

COVID-19 response SADC solidarity



THE COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced the resolve by SADC Member States to strengthen the response mechanisms at both the Member State and the regional levels for disaster risk reduction and management.

At its virtual meeting held on 29 May, the SADC Council of Ministers urged Member States to accelerate the operationalisation and implementation of regional strategies and instruments aimed at responding to crises.

The Chairperson of the Council of Ministers, Hon. Prof. Palamagamba John Kabudi, who is the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the United Republic of Tanzania, called for the strengthening of solidarity and unity to address the socio-economic impact of the pandemic in the region.

Prof. Kabudi called on the SADC region to transform the COVID-19 crisis into an opportunity by expanding the medical and pharmaceutical industry, which in turn would create jobs and boost the economy.

"It must be noted that COVID-19 is likely to remain with us for a considerable period of time," the SADC Executive Secretary, Dr Stergomena Tax said in her address to Council. "We therefore, need to understand it, and learn how to live with it by putting in place the needed preventive and curative measures."

Dr Tax said the COVID-19 pandemic has brought multiple challenges and responsibilities that require extra-ordinary and innovative approaches to doing business, and she ap-

pealed to Member States to remain vigilant and address the socio-economic impact of the virus as a united region.

The Council urged SADC Member States to source medical equipment and supplies from within the region and to engage private sector to re-direct some of the manufacturing towards production of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs), to facilitate the regional response to COVID-19.

For this purpose, the SADC Secretariat will disseminate a list of the manufacturers of essential medical equipment and supplies needed to address COVID-19 and will establish an online platform to facilitate easy access to information about the manufacturers and suppliers.

Council received the preliminary report on the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 and its implications for the region, and noted that the pandemic will have short, medium and long-term negative impact on all social and economic sectors, given its crosscutting nature.

The Joint Meeting of SADC Ministers responsible for Agriculture and Food Security, Fisheries and Aquaculture held virtually on 22 May noted that COVID-19 would lead to a decline in the nutrition status of the vulnerable population due to inadequate access to food, increase in household food insecurity, inadequate access to health, nutrition and water, sanitation and hygiene services.

POLICY	3
INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE	4
ENVIRONMENT	5
BIODIVERSITY	6
TRANSFRONTIER CONSERVATION	7
ENERGY	8-9
GENDER	10
TRADE	11
ELECTIONS	12
PEACE AND SECURITY	13
HERITAGE	14
EVENTS	15

COVID-19 response SADC solidarity



In view of this assessment, the Council of Ministers called on Member States to continue working towards the implementation of resilience-building initiatives, improving early warning and response mechanisms, and contingency planning to minimize the impacts of disasters and natural hazards on the people of the region.

"These multiple hazards are not without effect on national emergency preparedness and service delivery systems, highlighting the urgent need to strengthen measures that build resilience, disaster preparedness and response, including for pandemics and epidemics and related hazards," Prof. Kabudi said.

Council urged Member States to implement the recommendations of the preliminary report on the socio-economic impact of COVID-19, including: Setting regional standards to facilitate harmonization of systems and

capacities in the health sector, prioritizing digitization; joint resource mobilization and pooled procurement; developing a framework for logistics, connectivity and automation of border management for effective logistics and trade facilitation; provision of financial lifelines to Small and Medium Enterprises; expanding social safety nets and social protection measures for the poor and vulnerable; synchronising fiscal and monetary measures to mitigate the effect of COVID-19 pandemic on the region's macroeconomic and financial stability; developing recovery plans, accelerating the implementation of the SADC Industrialization Strategy and Roadmap 2015-2063 on value chains to among others, pharmaceutical value chains; and to deepen regional cooperation and integration.

Despite progress in policy formulation, one of the major challenges inhibiting the successful implementation of disaster risk

reduction strategies is the lack of sufficient funding, given that the SADC Regional Disaster Preparedness and Response Strategy and Fund is inadequately resourced.

The SADC Regional Development Fund (RDF), which is intended to be the primary source in the event of a disaster, is yet to be fully functional.

Member States agreed to establish the RDF in order to mobilise financial resources to support infrastructure, social development, disaster risk and regional integration requirements.

The SADC region recorded its first case of COVID-19 in early March and since then the number of cases has been increasing exponentially.

Apart from significant public health implications, the COVID-19 pandemic is having an adverse effect on economic output, with most SADC Member States are projected to record economic contractions in 2020. □

SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap

The SADC Council of Ministers in a virtual meeting chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the United Republic of Tanzania, Prof. Palamagamba Kabudi, reviewed progress on the implementation of the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap (2015-2063) and noted a number of achievements, including the processing of new projects, mainly in Agro-processing and one in mineral beneficiation.

Council noted the preliminary findings in the assessment report on the status of SADC industrialisation and intra-regional trade in the SADC region, noting that despite the improvement in intra-SADC exports and imports in the decade 2008-2018 the total intra-SADC trade is significantly less compared to other regions of the world such as Asia (30%) and the European Union (60%). Council directed the Secretariat to finalize and submit concrete recommendations to Summit in August, taking into account the impact of COVID-19.

In order to accelerate SADC industrialisation and intra-regional trade, Council urged Member

States to intensify efforts in resolving binding constraints to industrialisation in the areas of macroeconomic stability, access to finance and enabling infrastructure for industrial development and regional integration; sign and ratify the SADC Protocol on Industry; fast track the operations of the pending instruments to provide support, such as the SADC Regional Development Fund and the SADC Resource Mobilisations Framework; and address Non-Tariff Barriers in a timely manner to support development of regional trade.

In terms of preparedness and response to disasters and crises, Council urged Member States to accelerate the operationalization and implementation of these regional strategies and instruments that are intended to respond to the crisis, such as the SADC Regional Development Fund; the Preparedness and Response and Disaster Fund, the Regional Resilient Strategic Framework 2020-2030; and urged Member States to continue working together and support each other in accelerating the implementation of resilience-building initiatives, improve early warning and response, and contingency planning to minimize the impacts of future climatic disasters. □



SADC, UNESCO sign education agreement

THE SADC Secretariat and the United Nations, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) have signed a Joint Statement and Action Plan on ensuring continuity of learning in the context of COVID-19.

In a joint statement signed by the SADC Executive Secretary, Dr Stergomena Lawrence Tax and the Regional Director and Representative for the UNESCO Regional Office for Southern Africa, Professor Hubert Gijzen, the two organisations are rallying their development partners, the international organizations, civil society organisations and private sector in a Broad Coalition to ensure #LearningNeverStops.

SADC and UNESCO highlighted the importance of regional coordination and partnerships in responding to the COVID-19 to avoid duplication of efforts and resources.

The SADC Secretariat agreed to work with UNESCO, leading a Global Education Coalition to support SADC Member States in mitigating the effects of the coronavirus on education, and in ensuring the continuity of education and learning programmes.

The COVID-19 crisis has resulted in the closure of schools, polytechnics, and universities, affecting learners and youth throughout the region. School closures widen education inequalities and affect vulnerable children and youth disproportionately, as some students have access to online learning while the majority do not.

Through this collaboration, the SADC Secretariat and UNESCO agreed to facilitate inclusive learning opportunities for children and youth during this period of sudden and unprecedented educational disruption, and to support Member States in distance learning solutions that include the most at-risk children and youth.

Investment in remote learning should both mitigate the immediate disruption caused by COVID-

19, and accelerate the development of more open and flexible quality education systems.

Through this agreement, the SADC Secretariat and UNESCO commit to work with Member States, and other Global Coalition partners to provide support to Member States to ensure continuity of education under the hashtag #LearningNeverStops.

Support will be provided to SADC Member States for mobilizing resources and implementing innovative and appropriate solutions to provide education and learning remotely, leveraging hi-tech, low-tech and no-tech approaches, and seeking equitable solutions and universal access.

Strengthening access to innovative distance learning opportunities will help to ensure the provision and access of high-quality curricular contents.

This initiative also presents an opportunity to strengthen science, technology, engineering and

mathematics (STEM) education to ensure learners will develop the knowledge, skills and creative minds required by productive sectors in Member States.

Specifically, the SADC-UNESCO partnership will focus on:

- ❖ Making distance learning possible for all learners at all levels;
- ❖ Creating awareness on the importance of health and hygiene, and on COVID-19 prevention through age-appropriate information about coronavirus and other infectious diseases for teachers and learners;
- ❖ Supporting teachers and teacher educators through access and capacity-building to use relevant technologies to facilitate and support distance learning;
- ❖ Strengthening capacities and skills for quality STEM education, to ensure learners develop creative minds, and



the knowledge and skills required by productive sectors for the implementation of the SADC Industrialisation Strategy; and

- ❖ Improving science, technology and innovation, and research and development response to COVID-19 through the dissemination of timely and relevant research output, including sharing best practices, information and mutual learning, expanding the initiative with regional dimensions, and minimising duplication of efforts on COVID-19.

The partnership will seek equitable solutions to ensure coordinated responses and avoid overlapping efforts, while facilitating the return of students to school when they reopen to avoid an increase in dropout rates. □

Strategic framework for disaster risk reduction and response

OVER THE years, SADC has developed strategies and instruments to reduce and manage the impact of disasters in the region in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction which was adopted at the Third United Nations World Conference in Sendai, Japan in 2015 and focuses on the need to prevent the emergence of new risk, reduce existing risk, strengthen resilience, enhance disaster preparedness for effective response, and to "Build Back Better" in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

Ministers responsible for Disaster Risk Management have adopted the SADC Regional Disaster Preparedness and Response Strategy and Fund (2016-2030) with the objective of enhancing coordination in response to disasters.

The Strategy, which was approved by the SADC Council of

Ministers in 2017, has three priorities:

- ❖ Understanding risk and disaster management information systems;
- ❖ Strengthening disaster preparedness and response planning; and,
- ❖ Establishing the regional disaster preparedness and response fund.

It is expected to promote the timeous sharing of relevant disaster risk data by Member States with the SADC Secretariat to enable the provision of early warning information and products for effective decision-making.

This includes developing capacity for vulnerability assessments, accelerating resilience-building initiatives, and strengthening contingency-planning capabilities.

Implementation of the strategy is expected to result in a

substantial reduction of the negative impact of disasters through the loss of lives, livelihoods, health, infrastructure and the economic performance of Member States.

Ministers responsible for Disaster Risk Management in February 2020 approved the draft Regional Resilience Strategic Framework (2020-2030), which seeks to strengthen the capacity of Member States in preventing and responding to disasters. The framework entails monitoring transboundary risks and strengthening collaboration in the development of agreements and frameworks of cooperation to mitigate the spread of transboundary risks.

From a climate change perspective, the region has focused on adaptation and mitigation actions, which include promoting investments in climate-resilient infrastructure. □

Could African indigenous knowledge hold answers to COVID-19?

by Kumbirayi Nhongo

COULD AFRICA be the source of the elusive cure for the coronavirus that causes COVID-19?

This question has come up during the global discourse around the quest for a prevention or cure for the deadly coronavirus, which has by 30 June affected about 5 million people globally and claimed more than more than 350,000 lives.

Madagascar has attracted global attention after announcing in April that it has a herbal remedy for the coronavirus.

Unfazed by international criticism that scientific evidence was lacking, President Andry Rajoelina launched COVID-Organics, a herbal remedy that he claimed could prevent and cure the disease.

"This herbal tea gives results in seven days," he said, to choruses of disapproval from health experts and pharmaceutical companies from the usually dominant industrialised nations and curiosity from other African leaders aware that the northern companies often find and patent medicines

that originate in Africa, with little benefit to the continent.

According to the Malagasy Institute of Applied Research, the organisation that developed the beverage, the remedy consists of a number of indigenous herbs, including *artemisia annua*, a plant with proven efficacy for malaria treatment.

Figures from the Africa Centres for Disease Control (CDC) show that Madagascar has one of the highest COVID-19 recovery rates on the continent, and fewer fatalities, a situation that Malagasy authorities say adds credence to their claims about the effectiveness of the remedy and the potential of the contribution of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) to modern medicine.

While the industrialised world and its medical experts have been slow in warming up to COVID-Organics, some African countries including Chad and Nigeria have placed orders.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has remained open to the role of IKS in modern medicine and has welcomed innovations based on

traditional medicines and plants.

"WHO is working with research institutions to select traditional medicine products which can be investigated for clinical efficacy and safety for COVID-19 treatment," the WHO said in a statement.

The United Nations agency added a cautionary note, emphasizing the need to subject such remedies to clinical trials. "We are advising the Government of Madagascar to take this product through a clinical trial and we are prepared to collaborate with them," said Matshidiso Moeti, WHO regional director for Africa.

Similarly the African Union (AU) has said it would look into the Malagasy remedy after President Rajoelina presented the medicine to other African leaders during a teleconference held on 29 April.

The AU said in a statement, "once furnished with the details, the Union, through the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, will review the scientific data gathered so far on the safety and efficacy of the COVID Organics."

The AU emphasised that this review would be based on "global technical and ethical norms to garner the necessary scientific evidence regarding the performance of the tonic." The South African government has expressed its willingness to assist Madagascar in conducting the required clinical trials.

"We received a call from the government of Madagascar, which asked for help with scientific research. Our scientists would be able to assist in the research," South

African Health Minister Zweli Mkhize said.

Despite the cautionary approach from both the WHO and the AU, the Madagascar remedy is proving popular with some African countries.

Equatorial Guinea became the first African country to receive the product from Madagascar on 30 April. The consignment contained 11,500 packets of COVID-Organics weighing 1.5 tonnes. Niger, has also taken delivery of the Malagasy product.

The Senegalese President, Macky Sall, commended Madagascar for its "efforts in the search for therapeutic solutions which Senegal is following with interest."

In the United Republic of Tanzania, President John Magufuli announced plans to import the product for local use.

"I have been in talks with Madagascar. They say they have discovered the medicine for COVID-19. We will send a plane to bring the medicine so that Tanzanians can also benefit," he said.

Other countries that have received the Malagasy remedy include the Republic of Congo and Guinea Bissau.

COVID-19 has had a serious economic impact in Africa, and a study conducted by the AU predicts that the continental economy could shrink by more than four percent in 2020 due to the adverse impact of the virus.

A number of countries around the world are conducting scientific research to find a vaccine or cure for the coronavirus and patented medicine often includes IKS from Africa. sardc.net



Covid-19 and the environment

THE ENVIRONMENT sector in southern Africa has not been spared by the coronavirus pandemic.

As countries in the region put in place lockdowns of various magnitudes to contain the spread of the disease, with the resultant negative impacts on the economy, some positive environmental impacts have been realised.

The spread of the coronavirus that causes COVID-19 has resulted in deaths, illness and disruptions to productivity, employment and trade; but the negative impact of halting industrial activity, cancellation of flights and reduction in vehicular traffic as many people reduce travel through working remotely, has resulted in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution.

A preliminary analysis by South Africa's Council for Scientific and Industrial Research suggests that sulphur dioxide pollution levels dropped by 47 percent during the country's first lockdown period in March.

Nitrogen dioxide levels appear to have dropped by 23 percent over the same period.

Scientists are seeing a connection between air pollution and lung problems that make people more susceptible to COVID-19, as shown by the higher death rates in heavily industrialised areas.

This has been a reminder that human health is linked to environmental health.

COVID-19 has also resulted in a spike in hazardous medical waste such as discarded Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), electronics, and pharmaceuticals as well wastewater, detergents, disinfectants and antimicrobial solutions.

In a recent report titled Working with the Environment to Protect People: UNEP's COVID-19 Response, the UN Environment Programme lays out how it is adjusting its work in response to COVID-19 through supporting nations and partners to "build back better" – through stronger science, policies that back a healthier planet, and more green investments.

UNEP's response covers four areas:

- ❖ helping nations to manage COVID-19 waste,
- ❖ delivering a transformational change for nature and people,
- ❖ working to ensure economic recovery packages create resilience to future crises, and
- ❖ modernizing global environmental governance.

"In COVID-19, the planet has delivered its strongest warning to date that humanity must change," the UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen said.

"Shutting down economies is a short-term response to this warning. It cannot endure. Economies that work with nature are critical to ensure that the world's nations thrive."

To support nations in their efforts to address the socio-economic and environmental impacts of COVID-19, UNEP will coordinate its work with the rest of the UN system. Examples of interventions include:

- Supporting decision-makers to deal with the spike in hazardous waste such as personal protective equipment, electronics and pharmaceuticals in a way that does not further damage human health or the environment;

- A zoonotic risk and response programme to improve countries' ability to reduce threats through nature-positive approaches, including a new global mapping of risks from the unregulated wildlife trade, habitat fragmentation and biodiversity loss;
- Promoting expanded opportunities for investing in nature and sustainability as part of the response to the COVID-19 crisis, including through existing funds UNEP manages and economic stimulus packages that countries are planning.
- Reaching real economy actors to rebuild, scale up and accelerate sustainable consumption and production, and create new green jobs, including reaching businesses through partnerships with UN agencies, finance, government and private sector institutions, and revitalizing markets and supply chains for green and sustainable products; and
- Reviewing the implications of moving environmental governance and multilateralism towards virtual meeting platforms, and thus reducing the environmental footprint.

"The idea that a thriving natural world is essential to human health, societies and economies has always been central to UNEP's work," Andersen said. "But now UNEP must provide even more support to countries as they reduce the risks of future pandemics by restoring lost ecosystems and biodiversity, fighting climate change and reducing pollution."

UNEP is the leading global voice on the environment, providing leadership and encouraging partnership in caring for the environment by informing and enabling people and nations to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations. □

Biodiversity loss and COVID-19

BIODIVERSITY IS the foundation that supports all life on land and below water, impacting on every aspect of human health – providing clean air and water, nutritious foods, scientific understanding and medicine sources, natural disease resistance, and climate change resilience.

Changing or removing one element of this web affects the entire life system and can produce negative consequences.

The UN Environment Programme says that human actions have pushed nature beyond its limits, including deforestation, encroachment on wildlife habitats, intensified agriculture, and acceleration of climate change, and that it would take 1.6 Earths to meet the demands that humans make of nature each year.

If we continue on this path, UNEP says, biodiversity loss will have severe implications for humanity, including the collapse of food and health systems.

The emergence of COVID-19 has underscored the fact that, when we destroy biodiversity, we destroy the system that supports human life. Today, it is estimated that, globally, about one billion cases of illness and millions of deaths occur every year from diseases caused by coronaviruses. □



Time for nature

“TIME FOR Nature” is the theme for World Environment Day in June 2020, with focus on the role of the natural environment in providing the essential infrastructure that supports life and human development.

The foods we eat, the air we breathe, the water we drink and the climate that makes our planet habitable all come from nature.

Each year, for example, marine plants produce more than half of the atmosphere’s oxygen, and a mature tree cleans the air, absorbing 22 kilos of carbon dioxide, and releasing oxygen in exchange.

This theme is also about biodiversity – a concern that is both urgent and existential. Recent global events, from bushfires to drought and floods, cyclones and locust infestations and now, a global disease pandemic, demonstrate the interdependence of humans and the webs of life in which we exist.

“Despite all the benefits that our nature gives us, we still mistreat it. That is why we need to work on that. That is why we need this reminder that engages governments, businesses, celebrities and citizens to focus their efforts on a pressing environmental issue,” the UN Environment Programme (UNEP or UN Environment) said about the theme.

“Nature is sending us a message.”

The Executive Director of UNEP, Inger Andersen, added that, “If anyone needs further convincing, perhaps it is use-

ful to highlight some numbers that show what nature already gives us, and how much more it could give if we treat it with the respect it deserves:

- Around half of global GDP depends on nature.
- Our oceans and forests sustain billions of people and provide green jobs –

- 86 million green jobs from forests alone. Yet deforestation rates in southern Africa’s woodlands are five times higher than prior estimates, according to recent research published in early August.
- Four billion people rely primarily on natural medicines.

- Natural climate solutions – such as afforestation and using greenery to cool our cities and buildings – can provide around one-third of the emissions reductions needed to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement.”

What is biodiversity and why does it matter?

BIODIVERSITY DESCRIBES the variety of life on Earth, including the 8 million plant and animal species on the planet, the ecosystems that house them, and the genetic diversity among them.

Biodiversity is a complex, interdependent web, in which each member plays an important role, drawing and contributing in ways that may not even be visible to the eye.

In the last 150 years, the live coral reef cover has been reduced by half. Within the next 10 years, one out of every four known species may have been wiped out, and when we destroy biodiversity, we destroy the system that supports human life.

UNEP says that reversing biodiversity loss is the only way to restore and sustain a healthy planet, adding that this will only be possible when we understand the web of life in which we live and appreciate that it functions as a whole system.

“It is time to re-imagine our relationship with nature and put nature at the heart of our decision-making.”

The Convention on Biological Diversity recognizes that biological diversity is critical to a healthy planet.

This Convention is the international legal instrument for “the conservation of bio-

logical diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources”, and has been ratified by 196 nations.

United Nations Summit on Biodiversity September 2020

THE UNITED Nations Summit on Biodiversity will be convened by the President of the General Assembly on 30 September 2020, at the level of Heads of State and Government under the theme of “Urgent action on biodiversity for sustainable development.”

The Summit will highlight the crisis facing humanity from the degradation of biodiversity and the urgent need to accelerate action on biodiversity for sustainable development.

This will provide an opportunity for Heads of State and Government to raise their expectations for the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework to be adopted at the 15th meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2021.

This framework and its effective implementation are intended to put nature on a path to recovery by 2030 to meet the targets agreed in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and realize the Vision of “Living in harmony with nature”.

Human societies are intimately linked with, and depend upon, biodiversity. Its loss and the degradation of its contributions to people jeopardize progress towards the SDGs and human well-being.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the importance of the relationship between people and nature. □



Greater Mapungubwe transfrontier park shared by Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe

A TREATY to formalise the establishment of the Greater Mapungubwe Transfrontier Conservation Area is being finalised by three SADC Member States.

This Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA) is located at the confluence of the Shashe and Limpopo rivers encompassing territories in Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe, and measures 5,909 square kilometres.

The Greater Mapungubwe TFCA operates on the basis of

a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the three countries in 2006, but negotiations have begun for a formal Treaty to strengthen collaboration in conservation work and tourism development.

The Minister of Environment, Natural Resources Conservation and Tourism in Botswana, Hon. Philda Kereng, told Parliament that the trilateral technical committee, with representation from the three Member States, met in South Africa in February.

The purpose of the meeting was to create a roadmap for signing the treaty and establishing the institutional structures required to ensure its sustainable implementation.

The treaty is expected to be signed soon by the Heads of State of the three countries.

"The GMTFCA is progressing well and we are hopeful that progress will further improve after the signing of the Treaty in June," Kereng noted. The Greater Mapungubwe

area has great historical and cultural significance to southern Africa.

The Mapungubwe region was the centre of a powerful ancient kingdom which traded throughout the Indian Ocean network during the period of approximately 900 to 1300 AD, and with other kingdoms and state structures in the three countries.

Evidence of its history is preserved in over 400 archaeological locations within the park, and the Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape on the South African side was recognized in 2003 as a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

Apart from the cultural and historical significance, the area is known for its abundant wealth in plant and animal life, and is rated highly for its "big five" conservation potential. The Big Five large African mammal species are the lion, leopard, rhinoceros, elephant and buffalo.

A number of international adventure tourism events are held annually in the area, such as the Tour de Tuli, the 4X4 Defender Trophy, and the Wild Run, among others.

The Greater Mapungubwe Transfrontier Conservation Area was known as the Limpopo-Shashe Transfrontier Conservation Area until 2009, when the three countries agreed to name it Mapungubwe to signify their common cultural heritage.

It is envisaged that this region will attract even greater levels of investment in conservation, tourism and wildlife management after the Treaty is concluded for the Greater Mapungubwe TFCA. □



TRANSFRONTIER CONSERVATION Areas (TFCAs) represent a regional approach to biodiversity conservation and tourism development.

The concept of transfrontier conservation areas is based on the flow of nature, including rivers, wind, vegetation and animals which are not bound by political boundaries, and founded on the "realisation that natural resources that straddle international boundaries are shared assets with the potential to meaningfully contribute to conservation of biodiversity and the socio-economic development of rural communities," notes the SADC Programme for Transfrontier Conservation Areas.

This protection is essential as biodiversity is under pressure in the region due to the expansion of human populations and settlements as well as climate change, desertification, and wildlife poaching, among others.

A number of protocols and strategies provide an enabling environment for the establishment and development of TFCAs in the SADC region. These include the following, with the date of signature and the date the protocol entered into force:

- ❖ SADC Protocol on Wildlife Conservation and Law Enforcement (1999, 2003)
- ❖ Revised SADC Protocol on Shared Watercourses (2000, 2003)
- ❖ SADC Protocol on Forestry (2002, 2009), and
- ❖ SADC Regional Biodiversity Strategy (2006).

TFCAs are defined in the SADC Protocol on Wildlife Conservation and Law Enforcement as large ecological regions that straddle the boundaries of two or more countries.

There are 18 TFCAs within the SADC region.

These areas provide building blocks for regional integration as they are trans-boundary and multi-sectoral, with a focus on conservation and development for local people in the area.

This drives regional integration on a practical level by promoting the harmonisation of policies and developing new ways of dealing with critical issues such as trans-boundary law enforcement to combat poaching.

Some of the other TFCAs in the region are the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park straddling parts of southern Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe; the Liuwa Plains-Mussumma TFCA involving Angola and Zambia, and the Selous-Niassa TFCA shared by Mozambique and the United Republic of Tanzania.

The Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park is the world's largest TFCA, covering an area of 37,572 square kilometres.





SADC energy sector braces for COVID-19 impact

by Joseph Ngwawi

THE ENERGY sector in Southern Africa has not been spared by the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, with both positive and negative impacts on efforts by the region to address power shortages.

On the positive side, most countries in SADC have experienced reductions in demand for electricity during peak hours.

According to the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP), the majority of its member countries have not had to impose demand-side management measures such as load shedding during this season as there has generally been a decline in system load.

“There has been a general decrease in demand recorded by SAPP members due to lockdown measures that were taken by most SADC countries,” SAPP said during a teleconference meeting of the SADC Energy Thematic Group (ETG) held on 5 May.

SAPP is a regional body that coordinates the planning, generation, transmission and marketing of electricity on behalf of member utilities in SADC.

It is made up of power utilities from Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The majority of these countries have been on lockdowns since the end of March, a development that has seen them shutting down businesses, closing borders and asking people to stay home as part of measures to contain the spread of the coronavirus.

South Africa, which is the largest producer and consumer of electricity in the region, has experienced a 40 percent decline in peak system load since it embarked on a nationwide lockdown for coronavirus on 27 March, according to SAPP.

South Africa accounts for more than 70 percent of the installed electricity generation capacity for the 12 SAPP member countries, according to the SADC Energy Monitor 2018, published last year. As the largest economy in southern Africa, South Africa also consumes the bulk of the power generated in the region.

According to SAPP, Zimbabwe has experienced a reduction of 25 percent of its system load since the country embarked on a lockdown on 30 March.

Other countries with significant demand reductions are Botswana where the Botswana Power Corporation has noted a 14 percent decline in system load, while NamPower of Namibia has reported a decrease of 10 percent for its load.

A similar situation has been reported for other SADC Member States such as Lesotho, Malawi and Zambia.

However, the negative impact of the pandemic are more worrisome, given the long-term implications of the lockdown measures on the ability of the SADC region to achieve energy self-sufficiency.

According to members of the SADC ETG, the lockdowns are likely to significantly delay implementation of both planned projects and those where construction has already commenced.

By their very nature, construction of power plants involve the employment of several hundreds of workers and regular meetings among teams from engineering, construction and procurement firms.

However, with the lockdown directives barring gatherings and calling for social distancing, there are likely to be delays in meeting project timelines and amendment of work schedules, SAPP warned.

The same is expected for environmental and social impact assessments, which are one of the requirements before construction of a power plant commences.

As a result of the lockdowns, most environmental site visits and geotechnical investigations have been shelved until further notice and project teams have resorted to increased use of desk-top studies and information.

SAPP is coordinating a number of power generation and transmission projects across the region and one of these is the Mozambique-Malawi Transmission Project for which tendering is in the process and construction is expected to be completed by the end of 2022.

This is one of several transmission projects expected to connect Malawi to the regional power grid, a development that would leave Angola and the United Republic of Tanzania as the only SAPP member countries whose power systems are not linked to the rest of the pool.

There are fears that the worst-case scenario is that funding partners could invoke force majeure clauses in contracts already signed should the coronavirus pandemic and the accompanying restrictions continue.

Force majeure is a common clause in contracts that essentially frees both parties from liability or obligation when an extraordinary event or circumstance beyond the control of the parties prevents one or both parties from fulfilling their obligations under the contract.

Such clauses are invoked in the event of a war breaking out, a long-running industrial strike, riot, crime or epidemic.

Other ETG members said they have been affected by the lockdowns, with the Regional Electricity Regulators Association of Southern Africa (RERA) saying it is conducting an assessment of the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on its members. sardc.net □



ENERGY IN SOUTH



RGY ERN AFRICA



Over 16,500 MW in new generation capacity targeted by 2023

SADC IS targeting to commission 16,515 megawatts of new electricity generation capacity over the next three years as the region moves to strengthen its energy infrastructure as an enabler for its industrialisation agenda.

According to the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP), which coordinates the planning, generation and transmission of electricity on behalf of Member State utilities, the majority of the new power this year is expected to come from South Africa, which is expected to contribute additional 5,891 MW to the regional power pool between 2020 and 2023.

Planned power projects in the United Republic of Tanzania are expected to contribute 3,859 MW, according to figures shared by SAPP during a virtual meeting of the SADC Energy Thematic Group (ETG) that was held in May.

Other significant contributions to the regional power pool are expected from Angola (2,499 MW) and Zambia (1,186 MW).

However, of the 16,515 MW additional generation capacity planned for commissioning, only 9,731 MW, or about 59 percent, will be available to the regional grid since SADC is not yet fully integrated in terms of energy trading.

All mainland SADC Member States, with the exception of Angola, Malawi and Tanzania, are interconnected through SAPP regional grid, allowing them to share surplus energy.

New generation capacity installed in any of the three non-participating countries is not accessible to the nine other members of SAPP – Botswana, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

According to SAPP, the region will need to continue investing in new generation capacity as a number of existing power plants are decommissioned.

Power plants with a combined generation capacity of 8,450 MW are expected to be decommissioned across the region between 2020 and 2023, thereby necessitating the need for additional generation capacity.

In terms of generation capacity commissioned in 2019, SAPP reported that a total of 3,595 MW were added to the regional power pool by its members.

Thermal power projects continued to dominate the generation mix for new capacity that was commissioned in 2019, accounting for 83 percent of additional electricity generated during the year.

This is mainly because the bulk of the new capacity came from the South Africa's Kusile and Medupi thermal power plants, which contributed 1,440 MW and 1,480 MW, respectively.

In terms of interconnector projects, there has been notable progress on preparation and implementation of priority interconnector projects that aim to connect Angola, Malawi and Tanzania to the SAPP grid.

The Mozambique-Malawi interconnector attained financial closure and is at construction stage and is expected to be commissioned in 2022.

The Zambia-Tanzania interconnector is divided into several components and it is at construction phase from the Zambian side and Tanzania side where the two transmission lines are designed to converge near Nakonde Border by 2022.

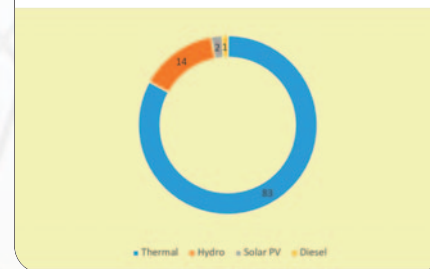
The Angola-Namibia Interconnector is at feasibility studies stage and is also expected to be commissioned by 2022 following expression of commitment by the two Member States by signing the Inter-Governmental Memorandum of Understanding.

On the north-western side of the region, Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo are also considering to develop an interconnector project which is still at pre-feasibility stage.

To unlock and leverage the development of the interconnector projects, SAPP is undertaking, with support from the World Bank, a study on establishment of a Regional Transmission Infrastructure Financing Facility.

Recommendations from the study are expected to be presented to energy ministers for clearance and ultimately to Council of Ministers for consideration and approval.

SADC Generation Mix for 2019 New Capacity (% of total)



Source SAPP

Planned Generation Capacity 2020-2023 (MW)

Country	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total (MW)
Angola	399	-	2100	-	2499
Botswana	10	-	500	-	510
DRC	240	120	-	-	360
Eswatini	10	-	-	-	10
Lesotho	-	-	20	-	20
Malawi	90	18	50	268	426
Mozambique	30	-	-	550	580
Namibia	220	44	-	-	264
South Africa	1219	2342	1525	805	5891
Tanzania	212	820	1795	1032	3859
Zambia	765	120	200	101	1186
Zimbabwe	20	300	590	-	910
Total					16515

Source SAPP

COVID-19 places extra burden on women

by Nyarai Kampilipili

PROGRESS MADE in gender equality and empowerment of women is at risk due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic because it is affecting different groups of people and sexes differently.

The severity and rapid spread of the Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), an infectious disease for which there is no human immunity or cure, has been described by the World Health Organization (WHO) as the most serious health emergency in generations.

Women make up more than two-thirds of the frontline workers in the health and social sector and are being highly exposed to the coronavirus, increasing their chances of contracting the disease. In addition, the informal sector, which is dominated by women, has been impacted by the economic lockdown imposed by a number of countries in response to the pandemic, thus affecting the livelihoods of many women.

Women have largely incorporated the extra work involved in home-schooling and supervision of online learning while schools are closed and children remain at home.

The Executive Director of United Nations (UN) Women, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka said there is need for a global response that places women and girls at the centre of efforts to address COVID-19.

She said that failure to embed gender dimensions

within response plans to COVID-19 would reverse gains made in advancing gender equality and equity since the pandemic is already deepening existing inequalities.

"One thing is clear about the COVID-19 pandemic...this is not just a health issue," she said, adding that the pandemic has not only caused stock markets to tumble and schools to close, but also exposed "the deficiencies of public and private arrangements that currently function only if women play multiple and underpaid roles."

She said the time has come for the global community including governments to recognize the enormity of the contribution that women make to socio-economic development as well as the precarious position that women find themselves in when such disasters occur.

"All of us engaged in this effort, whether public or private sector, need to take a coordinated, people-centred approach to rapidly building health system capacity in both developed and developing countries, making a conscious effort to put women front and centre," Mlambo-Ngcuka said.

One way of mainstreaming gender in the response to

COVID-19 is by creating better access to appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for home-based caregivers, promoting flexible working arrangements, and ensuring supplies of menstrual hygiene products.

Other measures include the need to provide flexible and innovative tools for reporting, counselling services, and medical and legal support and counselling to victims of domestic violence.

This is particularly important as cases of domestic violence have been rising significantly across the globe following the lockdown measures instituted by most countries to contain the spread of the virus.

According a recent UN report, some countries have registered up to 30 percent increase in reported domestic violence cases and about 30 percent increase in emergency calls for Gender Based Violence (GBV), with women and girls the victims.

The SADC Executive Secretary, Dr Stergomena Lawrence Tax said it is critical for all stakeholders to work together in addressing gender-based violence during the ongoing fight against the coronavirus pandemic.

"SADC recognises that, in the midst of combating this unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, it is easy to overlook the abuses that women and girls encounter during this crisis," Dr Tax said.

For example, under the lockdown measures, women who have been in abusive re-

lationships are now forced to be at home with their abusers for a prolonged period, making it difficult to reach out for help.

The pandemic has made reporting of abuses harder due to the disruption of public services and limited access to communication facilities such as phones and helplines, hence the need for flexible and innovative tools for reporting domestic violence.

Dr Tax said it is therefore important for everyone including the "public sector, private sector, civil society, media and community leaders to work together during the COVID-19 crisis, while considering the differential impact of the crisis on women and men, boys and girls."

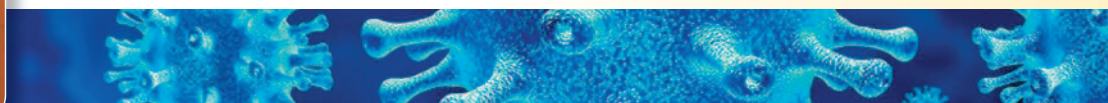
"With collective efforts and commitment, we can avoid a double crisis of COVID-19 and gender-based violence, and the associated far-reaching consequences to our society.

"We must all redouble our efforts on zero tolerance to gender-based violence as we fight this devastating COVID-19 pandemic," she said.

Another impact of the coronavirus pandemic is that it has overwhelmed the health sector, affecting access to reproductive health services for women.

Limited access to reproductive health services may lead to an increase in unplanned pregnancies as well as infant and maternal mortality.

It is, therefore, essential to place women and girls at the centre of coronavirus resilience and recovery efforts at community, national, regional and continental levels. □





SADC chairs Tripartite taskforce

SADC HAS assumed the chair of the taskforce in charge of negotiating and implementing an integrated market covering 26 countries in eastern and southern Africa.

The enlarged market, commonly known as the Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA), involves the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC) and SADC and was launched in 2015.

It aims to promote economic development and integration in east and southern Africa by creating an integrated market with a combined population of more than 600 million people and a total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of about US\$1 trillion.

Speaking at the handover ceremony conducted during a virtual meeting in April, SADC Deputy Executive Secretary for regional integration, Dr Thembinkosi Mhlongo said the region remains committed to the success of the integrated market.

He noted that SADC is chairing the taskforce at a time when the global and regional community has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The coronavirus that causes COVID-19 has disrupted most economic activities, including the movement of goods and services across the region, hence the need for COMESA-EAC-SADC to address such challenges.

"We may have to re-look at the tripartite implementation plans and prioritize what can be done in the prevailing environment that we are all in," Dr Mhlongo said.

He noted that one of the activities that has been greatly affected by COVID-19, as well as limited resources, is the implementation of the industrial development pillar of the Tripartite arrangement.

Under the Tripartite arrangement, SADC is leading implemen-

tation of the industrial development pillar.

COMESA and EAC are, respectively, leading implementation of two other pillars focusing on market integration, and infrastructure development.

Outgoing chair of the Tripartite taskforce and COMESA Secretary General, Chileshe Kapwepwe said a lot of achievements have been made by the three regional economic communities to deepen integration and sustainable development in the region.

Under the market integration pillar, for example, a total of 22 countries out of 28 have now signed the TFTA Agreement, while eight have signed and ratified.

The eight countries are Egypt, Kenya, South Africa, Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi, Botswana and Namibia.

The signature and ratification by eight countries now means that only four remain for COMESA-EAC-SADC to reach the 14 States threshold to operationalize the Agreement.

At least six countries are at advanced stages of ratification -- Comoros, Eswatini, Malawi, Sudan, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

With regard to Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs), a total of 25 member states have established focal points and national monitoring committees to utilize the Tripartite NTBs online monitoring, reporting and elimination mechanism.

"Over this period, the Tripartite NTBs Short Messaging reporting tool was developed and rolled out," Kapwepwe said. The tool is currently installed in four countries – Comoros, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Other milestones include a commitment by countries to operationalize the Single African Air Transport Market under the Yamoussoukro Declaration on liberalization of Access to Air Transport Markets in Africa.

The establishment of a Single African Air Transport Market is expected to reduce aviation costs and make air transport services accessible to a wider population of business and leisure-related travellers.

The anticipated growth in air passenger volumes will also have the knock-on effect of accelerating the growth of the civil aviation industry at the regional and continental level.

The Secretary General of the EAC, Libérat Mfumukeko said these achievements should be consolidated and furthermore improved, adding that the tripartite taskforce has great confidence in SADC to deepen integration in east and southern Africa.

COMESA was chair of the taskforce since November 2017, and SADC will also lead for a period before handing over the rotating chair to EAC. □



THE TFTA falls within the framework of establishing an African Economic Community and the overall African Union Vision and Strategy presented in the 1980 Lagos Plan of Action and the Abuja Treaty of 1991.

The launch of the African Economic Community moved closer to reality in May 2019 when the continent launched the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

The AfCFTA is an enlarged market that brings together all the 55 AU member states, covering a market of more than 1.2 billion people and a combined GDP of more than US\$3.4 trillion.

The operationalization of the AfCFTA has the capacity to change the global economic landscape and boost intra-regional trade across the continent. □

Chakwera wins Malawi elections, pledges nation-building

by Martin Makoni

FORMER OPPOSITION leader Lazarus Chakwera has won Malawi's presidential election re-run over outgoing President Peter Mutharika who served a single five-year term.

More than 6.8 million Malawians voted on 23 June in a poll that was closely watched by local and regional observers. Voter turnout was 64.81 percent.

In the run-up to the presidential election re-run, Chakwera teamed up with another opposition leader, Saulos Chilima in a bid to appeal to different parts of the country and dislodge Mutharika's Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) from power.

Chilima was the country's Vice President but he fell out with Mutharika a few years ago and formed his own opposition party, the United Transformation Movement (UTM).

Mutharika joined forces with United Democratic Front (UDF) party leader Atupele Muluzi to fend off the opposition MCP-UTM Tonse Alliance of Chakwera and Chilima.

While the Tonse Alliance waged a well-planned campaign, crossing the entire country, Mutharika-Muluzi's lacklustre campaign did not inspire the voters, who complained of unfulfilled manifesto promises by the previous administration.

The results of the rerun were announced on 27 June by the chairperson of the Malawi Electoral Commission, Chifundo Kachale, who is a High Court Judge. Chakwera won 2,604,043 of the votes cast (58.6 percent), thereby surpassing the legal requirement of 50 percent +1 to win the presidency. Mutharika got 1,751,377 votes



while a third presidential candidate, Peter Kuwani, drew 32,456 votes.

"This means that Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera is the duly elected president of the Republic of Malawi," Kachale declared, amid applause from his Malawi Congress Party (MCP) supporters at the National Tally Centre in the southern city of Blantyre.

A former evangelist, Chakwera touted his win as a victory for all Malawians irrespective of their political hues.

"This win is for all of us. Those that voted for me and those who did not vote for me know that I'm a servant for all of you," he told journalists soon after the announcement of the results.

The new Malawian president was born on the outskirts of the capital Lilongwe in April 1955 and was educated in Malawi and South Africa.

Before becoming a politician, he headed the Assemblies of God church in Malawi from 1989 to May 2013 when he first decided to run for political office.

Since August 2013, he has been leader of the MCP which ruled Malawi for 30 years (1964-1994) under the independence leader Hastings Kamuzu Banda.

Chakwera was sworn in on 28 June, becoming Malawi's sixth president since the late Kamuzu Banda led the country to independence from Britain in 1964 under the MCP – which has now returned to power after 26 years in opposition.

Speaking after being sworn in by Chief Justice Andrew Nyirenda, Chakwera said his administration will ensure that Malawi is firmly placed on the path "to 'Tsogolo labwino' meaning a better future."

"With your help, we will restore the new generation's faith in the possibility of having a government that serves, not a government that rules," he said.

It was third time lucky for Chakwera following two previous attempts to win the ticket to Sanjika Palace, narrowly missing out in the presidential elections in 2014 and 2019.

During general elections held in May 2014, he narrowly lost to Peter Mutharika, conceding defeat and urging Malawians to maintain peace, accept the outcome and wait for the next elections.

The rerun of the May 2019 election was ordered by the Constitutional Court in February 2020 following a deposition that the previous elections had favoured then President Mutharika.

Mutharika narrowly defeated Chakwera in 2019 by winning 38.57 percent of votes cast during the presidential elections which were held concurrently with polls for members of the National Assembly and local government councillors. Chakwera won 35.42 percent of the votes while Saulos Chilima was third, with 20.24 percent of the ballots cast.

Mutharika's victory sparked months-long protests that led to widespread destruction of property and looting, with the protesters demanding the removal of the then Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC) chairperson Jane Ansah and her fellow commissioners.

Ansah eventually resigned in May after resisting pressure to do so for several months, resulting in Mutharika appointing High Court judge Chifundo Kachale in June to head the MEC and organise the holding of the presidential election rerun. sardc.net □



SADC seized with regional security situation ...as action is taken on insurgency in Mozambique

SADC REMAINS seized with the political and security situation prevailing in the region and stands ready to support any of its Member States to find lasting solutions to challenges threatening peace and stability in the region.

This was said by the SADC Troika on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation which met 19 May in Harare, Zimbabwe to discuss the security situation in northern Mozambique.

The northernmost part of Mozambique, particularly in the Cabo Delgado Province is under serious threat from some acts of extremism and terrorism, which have left more than 400 people dead and almost 100,000 people displaced.

In a communiqué released soon after the Extra-ordinary Summit of the Organ Troika plus Mozambique, the region "strongly condemned the armed attacks and acts of sabotage perpetrated by the terrorists and armed groups in some districts of Cabo Delgado Province."

Various groups including those with Islamic fundamentalism, especially a group known as Ahlu Sunna Wa-Jama have claimed responsibility for some of the attacks.

"The Extra-ordinary Organ Troika Summit plus Mozambique committed and urged SADC Member States to support the Government of Mozambique in fighting against the terrorists and armed groups in some districts of Cabo Delgado," reads part of the communiqué.

The Chairperson of the SADC Organ, President Emmerson Mnangagwa of Zimbabwe said a united region is better placed to combat any instability in the region.

"It is imperative that we once more stand shoulder to shoulder and confront this and

other challenges we may face by working together in unity," President Mnangagwa said in his opening address.

"Successfully preventing and combating terrorism requires renewed and firm commitment from all SADC Member States."

Regional collaboration to address and manage any conflicts in SADC is critical since peace and stability are key to sustainable development and regional integration.

On the political situation in the Kingdom of Lesotho, the Extra-ordinary Summit of the Organ "called for the peaceful transfer of power in line with the provisions of the Constitution" of the country. This follows the resignation of Thomas Thabane as Prime Minister of Lesotho on 19 May.

Thabane, who served as Prime Minister between 2012

and February 2015, as well as from June 2017 to May 2020, was facing pressure to step down over a case in which he and his current wife are accused of involvement in the 2017 murder of his previous wife.

Thabane and his wife both deny the allegations.

With regard to the presidential elections rerun in Malawi, SADC "took note of the Supreme Court of Malawi's decision" to nullify the May 2019 presidential elections, paving way for a re-run on 23 June.

On the general political situation in the region, the Summit expressed satisfaction with the relative peace and stability that prevails in most Member States.

The SADC Troika of the Organ is responsible for promoting peace and security in the



SADC region, and is coordinated at the level of Summit, consisting of a Chairperson, Incoming Chairperson and Outgoing Chairperson, and reports to the full SADC Summit.

The SADC Troika of the Organ is currently constituted by President Emmerson Mnangagwa of Zimbabwe (Chairperson), President Mokgweetsi Masisi of Botswana (Incoming Chairperson) and Zambian President Edgar Lungu (Outgoing Chairperson). sardc.net □

Dr. Moeketsi Majoro, new Prime Minister of Lesotho

THE NEW Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho, Dr. Moeketsi Majoro is an economist and technocrat who has been the Minister of Finance since 2017.

He was principal secretary in the Ministry from 2004-2008, before joining the International Monetary Fund from 2008-2012 where he served as an executive director and alternate. In 2013, he was appointed to Cabinet as development planning minister.

Dr Majoro, 58, has a BA in economics from the University of Lesotho, Masters in agricultural economics and PhD in natural resources economics, both from Washington State University in the United States. He lectured at the University of Lesotho 1991-2000.

He has worked as a fiscal analyst and business consultant, served on the boards of private companies and chaired international institutions.

"I will be a true and faithful Prime Minister," Majoro said in his inauguration speech on 20 May following the resignation of Thomas Thabane on 19 May.

Majoro said he will ensure that all Basotho regardless of their political affiliations will benefit from various socio-economic activities, programmes and projects initiated by the government.

He was nominated by the All Basotho Convention (ABC), which formed a coalition government with the Alliance of Democrats, Basotho National Party and the Reformed Congress of Lesotho after the 2017 elections.

Lesotho has a bicameral Parliament consisting of a Senate with 33 seats and a National Assembly with 120 seats, and according to the Constitution, a winning party should win at least 61 seats to form a government.

However, if no party attains the required 61 seats, coalitions can be formed for this purpose. Majoro will serve out Thabane's remaining term before the next elections scheduled for 2022.

Thabane has featured in almost every administration in Lesotho since Independence in 1966. □



Dr. Moeketsi Majoro



Culture, heritage key for sustainable development

by Raymond Ndhlovu

AFRICA AND the rest of the global community should continue to uphold and appreciate peace as it is a permanent ideal and aspiration for humanity to achieve and consolidate sustainable development.

This was the key Africa Day message from a virtual conference hosted on 25 May by the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF).

Africa Day is an important part of the continent's heritage, past, present and future, and is celebrated on 25 May each year.

The day traces its origin to the first-ever conference of independent African states hosted by the founding President of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah, in April 1958.

Five years later – on 25 May 1963 – another historic meeting took place in Ethiopia when leaders of 32 independent African states formed the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), which is now the African Union.

In this regard, the virtual meeting by the AWHF was held under the theme “Cultural Perspectives for Peace Building in the Context of Covid-19 in Africa”.

The theme was aligned to the AU theme for 2020, which is “Health & Security in the Context of Covid-19”.

The AWHF noted that peace is a necessary precondition for Africa to achieve its aspirations, hence all Member States must work together towards creating conducive con-

ditions for Africa's development agenda.

Africa's aspirations to be advanced, developed, empowered, inspired, independent and united by 2063.

These qualities are contained in Agenda 2063 – a continental strategic framework adopted by the African Union in 2013 to optimize the use of the continent's resources for the benefit of all Africans.

The AWHF said these aspirations are possible, adding that Africa could use its rich culture and heritage to achieve its ambitions, since culture and heritage are essential tools for sustainable development and peace.

In fact, from Cape to Cairo or Yaoundé to Mogadishu, Africa has some of the most outstanding natural and cultural heritage sites that offer a variety of options for socio-economic growth, including tourism and infrastructure development.

One of the aspirations by Africa as contained in Agenda 2063 is to increase the number of African World Heritage sites to 10 times the 2013 level.

Speaking at the virtual conference, a conservation and heritage expert, Dr. Kendi Borona said it is critical for Africa to use its indigenous knowledge systems to cultivate a culture of peace in the continent.

She said peace must be cultivated among humankind, but “also with nature”.

A researcher with the Human Sciences Research Council of South Africa, Dr.

Olga Bialostocka, added that protection and conservation of natural heritage for present and future generations has the capacity to contribute significantly to sustainable development.

Dr Bialostocka said there cannot be sustainable development without deep appreciation of culture, since culture is fundamental as upholds identity.

On the health situation posed by COVID-19, an archaeological expert with the University of Cape Town, Prof. Shadreck Chirikure said Africa should tap into its rich heritage for solutions.

“Africans have been social distancing for many years,” he said, “hence it is important to bring these African experiences to help navigate this COVID-19 period.”

“Let us use our African knowledge to solve African problems,” said Prof. Chirikure.

He said the post COVID19 era offers an opportunity for Africa to harness and embrace change through traditional means.

“There is therefore great need for ensuring that we do not lose rich knowledge contained in our heritage.”

The AWHF virtual meeting witnessed the launch of a social media campaign #MyAfricanHeritage aimed at profiling African heritage sites.

The plan is to profile at least one African World Heritage Site each week on the AWHF's social media platforms. According to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the continent has 89 sites inscribed on the World Heritage List.

The first site to be profiled was *Mosi oa Tunya/Victoria Falls* World Heritage Site between Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The AWHF is an inter-governmental organization established in 2006 to support the effective conservation and protection of natural and cultural heritage of outstanding universal value in Africa.


It works with all the AU Member States and UNESCO to facilitate the implementation of the 1972 World Heritage Convention. □

THE WORLD Heritage Convention adopted by UNESCO in 1972 classifies heritage into two main categories -- cultural and natural.

Cultural heritage refers to a monument, group of buildings or site of historical, archaeological, scientific, ethnological or anthropological value.

Natural heritage includes outstanding physical, biological and geographical features, different kinds of plant or animal species, and areas with significant scientific or aesthetic value that could be best for conservation. □

June – August 2020

SOUTHERN AFRICA TODAY 

SADC TODAY Vol. 22 No 4 June 2020

SOUTHERN AFRICA TODAY is produced as a reference source of activities and opportunities in the Southern African Development Community, and a guide for decision-makers at all levels of national and regional development.

Southern African Development Community
SADC Secretariat, SADC House, Private Bag 0095,
Gaborone, Botswana
Tel +267 395 1863 Fax +267 397 2848/318 1070
E-mail registry@sadc.int Website www.sadc.int

SOUTHERN AFRICA TODAY is published six times a year by the Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC) for the SADC Secretariat in Gaborone, Botswana, as a reliable knowledge source on regional development. Articles may be reproduced freely in the media and elsewhere, with attribution.

EDITOR
Munetsi Madakufamba

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE
Joseph Ngwawi, Kizito Sikuka, Eglina Tauya, Admire Ndhlovu,
Phyllis Johnson, Nyarai Kampilipili, Kumbirai Nhongo,
Maidei Musimwa, Tariro Mutwira, Tanaka Chitsa, Monica Mutero,
Raymond Ndhlovu, Thenjiwe Ngwenya, Eunice Kadiki

SOUTHERN AFRICA TODAY is supported by the Austrian Development Agency, produced in support of the SADC Energy Thematic Group of International Cooperating Partners.

© SADC, SARDC, 2020

SOUTHERN AFRICA TODAY welcomes contributions from individuals and organizations within the SADC region in form of articles, photographs, news items and comments, and also relevant articles from outside the region. The publishers reserve the right to select or reject items, and to edit to fit the space available. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official positions or opinions of SADC or SARDC.

SOUTHERN AFRICA TODAY is published in English, Portuguese and French, and is available electronically at www.sardc.net Knowledge for Development, linked to www.sadc.int

DESIGN & LAYOUT
Tonely Ngwenya, Anisha Madanhi

PHOTOS AND ILLUSTRATIONS
P1 googleusercontent.com, theconversation.com; P2 mediabroadcasting.net, buzzsouthafrica.com; P4-5 herald.co.zw, afrik21.africa, pv-tech.org, southerntimes.com; P6 neweralive.na; P7 ft.com, tzbusinessnews.com, techcentral.co.za; P8-9 OKACOM Secretariat, sundaymail.co.zw, Irene Lungu-Chipili, Lola Castro Twitter, dobecology.nl; P10 fna.fbcn.net; P11 cdnuploads.aa.com.tr, cisp.cachefly.net, T Ngwenya, polity.org.za; P12 cmsqz.com, whispereye.com; P13 upnewsinfo.com, thepublicradio.org, hdnu.com, thesouthafrican.com; P14 mminingweekly.com, Oxfam, T Ngwenya, sundaymail.co.zw



Subscribe today


SOUTHERN AFRICA TODAY is available through an annual subscription fee for six issues a year: US\$55 outside Africa, including postage; US\$40 within Africa; and US\$30 in southern Africa. Your subscription will enable you to receive the newsletter by airmail or email. For more details, please contact the Editor.

Comments and contributions should be sent to
sadctoday@sardc.net

Southern African Research and Documentation Centre
Julius K. Nyerere House, 15 Downie Avenue, Belgravia, Harare, Zimbabwe
Tel +263 242 791 141

www.sardc.net
Knowledge for Development

 [sardc.net](https://www.facebook.com/sardc.net)  [@sardc.net](https://twitter.com/@sardc.net)



This document was produced in the context of a project funded by the Austrian Development Agency/the Austrian Development Cooperation. The responsibility for the content of this publication lies entirely with the publisher; the information and views expressed do not reflect the official opinion of the Austrian Development Agency/the Austrian Development Cooperation.

June
2, Global

World Environment Day

World Environment Day is set aside by the United Nations to generate worldwide awareness and environmental action. Observed annually since 1974, the intention is to engage governments, businesses, celebrities and citizens to focus their efforts on pressing environmental issues. The 2020 Theme is "Time for Nature". Recent events, from temperature increases and bushfires to cyclones and locust infestations, and now COVID-19, a global disease pandemic – demonstrate the interdependence of people and their environment.

23, Virtual

Extraordinary meeting of SADC Council of Ministers

The virtual meeting will be held via video conference and chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the United Republic of Tanzania. The ministers will review the response to the COVID-19 pandemic and is a follow-up to a previous meeting held in May to assess the coordination of regional cooperation to address the disease.

23, Malawi,

Malawi presidential election rerun

Malawians return to the polls on 23 June for presidential elections following the nullification of the outcome of the previous presidential elections held in May 2019. The rerun will be a three-way contest involving incumbent President Peter Mutharika and opposition candidates Lazarus Chakwera and Peter Kuwani.

26, Virtual

Ministerial Committee of the Organ

The virtual meeting will be held via video conference and chaired by Zimbabwe in its capacity as chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation. It will deliberate on a number of issues aimed at promoting peace and security in the SADC region. The committee is made up of the ministers responsible for foreign affairs, defence, public security and state security from the countries that make up the Organ.

July
TBA, Virtual

SADC Education Ministers Meeting

Ministers responsible for Education or Training meet at least once a year to consider policy issues for consideration and approval by Council of Ministers and the Summit of Heads of State and Government

TBA, Virtual

SADC Finance and Investment Ministers Meeting

Ministers responsible for Finance and Investment will meet to discuss several issues, including operationalisation of the SADC Regional Development Fund and finalization of the SADC Resource Mobilisation Framework.

TBA, Virtual

SADC Justice Ministers Meeting

Ministers responsible for Justice and Legal Affairs will meet to discuss several issues, including the development and review of legal instruments.

August
17, Mozambique

40th SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government

SADC leaders meet annually in August to discuss issues aimed at promoting regional integration and development. The summit is preceded by meetings of senior officials and Council of Ministers. Mozambican President Filipe Nyusi will take over the SADC chair from his Tanzanian counterpart, President John Magufuli.

TBA, Virtual

Southern African Regional Climate Outlook Forum

Climate experts from SADC Member States will meet to review the regional climate outlook, using indicators of seasonal rainfall to produce a regional forecast for the 2019/20 rainfall season.

60 years



60 Years of Independence

TWO SADC Member States have reached 60 years of Independence in June 2020 – Democratic Republic of Congo and Madagascar.

“I ask you to make today, the 30th June 1960, an illustrious day that will be etched on your hearts. A date whose significance you will pass on with pride to your children,”
Patrice Lumumba, The Congo.

ON 30 JUNE 1960, The Congo (now DRC) won independence from the Kingdom of Belgium, under the leadership of Patrice Lumumba, after almost a century of occupation and resistance.

Speaking on Independence Day, Lumumba, a visionary Pan-Africanist and a courageous hero of Africa, launched an appeal to the nation to uphold their Independence and engrave it in their hearts.

He was the first Prime Minister of the modern Congo, popularly elected, installed and then deposed after less than three months in office in a *coup d'état* organized by the colonial forces who saw him as a threat to their hegemony over the rich mineral resources in the south and east of the country.

After many years of political instability and external control, the DRC has made significant progress in creating peace and democracy as a Member State of SADC. The most recent elections in December 2018 resulted in President Felix Tshisekedi succeeding former President Joseph Kabila in a peaceful handover of power.

Speaking on the 60th national independence anniversary, President Tshisekedi noted that “...we have consciously chosen to favour national reconciliation in order to better build the future and preserve peace, the fight against impunity must in no case be transformed into revenge.”

The 60th anniversary of Independence drew the first official letter of acknowledgement from Belgium as King Philippe expressed his regrets saying, “During the time of the Congo Free State (1885-1908) acts of violence and brutality were committed, which weigh still on our collective memory. The colonial period that followed also caused suffering and humiliations. I would like to express my deepest regrets for the wounds of the past, the pain of today, which is rekindled by the discrimination all too present in our society.”

King Leopold II of Belgium seized control of the territory in the late 19th century when European powers were carving their claims in Africa, mainly for mineral resources, and this was followed by a long and arduous path to independence.

“Madagascar, my homeland, my life, my heritage”

THIS IS THE THEME as Madagascar celebrates the 60th anniversary of national Independence on 26 June 2020, after being administered as a French colony since the end of the 19th century, resulting in the decline of living conditions and deprivation of rights and freedoms.

The autonomous Malagasy Republic was proclaimed in 1958 following a referendum, with Philibert Tsiranana as head of the provisional government and later elected President of the Republic in advance of full independence on 26 June 1960.

Speaking on Independence Day this year, President Andry Rajoelina emphasised the need for unity: “Our elders gave their lives for our independence. Today, more than ever, we must establish our sovereignty so that the efforts of these heroes have not been in vain... by working together we will be able to raise our national pride and bring real development to our country.” □



Sir Seretse Khama
1 July 1921 – 13 July 1980

“One of his greatest contributions is that he initiated SADCC...we owe the existence of the most effective Sub-regional organisation of African cooperation to the initiative of President Seretse Khama. It was a great bequest to Africa, and to the Third World. Seretse Khama... was an active and effective member of the Front Line States. ...He was a man of courage, who lived and did his great work regardless of the personal as well as political threat which was inseparable from his nation's borders with apartheid South Africa, and with the then minority-ruled Southern Rhodesia.”

Julius Nyerere on 30 September 1986, the 20th anniversary of national independence in Botswana

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS IN SADC 2020

June - August 2020

1 June	Whit Monday	Madagascar
11 June	Corpus Christi	Seychelles
16 June	Youth Day	South Africa
18 June	Constitution Day	Seychelles
25 June	Independence Day	Mozambique
26 June	Independence Day	Madagascar
29 June	Independence Day	Seychelles
30 June	Independence Day	DRC
1 July	Sir Seretse Khama Day	Botswana
6 July	Independence Day	Malawi
	Independence Day	Comoros
	Heroes Day	Zambia
7 July	Unity Day	Zambia
7 July	Saba Saba Industry Day	Tanzania
17 July	King's Birthday	Lesotho
20 July	President's Day	Botswana
21 July	President's Day Holiday	Botswana
22 July	Birthday of late King Sobhuza	Eswatini
31 July	Ide el Kabir	Comoros
1 August	Ide el Kabir Holiday	Comoros
	Parents Day	DRC
3 August	Farmers Day	Zambia
8 August	Nane Nane Peasant Day	Tanzania
9 August	National Women's Day	South Africa
10 August	Heroes Day	Zimbabwe
11 August	Defence Forces Day	Zimbabwe
15 August	Assumption Day	Madagascar, Seychelles
20 August	Muharram	Comoros
17 August	SADC Day*	All
26 August	Heroes Day	Namibia
22 August	Ganesh Chaturthi	Mauritius
31 August	Umhlanga Reed Dance**	Eswatini

* SADC Day is not a public holiday but a commemoration of signing the SADC Treaty on 17 August 1992

**Umhlanga Reed Dance date to be confirmed