provide an opportunity for South Africa to work towards achieving a representative, legitimate and more effective Security Council.

African countries are pushing for the reform of the United Nations system, including the reservation of at least one permanent seat for the continent.

They also want a review of the veto power of the five permanent council members, which is often seen as a hindrance to a democratic UN system.

By wielding their veto power, any of the Security Council's permanent members can prevent the adoption of any draft resolution not to their liking.

Even the mere threat of a veto may lead to changes in the text of a resolution, or it being withheld altogether (the so-called pocket veto).

As a consequence, the power of veto often prevents the council from acting to address pressing international issues, and gives the permanent members great influence within the UN institution as a whole. ❐

Peace is critical to deeper African integration

AFRICA COULD achieve deeper integration and development if Member States can strengthen their efforts at promoting peace and security in the continent.

African leaders said this at the recent Summit of the African Union (AU) which was held under the theme "Towards greater unity and integration through shared values".

In a communiqué released after the summit, the leaders highlighted peace and security as major obstacles towards achieving socio-economic prosperity in the continent.

They urged Member States particularly those involved in conflicts to address their challenges as a matter of urgency.

Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Madagascar, Somalia and Tunisia are some of the countries experiencing instability due to various reasons, including a new spate of military coups d'etat and disputed elections.

On the situation in Cote d'Ivoire, the leaders set up a new panel of countries drawn from the five regions of the continent comprising Burkina Faso, Chad, Mauritania, South Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania. The panel shall be assisted by the AU Commission and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

With regard to Somalia that is now in a transitional period, the summit urged all stakeholders to broaden and consolidate the reconciliation process and ensure that all outstanding transitional tasks such as the constitution-making process are completed.

On Tunisia, African leaders said all parties must "work together, in unity, peace, consensus and respect of legality, towards a peaceful and democratic transition."

With respect to Madagascar, the summit renewed its support to SADC to mediate in the talks to ensure a consensual return to constitutional legality in the country

African leaders also welcomed progress made in the implementation of the Tripoli Declaration on the Elimination of Conflicts and the Promotion of Sustainable Peace in Africa as well as the Tripoli Plan of Action adopted in 2009.

However, there is need for continued and intensified efforts towards the achievement of the objectives set out in both documents, which aim to promote peace in the continent. ❐

UN Women vows to promote gender equality

JANUARY 1 marked a historic achievement towards gender equality when the newly created United Nations body, UN Women, officially began its operations.

ormally known as the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the UN Women emerged from an agreement by UN Member States, backed by strong advocacy from the global women's movement, that more must be done to accelerate opportunities for women to claim equal rights and representation.

This ambitious new organization consolidates and scales up UN actions to achieve gender equality, offering the promise of advancing the realization of the rights of women worldwide.

"UN Women will significantly boost UN efforts to promote gender equality, expand opportunity and tackle discrimination around the globe," Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said at the launch ceremony.

The first Executive Director of UN Women, Michelle Bachelet, the former President of Chile, said, "We have a historic opportunity to accelerate the achievement of what champions of gender equality have worked towards for years…. This is a time of great promise."

UN Women was created by a UN General Assembly resolution in July 2010, becoming fully operational on 1 January 2011. It merges and builds on four parts of the UN system:

- Division for the Advancement of Women;
- International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women;
- Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women; and
- United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

Michelle Bachelet

Asha-Rose Migiro

Anna Tibaijuka

As a global champion for women's rights, UN Women will work with Member States to agree on international standards for gender equality, and help countries to implement the standards.

It will assist other UN agencies engaged with a broad spectrum of development issues to integrate gender equality priorities in their activities. UN Women will also work closely with civil society partners in carrying out its programmes.

Gender equality is a basic human right and has enormous socio-economic ramifications. Empowering women should fuel thriving economies, spurring productivity and growth.

Many countries have made significant progress in advancing women's standing, but gender discrimination remains deeply entrenched in every society.

While significant strides have been made by southern Africa towards attaining the 50-perecent target for representation of women in politics and decision-making at all levels by 2015, a lot more still needs to be done to achieve the target.

With one more round of elections to go before 2015, most SADC countries that held elections in 2009 and 2010 slipped back on equality of representation, showing that this target will be a challenge.

For example, gender representation in the Namibian parliament decreased from about 31 percent at the dissolution of parliament to 22.2 percent following the 2009 elections with cabinet representation at 22.7 percent.

In Botswana, the number of women in parliament dropped to 6.5 percent in 2009, the lowest in the region, from about 18 percent five years ago.

After the elections in Mauritius in 2010, there was a marginal increase of women in parliament to 12 percent from nine percent in 2005. Only Mozambique recorded an increase to 39.2 percent in the October 2009 elections from 32.8 percent five years ago.

The recent SADC Summit called for Member States to ratify and implement the Protocol on Gender and Development, which makes the 50-percent target a legal validity.

The protocol aims to ensure that women take up an active role in national development by occupying half of the decision-making positions in all structures of society.

Five countries have ratified the Protocol, half of the number required for it to enter into force. Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe have deposited the instruments of ratification with the SADC Secretariat, while Lesotho, Seychelles and South Africa have almost completed the process. ❐

SADC Protocol on Gender and Development

THE PROTOCOL was signed by SADC Heads of States and Government in August 2008. Its objectives are to:

- Provide for the empowerment of women, eliminate discrimination and to achieve gender equality and equity through the development and implementation of gender responsive legislation, policies, programmes and projects;
- Harmonise the implementation of various instruments to which members have subscribed to at regional, continental and international levels on gender equality and equity;
- Address emerging gender issues and concerns;
- Set realistic, measurable targets, timeframes and indicators for achieving gender equality and equity;
- Strengthen, monitor and evaluate the progress made by Member States towards reaching the targets and goals set in this Protocol; and
- Deepen regional integration, sustainable development and community building. ❐

Full election calendar for SADC in 2011

THE SADC region is expecting a full election calendar in 2011, with at least six polls scheduled to take place during the year.

Parliamentary elections are due in Madagascar on 16 March, followed by presidential elections set for 4 May.

Madagascar uses a bicameral parliamentary system comprising a 127-member National Assembly whose members are elected for a four-year term in single-member and two-member constituencies, and a Senate that has 90 members.

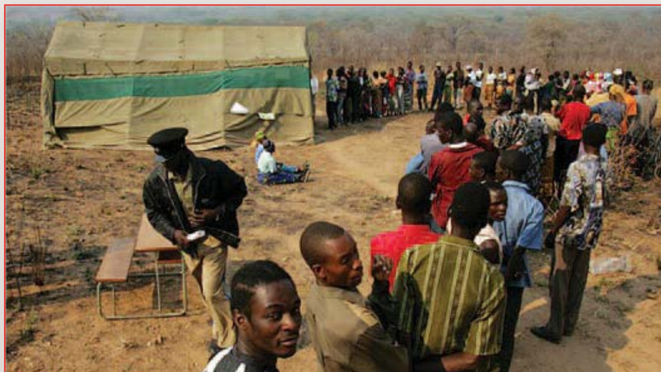
There is, however, uncertainty about holding the parliamentary polls amid unconfirmed reports that the elections may be moved to a later date to allow more time for preparations.

According to the L'Express de Madagascar newspaper, the various political parties agreed in January to postpone the poll after meeting with the island's Prime Minister, Camille Vital.

The discovery of gaps on electoral lists during a constitutional referendum in November 2010 was one of the reasons given for the postponement.

Another consideration was the rainy season in mid-April which makes many roads impassable and leaves many areas cut off from the rest of the island.

Old woman casting her ballot



People queuing to vote in the last general elections in Zambia

Municipal elections due to take place on 20 December 2010 were also postponed on “organisational grounds” with no new date fixed. Whether the presidential election on 4 May will be affected is not yet clear.

The former mayor of the capital Antananarivo, Andry Rajoelina, ousted then-president Marc Ravalomanana in a military coup in March 2009 and swore himself in as transitional president.

SADC and the African Union have refused to recognize Rajoelina as president.

Although he has promised not to run in the forthcoming presidential elections, analysts say the success in last year's constitutional referendum may encourage the 36-year-old former deejay to contest the poll.

Rajoelina successfully campaigned for a constitutional amendment lowering the minimum age of presidential candidates from 40 to 35.

General elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo are due in November when President Joseph Kabila's mandate expires.

The Independent Electoral Commission (CEI) announced that "the first round of the presidential election and of national parliamentary elections" has been fixed on 27 November 2011.

CEI secretary, Dieudonne Mirimo Mulongo said in the event that no presidential candidate wins more than 50 percent of the ballots cast in the first round, a second round would be held on 26 February 2012, at the same time as provincial assembly elections in the 11 provinces of the vast central African nation.

The president will be sworn in on 10 January 2012 if elected in the first round and on 4 April 2012 if there is a second round.

Zambians are due to vote this year to elect the president, members of parliament and local councillors. No date has been set but previous elections have been held in December.

The presidential contest is expected to be a two-way race between incumbent President Rupiah Banda of the ruling Movement for Multiparty Democracy and the Patriotic Front's Michael Sata.

Presidential polls are also expected in the second half of 2011 in Seychelles, followed by elections for members of the National Assembly early next year.

Incumbent President James Michel of the Seychelles People's Progressive Front won the last presidential elections held in July 2006. The president is elected by popular vote to serve a five-year term.

Zimbabweans are expected to go to the polls in the second half of the year to elect the president, members of parliament and local councillors.

The date for the harmonized elections will depend on the completion of an exercise to draft a new Constitution to replace the 1979 pre-independence charter agreed at Lancaster House in London.

The Parliamentary Select Committee on the Constitution (COPAC) has hinted that a referendum to vote on the new Constitution could be held in June or earlier, paving the way for elections in September ahead of the summer rainy season.

South Africa will hold municipal elections between March and June 2011 for all districts and local municipalities in the country's nine provinces. Municipal elections are held every five years.

This election will be the third since December 2000 when municipal governments were reorganized on a non-racial basis in the wake of the dismantling of apartheid.

As is tradition, SADC is expected to deploy teams of observers to each of the countries holding elections to ensure the polls conform to the provisions of the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections. ❒

SOUTHERN AFRICA TODAY
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EVENTS DIARY 2011 February – April

February	
7-16, Zimbabwe	**36th SAPP Meetings** The Southern African Power Pool (SAPP) is the coordination centre for 12 electricity utilities in the SADC region who meet regularly to review the power situation in the region.
11, Namibia	**SADC Ministers of Finance and Investment** The finance ministers will discuss a wide range of issues aimed at strengthening finance and investment in the SADC region.
12, Namibia	**SADC Ministerial Taskforce on Regional Economic Integration** The meeting of the Task Force is expected to discuss SADC's economic integration agenda including the SADC Free Trade Area and Customs Union, as well as the Grand FTA with COMESA and EAC.
21-25, Kenya	**UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum** The UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum is convened annually to review existing and emerging environmental policy issues aimed at promoting sustainable management.
22 Feb – 4 March, New York	**55th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women** The 55th CSW will among review the implementation of various gender action plans such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. 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, South Africa	**Low Carbon Future Conference** Stakeholders will gather to discuss ways of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, particularly in energy generation projects.
27 February – 4 March, Namibia	**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.
March	
28-31, South Africa	**Hydro Power World Africa Conference** Energy experts from Africa and beyond meet to explore ways of increasing the uptake of hydropower. Hydropower is regarded as one of most reliable and clean forms of energy.
28 March - 1 April, Namibia	**SADC Ministers of Justice/Attorneys- General** Ministers and AGs will meet to consider a report and recommendations on review of the SADC Tribunal's role, functions and terms of reference.
28 March - 1 April, Namibia	**SADC Ministers of Employment and Labour** The ministers will deliberate on various labour and employment issues including the promotion and protection of workers rights.
29-30, Botswana	**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 energy sector.
TBA, South Africa	**2nd COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Summit** Heads of State and Government from the three regional economic communities will meet for their second summit to discuss ways to promote deeper integration among Member States. The highlight of the summit will be the possible approval of a plan of action to launch the Grand Free Trade Area encompassing 26 countries in eastern and southern Africa by 2012.
April	
1, South Africa	**IPP World Africa** IPP World Africa seeks to find solutions for power producers, utilities, investors and governments on how to increase power capacity through Independent Power Producers.
TBA, China	**BRICS Heads of State Summit** This year's summit will see South Africa joining the BRICS group of fastest emerging economies which comprises Brazil, Russia, India and China.

99 years

ANC celebrates anniversary

THE AFRICAN National Congress (ANC) celebrated 99 years of existence in January amid calls for a shift from political liberation towards economic transformation.

One of Africa's oldest political parties, the ANC was formed as the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) on 8 January 1912 in Bloemfontein to campaign for the rights of the black South African population.

Its first president was John Langalibalele Dube, a scholar once described as "a great, if not the greatest, black man of the missionary epoch in South Africa."

The organisation became the ANC in 1923 and formed a military wing, the Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation) in 1961.

It has been the ruling party of post-apartheid South Africa on the national level since 1994. It gained support in the 1999 elections, and further increased its majority in 2004, with 69.7 percent of the votes. In 2009 its share of the vote reduced slightly, but it remained the dominant party with 65.9 percent.

The ANC is in an alliance with the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). Each alliance partner is an independent organisation with its own constitution, membership and programmes.

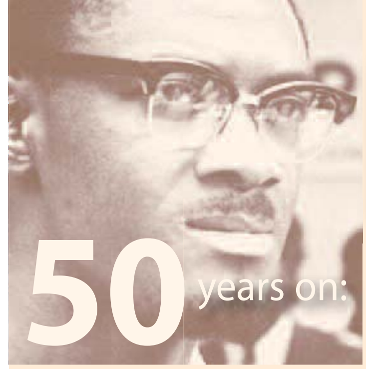
The alliance is founded on a common commitment to the objectives of the National Democratic Revolution, which aims to create a society in which people are intellectually, socially, economically and politically empowered.

"Our people have struggled selflessly for freedom from oppression. We cannot fail them when it comes to the struggle for the elimination of poverty," President Jacob Zuma said during celebrations to mark 99 years of the party's existence.

"We must make the decisive shift to meaningful economic transformation and set in motion a very deliberate programme that will ensure that the benefits of our political liberation are shared amongst all our people."

He observed that political emancipation without economic transformation was meaningless.

"That is why we have to commit ourselves to economic freedom in our lifetime, and the ANC must continue to be in the forefront of that transformation," he added.



50 years on: Remembering Patrice Lumumba

THIS YEAR marks the 50th anniversary of the brutal assassination of Patrice Lumumba, the first Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Born in July 1925, Lumumba played an instrumental role towards the country's independence from Belgium.

DRC won its independence in June 1960 after decades of armed struggle against colonialism and oppression. Despite resistance from the colonisers, Lumumba dreamt of a free DRC.

At the Independence Day celebrations, Lumumba delivered his famous speech after being officially excluded from the event programme despite being the new DRC leader.

King Baudouin of Belgium had earlier praised the development of DRC under colonialism, adding, "Don't be afraid to come to us. We will remain by your side… give you advice."

But Lumumba responded by reminding the audience that the independence of DRC was not granted kindly by Belgium.

"For this independence of the Congo, even as it is celebrated today with Belgium, a friendly country with whom we deal as equal to equal, no Congolese worthy of the name will ever be able to forget that it was by fighting that it has been won, a day-to-day fight, an ardent and idealistic fight, a fight in which we were spared neither privation nor suffering, and for which we gave our strength and our blood."

Lumumba was deposed less than three months in office following a coup on his government supported by outside forces.

He was subsequently imprisoned and murdered in circumstance suggesting the support and complicity of Belgium and the United States, as confirmed in recent publications by those involved.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS IN SADC

December 2010 – February 2011

1 February	Abolition of Slavery Day	Mauritius
3 February	Heroes Day	Mozambique
3 February	Chinese Spring Festival	Mauritius
4 February	National Armed Struggle Day	Angola
5 February	Carnival Day	Angola
12 February	Maha Shivaratree	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
29 March	Martyrs Day	Madagascar
4 April	Day of Peace & Reconciliation	Angola
	Heroes Day	Lesotho
7 April	Women's Day	Mozambique
18 April	Independence Day	Zimbabwe
22 April	Good Friday	Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe
23 April	Holy Saturday	Zambia
25 April	Easter Monday	Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe
	National Flag Day	Swaziland
27 April	Freedom Day	South Africa
30 April	Youth Day	DRC