

SOUTHERN AFRICA Today

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2018 Consolidating Sustainable Development

by Joseph Ngwawi and Kizito Sikuka

AN EVENTFUL year awaits southern Africa in 2018 as the region intensifies efforts to deepen economic integration and achieve sustainable development and stability.

The region is set to strengthen efforts to implement programmes and projects aimed at meeting various key milestones, including those on infrastructure development and industrialisation.

In line with the theme of the 37th SADC Summit held in South Africa in August 2017, Member States are expected to pursue activities aimed at promoting industrial development in the focus areas of agro-processing, mineral beneficiation and pharmaceuticals.

The 2017 summit of SADC Heads of State and Government was held under the theme "Partnering with the Private Sector in developing industry and regional value-chains".

As per tradition, the theme is the rallying point for most activities undertaken by SADC until the 38th summit set for Namibia in August.

During the coming year, countries in the region are expected to create a mechanism for the involvement of the private sector in

the roll-out of the economic integration agenda.

Public Private Partnerships are regarded as a viable model in attracting investment for public projects by allowing governments to have more access to additional capital and off-balance sheet financing.

The year 2018 will mark the second year of implementation of the Costed Action Plan of the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap, a 48-year blueprint that outlines proposals on transformation of the region from a resource-based economy to one that is driven by innovation and high industrial productivity.

The Costed Action Plan on Industrialisation, approved by the SADC Extraordinary Summit in Swaziland in March 2017, allocated about US\$100 million for coordination of the industrialisation agenda at the level of SADC Secretariat and Member States over the 15-year period extending from 2015-2030.

The action plan aims to create an enabling environment for sustaining industrial development as a driver of economic transformation; and establish an enduring alliance for industrialisation consisting of the public and private sectors as well as strategic partners.

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2018 Consolidating Sustainable Development

Strategic interventions proposed under the action plan include an improved policy environment for industrial development, increased volume and efficiency of public and private sector investments in the SADC economy, creation of regional value chains and participation in related global processes, as well as increased value addition for agricultural and non-agricultural products and services.

In order to improve the operating environment, there are plans to develop and operationalise a Protocol on Industry by 2020, which should lead to the development of industrialisation policies and strategies at national level.

To encourage participation in global processes, the region has identified five priority areas in which value chains can be established and for which regional strategies should be developed by 2020.

These are in the areas of agro-processing, minerals beneficiation, consumer goods, capital goods, and services.

A detailed study is proposed of potential value chains for specific products and services in the priority areas.

As part of the process of promoting participation, there are plans to develop model legislation and regulations for intra-SADC agro-processing, minerals beneficiation and other manufacturing activities and services.

A related activity expected during the coming year will be operationalisation of the proposed SADC University of Transformation, the initiative of King Mswati III of the Kingdom of Swaziland.

The university will be a regional institution to train citizens in innovation and entrepreneurship as part of efforts to transform southern Africa into an industrialised region.

Swaziland has offered to host the training institution and pledged to offer scholarships to 300 students – 20 for each Member State for the initial intake.

The SADC Council of Ministers at its last meeting held in South Africa in August 2017 called on the ministers responsible for education and training, and for science, technology and innovation, to finalize the preparatory work for the university.

The ministers are expected to submit proposals to Council at its next meeting in March 2018.

On energy development, SADC is set to establish a regional Inter-State Natural Gas Committee that will be charged with ensuring the inclusion and promotion of natural gas in the regional energy mix and with facilitating “an increase in universal access to energy as well as industrial development in SADC.”

According to the *SADC Energy Monitor* launched at the 36th SADC Summit in Swaziland in 2016, the contribution of gas to the regional energy mix is still very minimal, accounting for a mere 1.3 percent of the total power generation.

The low share of natural gas in the regional energy mix belies the fact that south-

ern Africa has some of the largest deposits of gas in the world.

The east coast of the SADC region has emerged in the past few years as one of the brightest spots on the global energy landscape, with large natural gas finds in Mozambique and Tanzania.

Exploration has taken place in other SADC Member States although the exact amount of reserves is unknown for these countries.

Efforts will be increased towards ensuring that the surplus electricity-generation capacity experienced by SADC last year is maintained through the commissioning of new power generation projects.

The Southern African Power Pool has already indicated that it will commission an average of 5,000 megawatts (MW) per year over the next six years.

Southern Africa has experienced surplus electricity generation capacity of around 900MW since the beginning of last year.

The surplus is partly due to a slowdown in the South African economy but also the result of the coordinated approach in implementation of the SADC energy programme, which has seen a number of new power plants commissioned over the past few years.

With regard to gender development, SADC will celebrate 10 years since the adoption of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, which was most recently revised in 2016.

SADC is expected to take stock of achievements made and challenges encountered during the past decade.

Agriculture and food security will remain a top priority for SADC following a slow start to the agricultural season.

At continental level, the SADC region will work with other regional economic communities to conclude efforts to operationalise the Tripartite Free Trade Area as well as establish the Continental Free Trade Area.

On environmental issues, the region will begin a process of re-

viewing achievements and challenges in the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan on Integrated Water Resources. Development and Management (2016-2020).

As SADC recognises the importance of sustainable use and management of the environment in addressing poverty and food insecurity, the region is set to assess the level of domestication of the SADC Protocol on Environmental Management for Sustainable Development (2014).

Namibia will host the 38th Summit of SADC Heads of State and Government in August, and President Hage Geingob of Namibia will take over the SADC chair from his South African counterpart.

The annual summit will mark the first time that the Union of Comoros, the newest member of SADC, will participate at this high-level regional meeting.

Comoros was formally admitted into the SADC at the 37th SADC Summit held in August in Pretoria, South Africa, raising the membership of SADC to 16.

Buoyed by the relative peace and political stability that has obtained in the region for the past few years as well as the smooth transition of power experienced in three Member States last year (Angola, Kingdom of Lesotho and Zimbabwe), the SADC region will seek to maintain the same peaceful and tolerant atmosphere in 2018 when five countries hold elections.

The Democratic Republic of Congo, Madagascar, Mozambique, the Kingdom of Swaziland and Zimbabwe are expected to go to the polls this year. Mozambique has set 10 October as election day for its sixth municipal polls, while the DRC has announced 23 December for general elections.

Madagascar, Swaziland and Zimbabwe are yet to pronounce election dates, although the elections in Zimbabwe are expected to take place in July-August. sardc.net (See page 4-5) □



SADC committed to curbing drug abuse, cyber-crime

SADC IS in the process of developing a comprehensive regional strategy to deal with drug abuse and cyber-crime in southern Africa.

In line with the directive from the 37th SADC Summit held in South Africa in August 2017, the development of the regional strategy is one of the issues that the Secretariat, working with Member States, is expected to focus on during the coming year.

The Summit agreed that there was need for the region to adopt a concerted and robust strategy to address the multi-faceted components of drug abuse in view of the harsh consequences being felt by the populations of Member States.

A rising number of people, particularly youth, are abusing both legal and illegal drugs.

Legal drugs include prescribed medicine such as cough mixtures, while some of the illegal drugs are cocaine, heroin and marijuana.

Medical research has shown that drug abuse causes physical, social, and psychological harm.

In some cases criminal or anti-social behaviour occurs when the person is under the influence of a drug.

To address the challenge, SADC heads of state and government directed the Secretariat “to urgently develop a comprehensive regional strategy to deal with drug abuse and cyber-crime.”

Cyber-crime is now among the fastest growing crimes in the world. Cyber-

crime involves the use of computer networks to harm the reputation of individuals or organisations, it includes copyright infringement, fraud, hacking, account thefts, identity theft, computer viruses, and unsolicited mail commonly referred to as spam.

Using information communication technologies, cyber-crime such as hacking is threatening the security of individuals, governments, companies and other organisations.

Cyber-crime is estimated to cause losses of more than US\$105 billion worldwide every year, according to the Global Cyber Security Agenda.

The urgency to curb cyber-crime is necessitated by the fact that most governments in the SADC region are moving towards “paperless” operations, which involve the use of the Internet and computers for storage of sensitive or irreplaceable strategic data and information.

In this regard, the proposed regional strategy on drug abuse

and cyber-crime is expected to develop innovative financial intelligence laws to deal with issues of money laundering, sponsorship of terrorism and other fraudulent activities that may be undertaken through electronic means.

Others initiatives will look at how SADC Member States can harmonize their cyber security laws, including harmonization of laws to curb the illicit and cross-border movement of drugs, as well as how to integrate drug-abuse victims back into society. □

Plant variety protection key to food security

SOUTHERN AFRICA plans to establish an effective system for plant-variety protection to ensure the rights of breeders are safeguarded to improve production in the region.

The creation of such a system follows the approval of the Protocol for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants in the SADC Region by the 37th SADC Summit held in Pretoria, South Africa in August 2017.

The need to provide an effective system for the protection of new varieties of plants is necessitated by the need to encourage plant breeding and the facilitation of agricultural advancements for the benefit of the region.

Provision for plant breeders’ rights in the region will

allow farmers access to improved varieties of crops, which can contribute to the attainment of the regional goal of economic development and food security.

The Protocol provides for the establishment and administration of an independent office called the SADC Plant Breeders’ Rights (PBR) Office.

The SADC PBR Office will be responsible for the administration of the Protocol, in collaboration with national authorities in the exercise of its functions.

The SADC PBR Office is to be managed by a Registrar to be appointed by the Board of Directors of the SADC Seed Centre.

In addition to the SADC PBR, the Protocol proposes the establishment of a SADC Plant

Breeders’ Rights Advisory Committee. The committee will,

- Advise the Registrar on technical matters regarding plant breeders’ rights;
- Issue general and specific guidelines and directives to the SADC PBR Office in relation to plant breeders’ rights;
- Receive budgetary proposals from the Registrar and recommend them to the Board of Directors of the Seed Centre for approval;
- Approve rules of procedures for the SADC PBR Office;
- Review and approve Test guidelines pursuant to this Protocol; and,
- Advise the SADC Secretariat on all matters pertaining to the implementation of the SADC PBR policy. □





Five SADC countries prepare for elections in 2018

by Tanaka Chitsa

SOUTHERN AFRICA is considered as one of the most stable and peaceful regions in the African continent. The region will seek to maintain this peaceful atmosphere in 2018 when five SADC Member States hold elections. These are the Democratic Republic of Congo, Madagascar, Mozambique (municipal elections), Swaziland and Zimbabwe. Southern African Today looks at some topical issues in these elections.

DRC to finally go to the polls?

THE NATIONAL Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) of DRC has set 23 December as Election Day.

According to the CENI, a total of 46,021,454 people had by 29 January registered to vote in the forthcoming elections.

Of these, 24,231,197 are men and 21,790,257 women.

The long-awaited elections were originally supposed to be held in 2016 when the second and final term of President Joseph Kabila ended.

However, various challenges such as internal instability, lack of preparedness of the electoral commission, as well as the delay by President Kabila in stepping down as national leader, hampered DRC from holding its elections.

As per the constitution of the country, Kabila's term officially ended in December 2016. He has been accused by the opposition of trying to hold on to power by attempting to scrap term limits.

CENI has repeatedly said elections have been delayed because of conflict in some parts of DRC, which has for a long time experienced conflicts in the eastern part of the country and more recently in the central region of Kasai.

However, with support from various regional and international partners, including SADC and the

African Union (AU), the DRC has been addressing some of these challenges and has said it is now ready to go to the polls on 23 December.

In a press statement, President Kabila reaffirmed the desire to hold the elections as announced by the CENI.

"We have to have elections as scheduled," he said.

Kabila, who came to power in 2001 following the assassina-

tion of his father, Laurent Kabila, did not say whether he would stand for a third term in office, which would require a constitutional amendment.

Under his leadership, the DRC has emerged from the darkest years of war, although internal conflict continues in the eastern part of the country.



Kabila led a transitional government and won national elections in 2006 and in 2011.

With support from other SADC Member States, DRC military forces have managed to contain rebels who had taken over some sectors in the eastern part of the country in 2012. □

New Zimbabwean leader promises credible poll

PRESIDENT EMMERSON Mnangagwa has promised credible, peaceful, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe before August, as required by the Constitution.

He has also said his government will invite election observers from the region and continent as well as Western election observers from the European Union and United Nations.

He told the London-based Financial Times that he does not "feel threatened" by the presence of western observers during Zimbabwe's forthcoming elections.

"We want fair, free, credible elections. In the past those who had pronounced themselves

against us; who predetermined that our elections would not be free and fair, were not allowed to come in. But now with this new dispensation I don't feel threatened by anything," Mnangagwa said.

"I would want that the United Nations should come, the EU should come. If the Commonwealth were requesting to come I am disposed to consider their application."

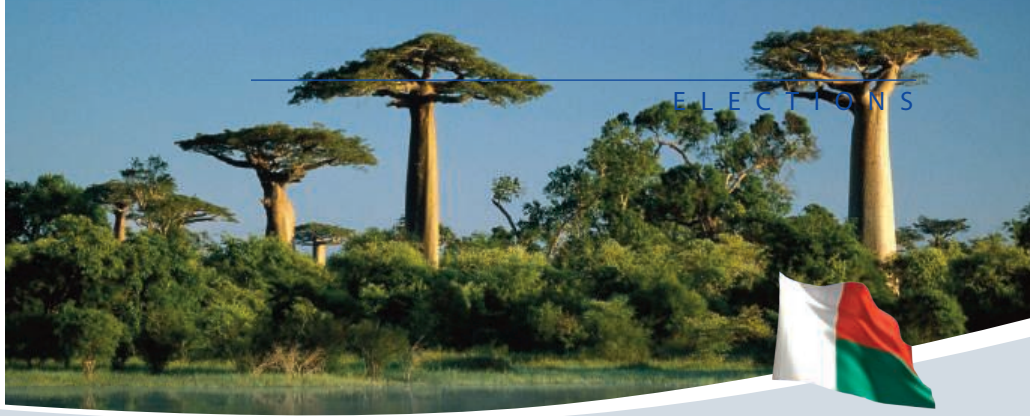
Relations between Zimbabwe and the United States and Europe are on the mend since the resignation of Robert Mugabe as president in November 2017. This will mark the first time that Zimbabwe



will conduct elections without Mugabe as one of the candidates.

The elections will mark the first time that the country has used Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) technology. The BVR is the latest technology that captures physical features such as the face and the fingerprints for identification purposes.

According to the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission, more than 5.3 million people had registered to vote by the close of the BVR registration mop-up exercise on 8 February. This is about 74 percent of an estimated 7.2 million eligible voters. □



Unpacking the Swazi electoral system

THE HOLDING of elections in Swaziland has always generated some interesting reading.

The Elections and Boundaries Commission of Swaziland (EBC) maintains that its electoral system is among the best in Africa, saying that people who criticize the electoral system do so because they lack knowledge on how the system works.

Swaziland uses a different system altogether, unlike most SADC countries that use various electoral systems such as First-Past-The-Post or Proportional Representation.

Swaziland's system of government is based on what is called the Tinkhundla. The term Tinkhundla or Inkhundla is siSwati for "community" or "constituency".

Under this system, candidates in parliamentary elections are selected in their chiefdoms, and a total of 55 parliamentarians are elected through this process.

King Mswati III nominates a further 10, bringing the total to 65 members. The candidate must be supported by at least 10 members of that chiefdom to participate in the elections. The minimum number of nominees per chiefdom is four and the maximum is 10.

After the nomination process is concluded, primary elections are held at the chiefdom level by secret ballot to elect one candidate who will take part in the secondary election.

Several chiefdoms make up a parliamentary constituency. Before the secondary election is held, the candidates from each chiefdoms are given equal opportunities in all the chiefdoms in that constituency to address

the voters on various aspects of development and issues of national policy.

To complete the selection process, a secondary election is held in all constituencies, where nominees from the chiefdom level contest at constituency level.

The candidates with the majority votes become the winners and Members of Parliament. In all these processes, participation is by an individual and not by party; hence political parties have been banned in Swaziland.

Members of the 30-member Senate are appointed -- 20 by the King and 10 by the House of Assembly. The Prime Minister is appointed by the King.

The EBC, which manages elections in Swaziland, says the electoral process is designed to ensure that people are elected "to public office based on individual merit."

"The system of Government (Tinkhundla) has proven to be working well for Swaziland and we want to believe that it

can work well for Africa," EBC said in one of its reports on the conduct of elections in Swaziland.

"It (Tinkhundla) has brought unity, peace and stability among the Swazis. It has made Swaziland a family within a nation," the EBC said.

However, other experts argue that the electoral process is not transparent as the chiefdom, which is appointed by the King serves as a nomination base for candidates. □

Former Malagasy president seeks re-election

FORMER PRESIDENT of Madagascar, Marc Ravalomanana who was ousted in a coup in 2009, has said he will contest elections scheduled for this year.

The incumbent, Hery Rajaonarimampianina, who took over from Andry Rajoelina who was behind the 2009 coup, is yet to declare his interest, saying "the moment is not yet opportune."

The island nation is expected to soon pronounce Election Day for presidential and parliamentary polls. Madagascar last went to the polls in 2013.

The 2013 elections ended more than five years of political instability after the country had slid into a crisis when then opposition leader Rajoelina seized power in a public demonstration backed by the military, in much the same way that Ravalomanana himself had seized power from his predecessor, Didier Ratsiraka.

In the 2013 elections, both Rajoelina and Ravalomanana were barred from participating to en-

sure stability, as part of a regional and international agreement.

Madagascar has been on the road to recovery and the forthcoming elections are expected to consolidate the stability.

The president is elected by direct popular vote for a five-year term, renewable once.

The electoral system of the country provides for the



conduct of a run-off, within two months of the announcement of the first-round poll results. In the event that there is no clear winner from the first round, the run-off

will involve the top two candidates.

The winner of the first round presidential poll needs to win more than 50 percent of the votes to avoid a run-off. □

Mozambique prepares for municipal elections

MOZAMBIQUE WILL hold municipal elections on 10 October for 53 municipalities in the 11 provinces.

The last municipal elections were held in 2013 in which the ruling Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) won 50 of the 53 urban councils and the Mozambique Democratic Movement (MDM) won the remaining three.

This was the first time that the MDM had contested the municipal elections after splitting from the Mozambique National Resistance (Renamo) in 2009.

The main opposition party, Renamo, did not participate in the last municipal elections citing the need to review the electoral system which they alleged favoured the ruling party.

Renamo has announced that it will take part in this year's municipal elections. □



2017/18 SADC rainy season forecast to extend to May

THE 2017/18 rainfall season in southern Africa is likely to continue until May, according to regional weather experts.

This is a change from previous seasons where the rainfall ended around March/April in most parts of the region.

According to the 21st Southern Africa Regional Climate Outlook Forum (SARCOF-21) Mid-season Review and Update released in December 2017, most parts of southern Africa are expected to receive an increased amount of rainfall in the period January to May 2018.

Chances of increased rainfall in the region will be a welcome development, particularly in the southern parts of the region where low rainfall resulted to delays in planting and crop moisture stress in some areas.

Parts of South Africa, including Cape Town, are facing their third season of drought. In areas of southern Mozambique, southern Zambia and Zimbabwe, crops are showing signs of moisture stress due to the prevailing dry spells in January.

Reports from Namibia indicate that low rainfall has resulted in deterioration of grazing pasture for livestock in several areas across the country.

Farmers, especially in these affected areas, are beginning to worry about the impact of the

current erratic rains on crop production.

According to the SARCOF-21 Mid-season Review and Update, almost the whole of southern Africa has increased chances of receiving high rainfall characterised as “normal to above-normal” during the period January to March, with the exception of a few areas.

Areas with a likelihood of receiving less rainfall termed as “normal to below-normal” are the south-westernmost parts of Angola and the western fringes of both Namibia and South Africa.

The review indicates that only north-western Democratic Republic of Congo and the easternmost parts of Madagascar are expected to have normal to below-normal rainfall during the period March to May 2018.

According to the mid-season update and review, above normal rains were received in most areas of the northern part and north-eastern part of the region whereas the central and south-western parts of the region such as Botswana and Zimbabwe received less rainfall during the October-November 2017 period.

The update shows that the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ), which is the main rain-bearing mechanism for southern Africa, is still very active and is centred over the

northern and eastern parts of the region.

Based on the forecast by weather experts in the mid-season update, there is a possibility that farmers who planted late may still harvest good yields.

The update is, however, only relevant to seasonal timescales and relatively large areas, and may not fully account for all local and intra-seasonal factors that influence weather patterns.

It is, therefore, crucial that farmers and other users of climate information contact their national meteorological and hydrological offices for better interpretation and regular updates.

While increased moisture is expected to improve crop productivity, flooding could destroy crops and impact on food security.

Excessive rainfall may increase the incidence of malaria and water-borne diseases in the region and the possibility of damage to infrastructure due to flooding.

One of the challenges still affecting SADC Member States is the lack of current and reliable data on possible weather scenarios.

To reduce vulnerability to floods, countries in the region will need to improve on data and information-sharing, and ensure that affected communi-

ties are evacuated when weather-related natural disasters are expected.

There is also need to retrofit public infrastructure such as schools as these act as sanctuaries in cases of emergencies such as floods.

River Basin Organisations (RBOs) are making efforts to improve the sharing of information on water flow and climate conditions.

One such RBO is the Zambezi Watercourse Commission, which is in the process of strengthening data and information sharing in the eight basin states through implementing the Zambezi Water Resources Information System Enhancement 3: Hydro-meteorological Database and Decision Support System (ZAMWIS-DSS).

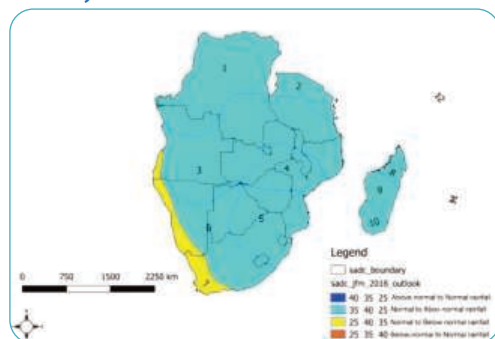
The main objective in setting up the ZAMWIS-DSS is to support the promotion and co-ordination of the management and development of the water resources in the Zambezi River in a sustainable and climate-resilient manner.

It is expected that once this system is completed, riparian states will be able to respond better to flood hazards. Another measure being undertaken in the region is the establishment of village-based response systems to respond to floods.

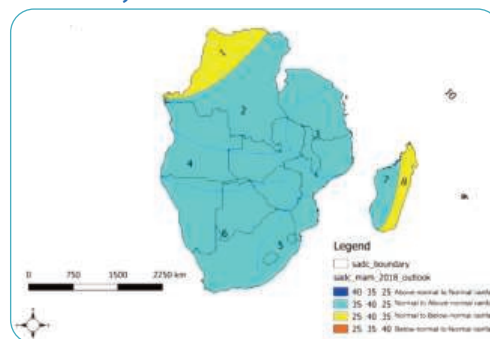
The alert system includes the use of traditional knowledge systems in raising awareness through civic education. For example, the appearance of large populations of ants indicates occurrence of floods.

Floods may present opportunities to the region if countries start prioritizing water harvesting projects to harness rains and use the water for agricultural purposes in future, especially during drought years. sardc.net □

January-March 2018 rainfall forecast



March-May 2018 rainfall forecast





INCREASING INVESTMENT IN THE ENERGY SECTOR IN SADC Challenges and Opportunities

The energy sector is one of the most important enablers for the integration agenda of southern Africa, particularly now that the region aims to industrialize its economy. For example, beyond its general use in daily life, energy catalyses infrastructure projects that drive socio-economic growth. However, a lack of investment for energy projects has been identified as one of the main challenges affecting the energy sector in southern Africa. This policy brief profiles some of the opportunities and challenges for increasing investment in the energy sector in the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

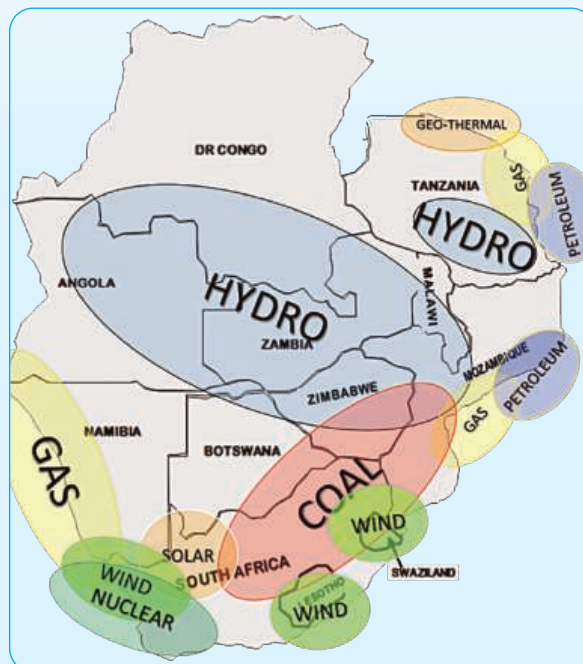
Overview of the SADC Energy Sector

Southern Africa is relatively well-endowed with energy resources, as the illustration shows. However, the SADC energy sector has faced some challenges in the provision of affordable and reliable energy due to a combination of factors including limited investment in exploring these energy resources. The lack of investment and financing of energy projects is hampered by a number of barriers such as low tariffs and poor project preparation, as well as limited off-takers that can sign power purchasing agreements under single-buyer models; and other required policy/regulatory frameworks.

Existing Energy Policy/Regulatory Framework

SADC has put in place a number of legal documents, policies and institutional frameworks to ensure the availability of sufficient, reliable, least-cost energy services. The main legal document on energy development is the SADC Protocol on Energy of 1996, which entered into force on 17 April 1998 after ratification by two-thirds of Member States. Other key supporting governance instruments include the Revised Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) of 2015, the Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan (RIDMP) Energy Sector Plan (2012), and the SADC Energy Sector Cooperation Policy and Strategy with related Activity Plan (2010).

SADC Energy Resources, Mainland Countries



Source: Presentation by the Southern African Power Pool at a workshop for review of the SADC RISDP, May 2013

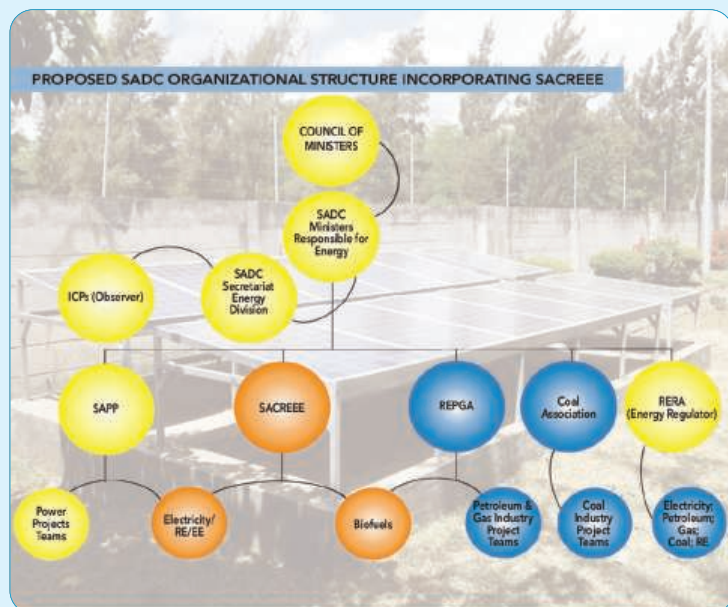
These frameworks are premised on the SADC Treaty that sets the SADC agenda and is intended to create an enabling environment for economic cooperation among SADC Member States. In addition, SADC Member States have crafted various national energy documents to spur developments in the energy sector with the creation of national agencies to coordinate implementation of agreed activities, projects and programmes. However, a major concern that has been raised at various fora, including the meetings of SADC Energy Ministers, is that regional energy policies and other documents are outdated and need to be reviewed in line with the changing environment for them to remain relevant and useful.

At the institutional level, the Directorate for Infrastructure and Services at the SADC Secretariat is tasked to coordinate developments in the energy sector. In furtherance of economic integration in the energy sector, SADC has also established subsidiary organizations to implement various programmes, projects and activities.

These organizations are the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP), Regional Electricity Regulators Association of Southern Africa (RERA), and the SADC Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (SACREEE).

The SADC Ministers Responsible for Energy form the apex policy body in the regional energy sector, reporting to the SADC Council of Ministers.

SADC Energy Institutional Structure



Source: SACREEE background booklet, 2014

Key Energy Investment Projects in SADC

A number of energy investment projects are being undertaken by SADC Member States and International Cooperating Partners. The Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan: Energy Sector Plan estimates the total cost of new electricity generation capacity for the region to be in the range US\$114 billion to US\$233 billion between 2012 and 2027.

The related transmission investment costs to support the new generation capacity are estimated at about US\$540 million. The investment in transmission projects does not, however, include planned transmission inter-connectors and national backbone lines.

A major challenge is that many of the proposed regional power generation projects are poorly structured and packaged, and therefore fail to attract investment. For example, a number of long-planned projects have failed

to take off as the private sector has been reluctant to engage in partnerships with governments mainly due to inappropriate financing formulas.

Most Member States have been slow in putting in place mechanisms that promote private sector participation in the energy sector and therefore improve the attractiveness of the industry for investors. The policy environment in most SADC Member States does not encourage private sector participation in the energy sector.

Opportunities for Investment in the Energy Sector

To showcase some of the opportunities for investment in the energy sector, the region convened a special SADC Investment Forum in Ezulwini, Kingdom of Swaziland, in July 2017. The forum saw SADC present its multi-billion-dollar energy infrastructure development plan to potential funders. The energy investment forum also provided a platform for resource mobilisation for sustainable energy infrastructure development to enable the energy sector to play a vital role towards industrialisation and prosperity of the region.

Key Success factors for Energy Investment in SADC

According to the SADC Investment Forum, the main challenges cited as affecting the successful resource mobilisation or implementation of energy infrastructure projects in the region include the absence of a coherent regional integrated plan and strategy that balances national and regional needs; an increasing focus on self-sufficiency and growing preference for domestic projects to regional projects for security of supply reasons.

Other challenges identified were difficulties in mobilising financing for regional generation and transmission investments due to inadequate project preparation; and the perceived high risk of cross-border projects and capacity constraints at national and regional levels. Some of the key factors attributed to the success of energy investment, which are lacking in some SADC Member States are as follows:

- A clear supporting regulatory framework for energy investment ensuring that there is both political and economic will;

- Support of local businesses and entrepreneurs to participate in energy projects;
- Stimulation by in-country energy regulators to transform the energy market to renewable energy, as most international investors are moving towards climate-friendly investing;
- Favourable tax and duty regimes;
- Laws and regulations that enable ease of doing business for both international and local business players, including the reduction of bureaucracy at key institutions;
- Publicising of in-country success stories and projects to the international community, which is usually done by participation at energy-related forums such as conferences, summits and workshops;
- Strong and effective monitoring, evaluation and reporting processes including the strengthening of in-country skills and project management skills;
- Incentives for Public Private Partnerships and effective management thereof;
- Creation of cost-reflective tariffs that make private and international investment in the energy sector attractive; and,
- Governments that commit their own resources particularly to early-stage projects in order to leverage private financing, thus minimizing risks associated with early stages of project development.

Energy Financing Mechanisms

The sources of finance for energy projects are many. Some of the available energy financing mechanisms include:

- Governments of SADC Member States;
- International Cooperating Partners;
- Introduction of a Regional Export/Import levy;
- Introduction of Tourism levies;
- Official Development Assistance;
- Local and foreign investment;
- Use of debt relief;
- Domestic public finance and savings;
- Public Private Partnerships;
- Domestic financial and capital markets;
- Private equity;
- SADC Regional Development Fund; and
- Venture capital.

However, for the above financing mechanisms to work, there is need for a conducive environment within the region for domestic revenue generation, savings and investments. In this regard, the Revised

RISDP 2015-2020 articulates strategic orientation for mobilization of sustainable resources for its implementation, such as the need to maintain sound economic policies, good economic governance and domestic public finance mobilization.

Policy Considerations

The following are some of the key policy considerations for SADC Member States as they seek to promote the development of the energy sector in the region.

- ♦ The “regional project” concept needs to be clarified, and there is a need for the development of a framework for the coordination, implementation; championing and financing of these projects. Existing institutions such as the SAPP need to be fully utilised in this regard.
- ♦ The SADC region should create an enabling environment for investment in the energy sector at both regional and national levels as investors look for stability, sustainability and returns. The environment should address the unique characteristics of energy sector projects, such long lead-times and high start-up costs.
- ♦ New strategic approaches to regional cooperation are needed with a clear regional financing framework to raise funds for project implementation. This should result in coordinated approaches to fundraising at regional, national and utility levels.
- ♦ There is need to promote private sector investment in the energy project sector. This can be done through direct investments, syndication with multilateral development banks or Public Private Partnership arrangements;
- ♦ Mechanisms need to be developed that will allow the energy investments to access long-term funds, including the development of a diversity of funds through innovative credit structures and co-financing arrangements.
- ♦ There is need to review a number of energy-related legal documents, policies, institutional frameworks and strategies that are out-dated and need to be reviewed in line with the changing environment in order to remain relevant and useful.



Conclusion

The implementation of legal documents, policies, institutional frameworks and strategies has been slow at national level, but the region has made significant progress in developing its energy sector. Cooperation among SADC Member States has allowed countries in the region to share surplus energy through the SAPP competitive market. In this regard, full implementation of all agreed instruments will enable SADC to develop its energy sector.

Another important observation is that a number of legal documents, policies, institutional frameworks and strategies are outdated and need to be reviewed in line with the changing environment to enable them to remain relevant and useful. This is very pertinent at this moment in time as SADC has

reviewed and revised the RISDP, and has adopted a new strategy and road map for industrialisation.

Studies have also confirmed that development assistance is not panacea for the financing and development of the energy sector in the SADC region. There is need to explore the efficacy of using domestic resource mobilisation strategies to raise money in the local markets through the development of capital markets and using private sector funds. Investment and financing are hampered by a number of barriers, which include low tariffs, poor project preparation, no off-takers that can sign Power Purchasing Agreements under single-buyer models and other required policy/regulatory frameworks. The capacity for project preparation and implementation at utility and Member State levels is still very low.

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Mainstreaming gender in the drive to curb corruption

by Nyarai Kampilipili

THE DRIVE to curb corruption is a collective effort that requires women and men to work together.

Chairperson of the African Union Commission Moussa Faki Mahamat said this during the 10th AU Gender Pre-Summit (AU GPS) held ahead of the 30th AU Summit in January in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

He said cooperation between women and men is critical since corruption affects women and men differently with the former being the worst affected.

Thus, there is need for the continent and the global community to develop innovative ways of integrating gender equality and empowerment of women in the fight against corruption.

"It is important to highlight that corruption affects progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment," Faki said.

"It (corruption) deepens already existing inequalities and discrimination in women's access to their fundamental human rights. It is, therefore, imperative that we mainstream gender equality and women's empowerment in our anti-corruption strategies."

Chairperson Faki said women should take an active role in addressing corruption and not only leave it to others to curb it.

"It is for us to ensure that women's specific concerns are addressed as well as how to support the full and effective participation of women in anti-corruption processes in the continent."

Corruption is one of the major challenges that continues

to hamper efforts aimed at promoting sustainable development and stability in the continent.

According to the AU, the continent loses close to US\$150 billion every year to corruption. The 2014 African Human Development Report estimated that gender inequality alone cost sub-Saharan Africa US\$105 billion.

In this regard, women often bear the brunt of corruption as it limits the capacity of governments to provide services such as education, health, clean water and social security. The impact of such deprivation limits the capacity of women to participate in economic opportunities in most African countries.

Failure to access education contributes to the inability by women and girls to access formal and good jobs and other economic enhancing opportunities.

As a way forward on efforts to curb corruption, the AU Gender Pre-Summit, held on 17-18 January, urged women and men to work together in community mobilization and awareness raising on anti-corruption.

Women and men were called upon to spearhead public campaigns and to conduct advocacy activities against corruption in partnership with governmental, civil society and international bodies.

SADC is one of the regional economic blocs in Africa that have strengthened efforts to curb corruption through improved cooperation among Member States.

In one such initiative, the SADC Anti-Corruption Committee (SACC) was established to eliminate the scourge of cor-

ruption through the adoption of effective preventative and deterrent measures and the enforcement of relevant legislation against all types of corruption.

The SACC is in the process of finalizing a Five-Year SADC Anti-Corruption Strategy and Action Plan which will be subjected to consultations with Member States.

Once finalised and approved, the SADC Anti-Corruption Strategy and Action Plan will be implemented through a collaborative effort by Member States as part of operationalising the SADC Protocol Against Corruption.

The SADC Protocol Against Corruption entered into force in 2005.

The AU GPS was held under the theme "Winning the Fight against Corruption: A Sustainable Path to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Africa".

The theme was in-line with the 30th AU Summit theme of "Winning the Fight against

Corruption: A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation".

The year 2018 marks the 10th anniversary of the AU GPS, which has played a significant role in influencing and shaping AU policies on gender equality and the empowerment of women and ensuring the inclusion of the critical voices of women and their perspectives in the AU development agenda.

This year also marks 10 years since the adoption of the SADC Protocol in Gender and Development, which was revised in 2016 to align it with other developmental frameworks such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, African Union Agenda 2063 and the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan. □

AFRICAN LEADERS, who met on the margins of the 30th African Union Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia underscored the importance of having more women in leadership positions within the AU and United Nations.

The leaders said there is need to create and implement policies that encourage young women to play an active role in decision making.

Chairperson of the AU Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat told a High Level Meeting on "Equal Access of African Women to High Level Positions at the African Union and United Nations Systems" that significant progress has been made to reduce the gender gap in leadership positions.

He said the proportion of women in leadership positions is now estimated at 45 percent in 2017 compared to 29 percent in 2013.

In addition, the High Level Meeting underscored the importance of putting in place a monitoring mechanism to ensure that qualified women are recruited across all geographical regions. □





Towards a trade promotion framework

SADC HAS commissioned a study that is expected to result in the development of a regional framework to promote trade.

The development of regional strategies in support of the business sector and helping entrepreneurs to identify new trade opportunities and markets is a priority for SADC.

In particular, the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap calls for the development of regional value chains to spur value-addition, provide business opportunities for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and catalyse competitiveness at all levels.

The SADC Protocol on Trade provides that Member States should adopt comprehensive trade development measures aimed at promoting trade within the region.

Article 26 of Annex V of the SADC Protocol on Trade recognises “that trade development among Member States and between Member States and third countries is an im-

portant element of the framework to achieve economic development and a more equitable international economic order.” (See box)

Cognizant of the advances made in attaining its regional economic integration agenda through the establishment of the FTA, SADC has embarked on a process to promote complementary steps aimed at taking advantage of new opportunities in trade arising from greater liberalization as well as the trade opportunities provided by growing regional and international markets.

With support from the Federal Republic of Germany through the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the SADC Secretariat has commissioned a study to develop a draft Trade Development and Trade Promotion Framework that will be the basis for a coordinated regional platform for practical intervention, concrete market development and trade and investment promotion tools and services, and assistance to the region’s economic operators and business organizations.

The main challenge in the SADC region has been the low level of intra-SADC trade, mainly because of low levels of industrialization, weak productive capacity, and lack

of diversity and complementarity in industrial structure.

The SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap seeks to address some of these challenges by building capacity to enable the private sector to produce value-added goods and services that can be traded regionally and globally in a competitive manner.

The relationship between trade liberalisation and industrialization is made more explicitly in Article 4 of the Trade Protocol, which states that trade liberalisation needs to be accompanied by industrialization in order to build competitiveness.

While the implementation of the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap contributes to growth of tradable goods, many traders especially SMEs lack information about market opportunities.

In this regard, a trade development and promotion framework should be designed in such a manner that it complements and supports the implementation of the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap and facilitates market access for the goods and services that are produced in the region by providing information and assistance to traders. □

SADC Protocol on Trade

Annex V of SADC Protocol on Trade calls on Member States to:

- ❖ Undertake measures to strengthen infrastructure related to trade, especially in the areas of transport and storage facilities, in order to ensure effective distribution of goods and services;
- ❖ Formulate and implement trade development policies in close cooperation with the private sector;
- ❖ Encourage and facilitate the creation of SMEs and promote their participation in trade;
- ❖ Facilitate the provision of trade-related services within the region, including those relating to insurance, freight, banking, warehousing and communication;
- ❖ Facilitate the establishment of national and regional databases and trade information networks; and
- ❖ Promote market research and participation in international conferences and meetings for the purposes of ensuring that they take advantage of the provisions of international trade arrangements. □

Status of SADC FTA

ACCORDING TO the Secretariat, intra-SADC trade rose by as much as 430.9 percent between 2000 and 2014 following the implementation of the Protocol on Trade.

However, as a proportion of total SADC trade, intra-SADC trade has only grown from 11.7 percent in 2000 to only 15 percent in 2014.

The SADC Free Trade Area (FTA), which is provided for in the SADC Protocol on Trade, was launched in August 2008 in Johannesburg, South Africa following a trade liberalization programme that commenced in September 2000.

Thirteen of the 16 SADC Member States are currently part of the FTA and maximum tariff liberalisation was only attained by January 2012 when the tariff phasedown process for sensitive products was completed.

With the process of internal tariff liberalization close to finality within the context of the FTA timeframe, SADC Member States would like to see more visible interventions at regional level on trade development and trade promotion.

A decision to that effect was made by the SADC Ministerial Task Force on Regional Economic Integration to develop a SADC Trade Development and Trade Promotion Strategy.

This was listed among the outstanding activities under the agreed Action Plan Matrix for the Consolidation of the SADC Free Trade Area that was adopted in 2010. □



Grand FTA to boost trade in Africa

by Kizito Sikuka

ONE OF the challenges that has hindered sustainable development in Africa is that the continent trades more with the outside world than within Africa.

This trade structure means that resources that are intended to develop Africa are shipped and traded elsewhere, improving the economies of other countries in Europe, Asia and the United States.

The current trade imbalance is caused by various factors including poor infrastructure built during the colonial era to disallow any smooth movement of goods, services and people between African countries, as well as the imposing of non-tariff barriers between African countries.

Another major factor is the lack of a vibrant industrialized sector that can change Africa from being a source of cheap raw materials for other countries in the west.

To address this situation and reform the trade structure in Africa and the world, the continent has intensified efforts to establish an integrated market covering more than half of the countries in Africa.

Commonly known as the Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA), the integrated market comprises 27 countries from the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC) and SADC.

When operational, the enlarged market is not only expected to dismantle the trade barriers among African countries but also deepen integration through improved infrastructure development, investment flows and enhanced competition.

Botswana became the 22nd and latest country on 30 January to append its signature to an agreement to launch the "Grand" FTA that will create a combined population of some 700 million people covering half of the member states of the African Union (AU) and a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of about US\$1.4 trillion.

The establishment of the TFTA is a decisive step to achieve the African vision of establishing the African Economic Community including the launch of a Continental FTA, which aims to promote the smooth movement of goods

and services across borders, as well as allowing member countries to harmonize regional trade policies to promote equal competition.

The harmonization of trade policies, and removal of non-tariff barriers and other trade barriers such as huge export and import fees would enable countries to increase their earnings, penetrate new markets and contribute towards their national development.

A single African market also has the capacity to help turn the migrant challenge into a human capital boon for Africa, by allowing workers to fill skills gaps across the continent, as well as increase tourism arrivals.

Furthermore, the creation of a single market will strengthen the continent's appeal as a global trading partner, thus reconstructing world affairs.

Speaking at the signing ceremony of the TFTA Agreement by Botswana, the COMESA chair, Sindiso Ngwenya said the Tripartite Arrangement will be anchored on three key pillars – market integration, industrial development and infrastructure development.

"Our political leaders realised that just opening up our markets will not increase the share of our region in global trade, nor can it contribute to poverty alleviation, hence they adopted a developmental approach to regional integration," said Ngwenya, who is also the chair of the Tripartite Taskforce.

He said prioritizing market integration, industrial development and infrastructure development is critical "in recognition of supply side constraints, poor connectivity and high cost of doing business in the region."

SADC Deputy Executive Secretary for regional integration, Dr Theminkosi Mhlongo concurred, adding that regional countries should take advantage of the Tripartite FTA and the Continental FTA to boost intra-regional trade in Africa.

"The Tripartite FTA should not be viewed in isolation but rather as an integral component of the larger Continental FTA," he said.

"These two processes offer our business operators in SADC the platform for greater market access opportunities covering both trade in goods and services."

Botswana Investment, Trade and Industry Minister, Vincent Seretse said the country is committed to making sure that the enlarged market is a success.

He urged other countries that are yet to sign the tripartite agreement to do so as a matter of urgency to ensure that "Africans create the Africa they want."

Negotiations for the TFTA have been conducted in three different phases – preparatory phase, phase one and phase two to cover a wide range of issues including tariff liberalization, customs procedures and simplification of customs documentation, transit procedures, as well as facilitating movement of business persons within the region is being negotiated in parallel phases.

Once these negotiations are concluded Africa will be able to launch the "Grand" FTA – a move that will signify a bold statement that the continent is ready to reform and reconstruct global trade. sardc.net □

Status of the Grand FTA Agreement

COUNTRY	SIGNED	RATIFIED
Angola	✓	
Burundi	✓	
Botswana	✓	
Union of Comoros	✓	
Democratic Republic of Congo	✓	
Djibouti	✓	
Egypt	✓	✓
Eritrea	✓	
Kenya	✓	
Libya	✓	
Lesotho	✓	
Madagascar	✓	
Malawi	✓	
Mauritius	✓	
Mozambique	✓	
Namibia	✓	
Rwanda	✓	
Seychelles	✓	
Sudan	✓	
South Sudan	✓	
United Republic of Tanzania	✓	
Uganda	✓	✓
South Africa	✓	
Swaziland	✓	
Zambia	✓	
Zimbabwe	✓	

SADC
 COMESA
 EAC



Africa strategizes on deepening integration, ending conflict

by Danai Majaha

THE AFRICAN Union will convene an extraordinary summit in Rwanda in March to sign the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) and consider the CFTA legal instruments, thus taking a major step toward strengthening trade among Africa countries.

When fully operational, the proposed CFTA is expected to increase African intra-regional trade from the present 10 per cent to about 40 percent.

The CFTA will bring together all the 55 AU member states, creating a combined market of more than one billion people and a combined Gross Domestic Product of more than US\$3.4 trillion.

The Rwandan President, Paul Kagame, was elected Chairman for the coming year at the 30th Ordinary Assembly of African Union Heads of State and Government, held in January in Ethiopia, and he immediately offered to host the extraordinary summit on 21 March in Kigali.

This will be preceded by an extraordinary session of the AU Specialised Technical Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs to consider the instruments prior to the meeting of heads of state and government.

Africa had originally planned to launch the CFTA by the end of 2017. However, this was delayed to ensure that the right modalities were put in place for the success of the market.

Another key outcome of the 30th AU summit that took place

on 28-29 January at AU headquarters in Addis Ababa was the adoption of a protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community relating to Free Movement of Persons, Rights of Residence and Right of Establishment and its draft implementation roadmap.

Other key decisions reached by the AU summit included the launch of a Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM), which is vital to the achievement of the long-term vision of an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa under the AU Agenda 2063.

The launch of the single air transport market is expected to bring about greater connectivity across the continent, a key ingredient to efforts towards sustainable development of the aviation and tourism industry in Africa.

The decision to adopt SAATM, one of the flagship projects of the AU Agenda 2063, was made during the 24th Ordinary Session of AU Assembly which took place in January 2015 in Ethiopia.

Discussions on African open skies have been ongoing for the last two decades, culminating in the adoption of the Yamoussoukro Decision by African leaders in 2000.

Currently, 23 Member States have pledged their commitment to the single air market whose implementation is expected to increase the number of routes, reduce the cost of air travel and contribute

to the expansion of intra-African trade and tourism.

African leaders are, however, keenly aware that these plans cannot fully succeed in the presence of conflict and so they also agreed to intensify efforts to end armed conflicts on the continent through greater cooperation aimed at "silencing the guns" by 2020.

The Summit appointed former Algerian Foreign Minister, Ramtane Lamamra, who is also a former AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, as the AU High Representative for Silencing the Guns.

They called upon member states, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the United Nations and other partners "to extend their cooperation and support his activities in assisting Africa and its people to silence the guns in Africa by the year 2020."

"The Assembly further stresses the urgent need for the AU to mobilize funding in support of the activities of the High Representative to enable him carry out his mandate, particularly galvanising efforts of all stakeholders to scale up activities in the implementation of the AU Master

Roadmap," read the statement issued at the end of the AU Summit.

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el Asisi, who was President of the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) in January, presented the PSC report on Implementation of AU Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by Year 2020.

The roadmap was endorsed by the 28th AU Summit held a year ago in Ethiopia, and provides practical, time-bound implementable steps to toward the goal of silencing the guns in two years time.

It is premised on the principle that Africa should assume total responsibility for its destiny.

Among the practical steps proposed under the roadmap is a commitment by AU member states and RECs to provide adequate funding for the strengthening of the African Standby Force (ASF) in the areas of force preparation, force employment and post-force employment in line with the 5-Year Maputo Work Plan on the Enhancement of the ASF.

The roadmap also requires member states and RECs to consolidate legal agreements for rapid deployment of the ASF as a response mechanism in support of efforts to end conflict, as well as to protect civilians, including during natural and man-made disasters. sardc.net □



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February
1-2, Botswana

SOLTRAIN Conference 2018

Energy experts from southern Africa will meet in Gaborone to discuss ways of improving a coordinated approach to harnessing the energy potential from the sun. The Southern African Solar Thermal Training and Demonstration Initiative (SOLTRAIN) is a regional programme on capacity building and demonstration of solar thermal systems in the SADC region.

5-8, South Africa

African Mining Indaba 2018

The African Mining Indaba is the world's largest mining investment conference and brings together investors, mining companies, governments and other stakeholders from around the world to learn and network, all toward the single goal of advancing mining in Africa.

20-21,
South Africa

Africa Energy Indaba

The indaba will bring together international and continental experts to share insights into and solutions to Africa's energy challenges while also exploring the vast energy development opportunities on offer for Africa.

22, Namibia

ZAMCOM Council of Ministers

Focusing on activities of the Zambezi Watercourse Commission (ZAMCOM) whose Secretariat is based in Zimbabwe, the Council of Ministers will provide policy guidance in promoting the cooperative management and development of the Zambezi River Basin; approve annual work plans and budgets; and consider recommendations from the ZAMCOM Technical Committee.

March
12-23,
UN New York

62nd Session of Commission on the Status of Women

This year's session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) focuses on the theme "Challenges and Opportunities in Achieving Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Rural Women and Girls." The CSW meets annually and is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women, taking a leading role in monitoring and reviewing progress in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

21, Rwanda

African Union Extraordinary Summit

Following the decisions of the 30th Ordinary Assembly of African Union Heads of State and Government, held in January in Ethiopia, the AU will convene an Extra-Ordinary Summit in Rwanda in March to discuss and adopt the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) and consider the CFTA legal instruments. The summit will be preceded by an Extra-Ordinary session of the executive council on 19 March.

21 – 22,
Swaziland

43rd SAPP Executive Committee Meeting

The Southern African Power Pool will discuss the energy situation in the region at the 43rd meeting of its Executive Committee, hosted by Swaziland Electricity Company. SAPP is a regional body that coordinates the planning of generation, transmission and marketing of electricity on behalf of 12 utilities of SADC Member States, two independent transmission companies and two independent power producers.

22, Global

World Water Day

World Water Day is held annually on 22 March to focus attention on the importance of freshwater and the sustainable management of freshwater resources. The theme for 2018 is "Nature for Water" – exploring nature-based solutions to the water challenges in the 21st century.

TBA, South Africa

SADC Council of Ministers

The SADC Council of Ministers is responsible for supervising and monitoring the functions and development of SADC, and ensuring that policies are properly implemented to advance regional integration.

April
11, Botswana

SADC ETG and Water/Energy Nexus Meeting

The Energy Thematic Group is a coordination meeting of SADC and its subsidiary organizations with cooperating partners and experts to review the energy situation in the region. The ETG will meet jointly with the Water Strategy Reference Group to discuss Water/Energy nexus issues.

50
YEARS

12 March 1968



Mauritius celebrates 50 years of independence

MAURITIUS REACHES another milestone on 12 March 2018 when the country celebrates its 50th independence anniversary.

The road to independence was not an easy one, and can be traced back to the 1630s when Europeans settled in the islands.

The first Dutch settlement lasted about 20 years but the failure to develop enough dividends saw them leave the country in 1710.

When the Dutch left, the island became a French colony in September 1715, named a "Isle de France".

However, it was only from 1735, with the arrival of the French governor, Mahé de La Bourdonnais, that the "Isle de France" started developing.

The island was under the administration of the French East India Company, which maintained its presence until 1767.

Officials were appointed by the French Government, except for a brief period during the French Revolution when the inhabitants set up a government independent of France.

During the Napoleonic wars, the "Isle de France" became a base from which French corsairs organised successful raids on British commercial ships until 1810 when a strong British expedition was sent to capture the island.

When the island was captured, a Treaty of Paris was signed in 1814, and the "Isle de France" regained its former name "Mauritius". The island was ceded to Great Britain, which promised to guarantee the respect of the language, customs, laws and traditions of the inhabitants.

Significant socio-economic reforms were achieved during the British administration. For example, the abolition of slavery was approved in 1835, while local planters received compensation for the loss of their slaves who had been imported from Africa and Madagascar during the French occupation.

A Council of Government was established in 1825, and expanded in 1886 to make room for more local representatives.

A major breakthrough occurred in 1948 when, after years of protracted negotiations for a more liberal constitution, the vote and the holding of influential positions was extended to all adults who could pass a literacy test.

The Council of Government was then replaced by a Legislative Council composed of 19 elected members, 12 members nominated by the governor and three ex-officio members.

General elections were held in August 1948 and the first Legislative Council met on 1 September 1948.

Following a constitutional conferences held in London in 1955 and 1957, the ministerial system was introduced and general elections were held on 9 March 1959.

In 1961, a Constitutional Review Conference was held in London and a programme of further constitutional advance was established. It was followed in 1965 by a constitutional conference which paved the way for Mauritius to achieve independence.

After general elections in 1967, Mauritius adopted a new constitution, and independence was proclaimed on 12 March 1968.

Mauritius achieved the status of Republic 24 years later on 12 March 1992.

To celebrate the Silver Jubilee, a series of activities kicked off in March 2017 running under the theme "La Main dans La Main".

The year-long celebrations portray the evolution and various phases of development of the country since independence in 1968 and its accession to Republic in 1992. □



DRC remembers liberation pioneers

JANUARY 4 is celebrated as Martyrs Day in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Known as the "Independence Martyrs Day", the day commemorates the mass action on that day in 1959 which sounded the death knell of Belgian colonialism in the Congo. "Immediate independence", the slogan of the Kinshasa protesters, soon became a non-negotiable demand of the national independence movement all over the country. The revolt marked the beginning of a new and truly revolutionary phase in the movement – the phase of the radicalisation of the struggle. □

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS IN SADC

February - April 2018

1 February	Abolition of Slavery	Mauritius
3 February	Heroes' Day	Mozambique
4 February	National Armed Struggle Day	Angola
13 February	Carnival	Angola
	Maha Shivaratri	Mauritius
16 February	Chinese Spring Festival	Mauritius
21 February	Youth Day	Zimbabwe
3 March	Martyrs Day	Malawi
8 March	Women's Day	Angola, Zambia
11 March	Moshoeshoe's Day	Lesotho
12 March	National Day	Mauritius
	Youth Day	Zambia
18 March	Ougadi	Mauritius
	Cheikh Al Maarouf Day	Comoros
21 March	Independence Day	Namibia
	Human Rights' Day	South Africa
29 March	Martyrs Day	Madagascar
30 March	Good Friday	All SADC except....
31 March	Easter/Holy Saturday	Seychelles, Zambia
2 April	Easter Monday	Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Namibia, Seychelles, Swaziland, Tanzania
4 April	Family Day	South Africa
7 April	Peace and Reconciliation Day	Angola
	Sheik Abeid Karume Day	Tanzania
	Woman's Day	Mozambique
13 April	Leilat al-Meiraj	Comoros
18 April	Independence Day	Zimbabwe
19 April	King's Birthday	Swaziland
25 April	National Flag Day	Swaziland
26 April	Union Day	Tanzania
27 April	Freedom Day	South Africa
30 April	Youth Day	DRC