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The Year 2021 Consolidating the gains of regional development

THE COVID-19 pandemic has continued to have an impact on the regional integration agenda of southern Africa and the rest of the global community as most countries maintained some economic lockdowns in 2021 to contain the spread of the virus.

However, as the curtain comes down at year end, there are a number of achievements made by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to ensure that the region moves closer to attaining its longstanding goals of a united, integrated and prosperous community.

On the health front, most SADC Member States were among the leaders to embrace and undertake campaigns to vaccinate their citizens against the COVID-19 virus.

This enabled the region to curb the spread of the virus and relax some of the restrictive economic lockdowns, allowing countries to refocus their efforts on rebuilding the economy.

Furthermore, and in line with its united fight against COVID-19, the 41st SADC Summit that was held in Lilongwe, Malawi

in August adopted the theme of *"Bolstering Productive Capacities in the Face of the COVID-19 Pandemic for Inclusive, Sustainable, Economic and Industrial Transformation."*

The theme was a regional response and commitment by SADC to see the pandemic as an opportunity to embrace digitization to industrialize using comparative advantages of Member States on value chains and ultimately, to increase the level of SADC and African intra-regional trade.

An industrialized region has the capacity to shield itself from any global commodity volatilities that have continued to dictate the direction of Africa's trade and economic progress.

In this regard, it is critical for SADC to tackle and address any threats such as the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and turn them into opportunities for emboldening industrialization and intra-African trade.

For example, an increased demand for medicines and medical supplies during and post the COVID-19 period should create a conducive environment for the region to establish its own pharmaceutical industries.

With respect to gender, the year 2021 saw Mauritius move closer to signing the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, a move that signified a united regional commitment to advance gender equality and equity.

The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development which entered into force in 2013 and was revised in 2016, provides for the empowerment of women, elimination of discrimination, and achievement of gender equality and equity through gender-responsive legislation, policies, programmes and projects.

All SADC Member States are party to the Protocol, with the exception of Mauritius and the Union of Comoros, which is the newest member of SADC.

Mauritius had previously objected to the Protocol because of a clause on child marriage that conflicted with the country's civil code that allowed children to marry below the age of 18 but above 16 with parental consent.

However, a new legislation which was finalized in December 2020 and is awaiting promulgation will repeal the Child Protection Act and replace it with a more comprehensive and modern legislative framework which addresses the shortcomings of the Child Protection Act that allowed marriage below the age of 18.

The new Children's Bill states that no religious marriage can be celebrated in Mauritius unless the parties to the religious marriage are aged 18 or above.

The year 2021 saw the region bid farewell to the last surviving SADC Founder, the first President of Zambia, Kenneth David Kaunda, at age 97. Dr Kaunda, who was popularly known as KK died in June while undergoing treatment for pneumonia.

He was a strong campaigner for African unity and deeper regional integration, and in April 1980 he hosted that historic

summit in Lusaka that established the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) now SADC.

With regard to democracy and governance, the 41st SADC Summit approved the transformation of the SADC Parliamentary Forum into a SADC Parliament which will be a consultative and deliberative body to strengthen citizen participation in issues and developments.

The regional Parliament will provide representation for the SADC citizenry, thereby serving as a valid interlocutor for the needs and desires of the public.

The Executive is the main driver of regional integration through intergovernmental institutions at senior officials, ministerial or Heads of State and Government levels.

On the political scene, Zambia witnessed a smooth transfer of power when President Hakainde Hichilema was inaugurated as the seventh President of Zambia since independence in 1964, after defeating the incumbent President Edgar Lungu.

Peace prevailed generally in the region except for pockets of instability. SADC despatched a

regional military mission to support Mozambique in addressing instability in the northern province of Cabo Delgado.

The SADC Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM) was deployed in July following a decision by a special SADC Summit held in June in Maputo. Since its deployment, there has been notable progress to curb the conflict and protect civilians.

Throughout the year, SADC remained seized with the conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, as well as the political situation in the Kingdom of Eswatini and the Kingdom of Lesotho.

The SADC Humanitarian and Emergency Operations Centre (SHOC) was established in the Nampula province of Mozambique, and will be operationalized with responsibility for coordination of regional humanitarian response to disasters.

Further, on climate change and the environment, SADC leaders once again raised concern at the way the global community is addressing the climate crisis.

The leaders expressed disappointment as to why Africa, which has not created the climate crisis is the hardest hit due

to limited financial resources to adapt to the impact of climate change.

In this regard, the SADC chairperson, President Lazarus Chakwera of Malawi told the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP26) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Scotland on 31 October to 12 November, that the time has now come for the global community to have a frank discussion on climate change.

He urged the global community to increase financial resources to allow Africa to adapt to the impact of climate change, adding the proposed "fund that some would like diminished is not charity, but a cleaning fee that must be paid."

SADC launched a well-documented and illustrated book in June to share the story of achievements and challenges over the past 40 years since its inception in 1980.

The book, titled *40 Years of SADC: Enhancing Regional Cooperation and Integration*, was published in three languages by the SADC Secretariat in collaboration with the Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC). □



Lazarus Chakwera



Filipe Jacinto Nyusi



Cyril Ramaphosa



Mokgweetsi Masisi

PRESIDENT LAZARUS Chakwera of Malawi became the SADC Chairman in August 2021, taking over from his Mozambican counterpart, President Filipe Jacinto Nyusi at the 41st SADC Summit held in Lilongwe.

For the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, President Mokgweetsi Masisi of Botswana handed over the Chair to South African President Cyril Ramaphosa.

The 41st SADC Summit appointed Elias Magosi of Botswana as the new SADC Executive Secretary, following two terms served by Dr Stergomena Lawrence Tax from the United Republic of Tanzania. Dr Tax was the first woman elected to the post of SADC Executive Secretary since establishment of the organization in 1980.

The Executive Secretary plays a key role in steering the Secretariat and is responsible for strategic planning, coordination and management of programmes.

Prior to his appointment, Magosi was the Head of the Botswana Public Service and Permanent Secretary to President Masisi.



Elias Magosi



Dr Stergomena Lawrence Tax

Regional centre of excellence on stunting reduction on the cards

A REGIONAL centre of excellence on stunting reduction is on the cards, following a decision by SADC to improve the state of nutrition in the region.

The annual SADC Ministers of Health meeting that was convened in a joint hybrid format and coordinated from Lilongwe, Malawi in November recommended for establishment of a regional centre of excellence on stunting reduction.

The ministers further endorsed Malawi's proposal to

host the Centre of Excellence on Stunting Reduction.

According to SADC procedures, the decision of the ministers is expected to be forwarded to the SADC Council of Ministers for final approval at their next meeting and then ultimately to the Summit of SADC Heads of State and Government.

Once the centre of excellence becomes operational, it will be tasked with spearheading the development and implementation of strategies and

measures to reduce stunting among children.

Stunting or low height for age among children is a chronic malnutrition problem, which is irreversible and can literally stunt the physical and cognitive growth of children.

Stunting can have a detrimental impact on a child's development, and high levels over sustained periods can negatively impact a country's economic outlook.

Stunting is caused by inadequate intake of nutritious

food, frequent illnesses such as diarrhoea and intestinal worms, poor care practices, and lack of access to health and other essential services. In addition, a mother's own health and nutrition have an impact on the baby's nutrition.

Therefore, the establishment of centre of excellence on stunting reduction will allow SADC Member States to share experiences and lessons on improving the state of nutrition in the region. □

Regional trade facilitation programme extended

SADC HAS approved an extension of implementation of the regional trade facilitation programme for the period 2020-2030 in line with the revised SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP).

The extension was proposed by the SADC Committee of Ministers of Trade (CMT) at their annual meeting in July.

The Trade Facilitation Programme (TFP) was initially approved in March 2016 to advance and consolidate the SADC Free Trade Area until 2020. However, the ministers have now extended the programme to 2030.

The CMT urged SADC Member States to ensure that the activities contained in the TFP are mainstreamed into their national plans in order to support the implementation plans, industrialization strategy, the regional integration agenda, and mobilization of resources.

It is expected that the progressive roll-out and implementation of the TFP will allow Member States to implement these activities, which were not implemented or were implemented partially

due to resource constraints in most Member States, and also at the Secretariat level, which will ultimately lead to improving the ease of doing business in the SADC Region.

The SADC TFP is aimed at increasing SADC intra-regional trade flows by supporting trade facilitation, strengthening capacities for streamlining border processes and monitoring and resolving non-tariff and technical barriers to trade. The programme also promotes implementation of the EU-SADC Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA).

The extension of the SADC TFP will overcome some of the challenges affecting intra-regional trade in the region, such as supply-side constraints, the high cost of trading among Member States prompted by poor infrastructure, restrictive practices, delays in clearing procedures for imports and exports, complex Rules of Origin and inefficient transit traffic issues, and the proliferation of Non-Tariff Barriers to Trade (NTBs).

SADC Member States have not been participating in the higher end of the global value chains, with exports consisting

mainly of commodities and unprocessed products, which create few employment opportunities and do not boost economic growth.

This is partly due to challenges regarding compliance of standards and the difficulties in accessing international markets.

Boundless Southern Africa feasibility study report and roadmap approved

SADC MINISTERS responsible for Environment, Natural Resources and Tourism have approved the Boundless Southern Africa Feasibility Study Report and the Roadmap.

The feasibility study addresses the role and sustainability of Boundless Southern Africa Programme to implement the SADC Tourism Programme 2020-2030 and promote the development of tourism within the SADC Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs).

Boundless Southern Africa is a regional marketing and investment promotion initiative that supports and facilitates sustainable tourism development in the SADC TFCAs.

By developing a more favorable trading environment through TFP, SADC Member States will be able to better compete in the various market places, enhance intra-regional trade and integrate faster in global value chains, creating wealth, jobs and additional government revenues. *sadc.int* □

The Ministers, who met in November also noted the progress made in the implementation of the Decisions of the Council of Ministers in addressing the winding up of the Regional Tourism Organisation of Southern Africa (RETOSA) and provided guidance to fast-track this process to its conclusion to allow the region to fully focus on implementing the SADC Tourism Programme 2020-2030.

The SADC Tourism Programme 2020-2030 serves as a roadmap to guide and coordinate the development of a sustainable tourism industry in the Region and to facilitate the removal of barriers to tourism development and growth. □



Africa must trade, invest in the continent

by Clarkson Mambo

AFRICA'S ROUTE to sustainable development is through creating an enabling environment for African companies to easily trade within the continent as well as invest in other African countries.

Such an enabling business environment ensures that Africa's proceeds from natural resources such as diamonds, gold and platinum remain in the continent to finance its development agenda, instead of benefiting other economies in Europe, Asia and the US.

Currently, the business landscape is structured in such a way that African countries, which possess the bulk of natural resources trade more with the outside world than among themselves, and much of the resources are exported in their raw form, with most of the value-addition and beneficiation taking place outside the continent, thus benefiting other countries.

This 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 to enable value addition in Africa rather than exporting

mainly raw materials to other parts of the world.

However, African countries have now established the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) to facilitate the smooth movement of goods and services across borders, as well as allowing African countries to harmonize regional trade policies to promote fair competition.

The AfCFTA, which was established by African leaders in 2012 and became operational in 2021, covers a market of 1.2 billion people across all the 55 Member States of the African Union (AU).

It has a gross domestic product of \$2.5 trillion, and is envisaged to become the world's largest free trade area since the formation of the World Trade Organization in 1995, when all the AU member states have ratified it.

And as a vehicle to promote the AfCFTA, the African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank) in collaboration with the AU set up the Intra-Africa Trade Fair (IATF) -- a platform for linking international buyers, sellers and investors as well as allowing participants and visitors to profile and share market information and investment opportunities in support of intra-African trade and the economic integration.

Speaking at the second edition of the IATF held 15-21 November in Durban, South Africa, the SADC chairperson,

President Lazarus Chakwera of Malawi said Africa must trade more with itself as well as invest in itself to ensure sustainable development.

"Africa cannot be a free trade area until as Members States we remove obstacles that hinder Africans from trading freely across Africa and when that happens, Africa will not just be free to trade, but free to demand a better seat at the table of nations, and that time is now," President Chakwera said.

He said once the continent addresses the issue of lack of market access for African companies within the continent, Africa will experience economic growth.

President Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa agreed, saying African countries should take advantage of the IATF to market their products as well as seek new trade opportunities.

"It is about using the combination of the continent's raw materials and industrial capacity, finance, services and infrastructure to produce quality finished goods to local and global markets," President Ramaphosa said, adding that "it is about creating a market large enough to attract investors from across the world to set up their production facilities on the continent."

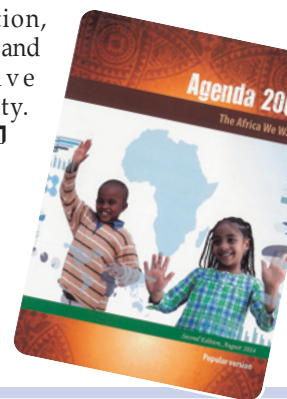
He said it is also imperative for Africa to resist the temptation of becoming a transshipment centre for products from other continents.

"Trade is built on a bedrock of investment. We must therefore find ways of attracting more investment into our economies, and, crucially, we must encourage African businesses to invest in each other's countries... We can no longer have a situation where Africa exports raw materials and imports finished goods made with those materials."

Chairperson of the IATF Advisory Council, Olusegun Obasanjo, who is a former President of Nigeria, said the fair is "one of the key initiatives in support of the AfCFTA which provides an opportunity for the continent to achieve economic emancipation and self-reliance."

"The IATF is an important component in righting the wrongs of the past and breaking down borders. It is aimed at building bridges to help us achieve the ambitions of Agenda 2063 - The Africa We Want," he said.

Agenda 2063 is Africa's long-term vision for inclusive growth and sustainable development for unity, self-determination, freedom and collective prosperity. sardc.net



Conducive environment key for industrialization

THERE IS NEED to put in place policies and regulations that provide a conducive environment to support industrialization and regional integration, Malawian Minister of Tourism, Culture and Wildlife, Dr Michael Usi, has said.

Speaking at the at the Support to Industrialization and Productive Sectors (SIPS) workshop held on the sidelines of the annual SADC Industrialization Week, Usi said policy and regulations harmonization was crucial in providing guidance in the actual operations of development programmes in the region.

He said the SIPS programme had come at the right time for SADC it aims to contribute towards advancing industrialization and regional integration. In this regard, he urged all stakeholders to ensure that their policies on the ground are conducive for the programme to achieve its objectives.

The SIPS programme is a joint action funded by the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, and seeks to improve the performance and growth of selected regional value chains and related services within the agro-processing and pharmaceutical sectors.

"This programme should make us realize our potential as a region and it rests with each one of us to take part and contribute," he said.

Minister Usi noted that SIPS was focusing on the leather, anti-retroviral, and COVID-19 related medical and pharmaceutical products value chains.

He commended SIPS for successfully strengthening dialogues between the private

and public sectors, giving room to a sustainable market driven by approach to regional value chain development.

He indicated that the programme will address challenges such as market failure, coordination and linkage failures between the national and regional levels as well as be-

tween the public and the private sector.

Senior Programme Officer, Value Chains, at the SADC Secretariat, Calicious Tatalife, said the SIPS programme had come to enhance policy, regulatory and business environment on national and regional levels for

development and sustainable operation of value chains for

selected products.

"In this regard SADC aims at improving its value chains, including those related to manufacturing of medical supplies and pharmaceuticals," he said. □



Sanctions hurting Zimbabwe economy ...as SADC calls for their immediate removal

ZIMBABWE'S ABILITY to develop its economy and improve the socio-economic lives of its citizens continues to be hindered by the imposition of illegal sanctions against the country, and there is need for the immediate and unconditional lifting of western sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe two decades ago.

These are some of the findings and recommendations of the United Nations Special Rapporteur, Aleana Douha, who was in Zimbabwe 18-28 October on a fact-finding mission to look into the negative impact of the sanctions.

Zimbabwe has grappled with economic sanctions since 2002 when the United States imposed an embargo on the country through the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act (ZIDERA) in response to the land reform programme and the leading role played by Zimbabwe in the SADC intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1998 in support of the government there.

Other western countries including the United Kingdom and the European Union imposed targeted sanctions on specific government officials and companies. These have however been gradually reviewed and lifted over time following re-engagement efforts.

However, in her report, the Special Rapporteur said the sanctions violate international law and Zimbabwe does not have to comply with them.

"Over the last 20 years, sanctions and various forms of over compliance with sanctions have had an insidious ripple effect on the economy of Zimbabwe, and on the enjoyment of fundamental human rights, including access to health, food, safe drinking water and sanitation, education and employment," Douhan said.

SADC has stood united on Zimbabwe, calling for the immediate and unconditional scrapping of the western sanctions.

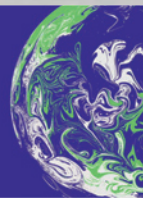
The region made an important statement at the 39th SADC Summit when southern African leaders declared October 25 as the date on which SADC Member States can collectively voice their disapproval of the sanctions through various activities and platforms until the sanctions are lifted.

In its second anniversary of the regional anti-sanction's day on 25 October, SADC said that with the sanctions coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic and recent cyclones in December 2020 and February 2021, the socio-economic pressures continue to mount on livelihoods of the people of Zimbabwe.

"The sanctions increase the perception of Zimbabwe as being in a high-risk profile category, thereby diminishing the credibility of investment and investor confidence, while exacerbating investment risks," SADC said in a statement, adding that "this further diminishes the country's prospects of obtaining impactful foreign direct investment and serves as a deterrent for economic emancipation, growth and stability."

The African Union Commission Chairperson, Moussa Faki Mahamat added his voice, saying the AU "remains concerned by the negative impact of the continued sanctions against Zimbabwe to the country's socio-economic development efforts." □





COP 26

Time for global community to act on climate change

by Kizito Sikuka

AFRICA HAS again criticized the way the global community is tackling climate change and its impact on socio-economic development.

For example, how does one explain the fact that Africa, which has done very little to create the climate crisis -- is the hardest hit due to limited financial resources to adapt to the impact of climate change caused by developments elsewhere?

Furthermore, why do industrialized countries who are the biggest polluters of the environment continue to play "hide and seek" and refuse to honour their pledges to cut down emissions and increase climate change finance to developing countries in the form of loans and not grants?

Increased aid was promised as far back as 2009 to help developing countries to cope with climate change. However, few have met these pledges, while calls to cut emissions are also being challenged by the highly polluting countries.

Addressing the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP26) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Scotland from 31 October to 12 November, the SADC chairperson, President

Lazarus Chakwera of Malawi said time has now come for the global community to have a frank discussion on climate change.

He said gone are the days that Africa "will take no for an answer. Not anymore."

"When will rich countries take responsibility? Last week, ahead of COP26 in Glasgow, it was revealed that many of them had lobbied against the UN's climate recommendations - namely that urgent action is needed. At the same time, some questioned the need to fund poorer countries to adapt to the effects of climate change -- despite the failure by developed countries to deliver the \$100 billion they had pledged," President Chakwera said.

He said Africa is "paying the price of others' emissions," adding that the proposed "fund that some would like diminished is not charity, but a cleaning fee that must be paid."

The growing impact of climate change has not only affected economic development in Africa but is now threatening peace and stability in some parts of the continent.

In the Darfur region, climate change has escalated the crisis with competition for scarce water in refugee camps, and scarce land causing disputes between farm-

ers and herders sparking serious conflicts in the arid region.

In the North Rift and North Eastern regions of Kenya, climate change and human pressures on natural resources have induced violent pastoral conflicts that have resulted in some locals migrating to new lands.

To address such challenges caused by climate change, President Chakwera said "a more nuanced approach is needed if climate equity and justice are to be respected."

"If countries with the greatest capacity to effect change do not, those with more modest means should not be expected to do so. At COP26, the west must show that it is now fit for the challenge and will finally fulfil its obligations. Only then will equity and justice become more than a mere slogan," he said.

Various other leaders were in agreement with the message by President Chakwera, saying the time is now up to "save the environment for future generations."

Two of the global powerhouses and polluters, the United States and China have pledged to do more to reach solutions to climate change and its impacts.

"There is no more time to hang back or sit on the fence or argue amongst ourselves. This is a challenge of our collective

lifetimes. This existential threat is a threat to human existence as we know it, and every day we delay, the cost of inaction increases. So let this be the moment that we answer history's call here in Glasgow," the US President Joe Biden said.

President Xi Jinping of the People's Republic of China urged the polluting countries to "provide support to help developing countries do better" in dealing with the climate crisis.

Indeed, the climate crisis requires a collective approach by the global community since it cuts across boundaries, and is getting more severe.

Predictions by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) indicate that over the next 50 years, the African continent is expected to suffer from more frequent and intense droughts and floods, more unpredictable growing seasons, and higher average temperatures.

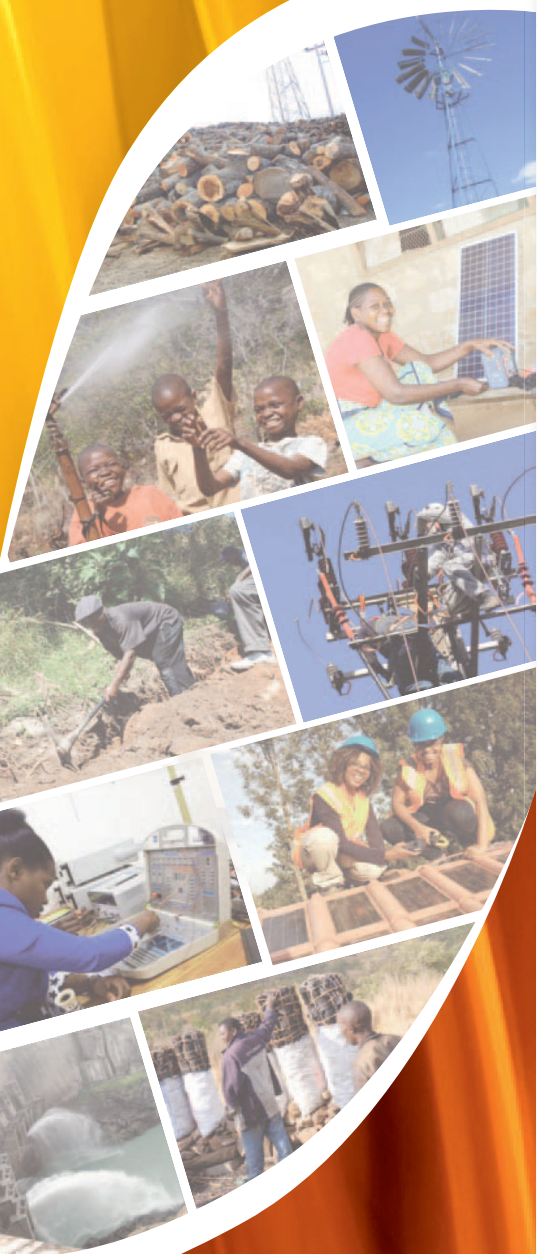
The annual climate change brings together world leaders and key experts to negotiate on the Paris Agreement and discuss the climate crisis and solutions.

The Paris Agreement, reached at COP21 in 2015, is the crown jewel of the UNFCCC process since it gave the world its first universal global agreement on climate change. sardc.net □



RENEWABLE ENERGY

Efforts and Benefits of Mainstreaming Gender in the SADC Renewable Energy Sector



Renewable Energy Innovations

INTRODUCTION

It is imperative that the SADC region addresses the need for renewable energy to enable socio-economic growth and sustainable development. Challenges such as climate change and global warming have intensified the need for renewable energies as a more sustainable way of development that can improve livelihoods for the population if the region, especially those that are off-grid.

SADC Member States have instituted renewable energy programmes in recent years in pursuit of energy efficiency and to manage the challenges of the power deficit in the region. Guided by the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP), the region has sought to manage the shortages by focusing on renewable energy to drive socio-economic growth and industrial development. The benefits of renewable energy are many, and have the potential to address the challenges faced by people in areas without access to electricity. Access to renewable energy can promote gender equality, women empowerment, and improve access to water, healthcare, education, and employment among others, as shown in this publication.

Issues of access to energy affect women disproportionately to men. In most of the SADC region, women and girls are largely responsible for household and community activities, including energy provision. This makes women susceptible to time poverty when it comes to development activities, as there are competing demands for time use, concentration and effort. The discourse on access to various forms of energy, inclusive of water, cooking and industrial energy therefore requires the inclusion of marginalised

and vulnerable communities, focusing particularly on the gender disparities. The inclusion of key principles of gender equality and equity is pivotal to successful solutions for strategic socio-economic growth in the sector, which impacts on women and their communities.

As a result, a number of gender and renewable energy innovations have been established with the aim of managing power deficits and making activities more productive for those without access to consistent grid electricity. These innovations have been inspired by the amount of productive time lost by women in pursuit of alternative sources of energy such as firewood for cooking, as well as the physical and mental strain of traveling long distances to fetch water, and the environmental factors such as deforestation that accompany the search for firewood. In addition, there are safety issues that come with seeking firewood in distant, isolated areas, causing women to be susceptible to sexual and gender-based violence and attacks by wild animals.

RENEWABLE ENERGY INNOVATIONS

In recognition of the advantages that renewable energy has for off-grid populations, particularly women and girls, the Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC) provided a platform where stakeholders could share experiences and practices on advancing gender equality and women empowerment through renewable energy innovations. The purpose was to encourage the sharing of effective practices for replication or adaptation, and to create conditions that promote improvement in livelihoods through renew-

able energy access. The virtual conference was attended by participants from regional and national organizations from eastern and southern Africa and beyond, as well as individuals whose mandate was to advance the status of women in the energy sector. The innovations were presented as solutions to some of these challenges and to advancing gender equality.

Reduction of Harmful Emissions

The burning of fossil fuels such as coal, oil and gas which produce heat-trapping gases has been a major contributor to the greenhouse gases that cause climate change, now

resulting in severe and frequent storms, flooding, droughts, landslides, destruction of homes and communities. In addition, droughts are stirring destructive sand and dust storms which contribute to the expansion of deserts and reduces land for growing food. Many communities worldwide now face the threat of insufficient supply of water and food due to climate change. In the SADC region, the most of the population relies on agriculture, with men largely engaged in the cash economy while women in rural and peri-urban areas rely on subsistence farming to feed their families.

To reduce the impacts of climate change and support resilience, an innovative method is being implemented in Nepal with the additional aim of creating employment, healthy environments and gender equality.

BIOMASS PELLET INDUSTRY: A CLEAN ENERGY SOLUTION

An organization in Finland, Arbonaut, is implementing a project in Nepal, a country which is vulnerable to climate risk. Arbonaut expects that their biomass pellet project will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create employment, revenues, good health and wellbeing, and foster gender equality in the local communities in Sarlahi and Mahottari districts of Nepal. More than 90 percent of rural households in Nepal use firewood for cooking, heating and other activities, thus producing CO₂ gas, harmful particles and other gases. The proposed solution of replacing firewood from indoor kitchens with pellets can improve the air quality and decrease the number of respiratory infections, especially to women and children. Arbonaut will establish a biomass pellet factory to produce up to 20,000 tons of pellets annually from renewable biomass. The biomass will be collected from forests, bushes and grasses, and waste by-products of agriculture, sawmills, sugar and plywood factories. A start-of-the-art technology will be used to map available raw materials. Only 50 percent of the available raw materials will be collected to produce pellets leaving a remaining 50 percent on the ground for nutrient cycling, biodiversity and local livelihoods. The produced pellets will reduce, and eventually replace, the use of coal and firewood. The concept mitigates climate change by replacing the use of fossil-fuel energy with biomass energy. The project contributes to the emissions reduction aspiration of Nepal in line with the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC), by removing the highly flammable biomass from the forests and using advanced forest-fire management systems. The proposed biomass pellet industry is expected to become a viable business after three years in which local people will benefit and have an opportunity to get a 10 percent equity share of the industry as well as employment opportunities. Some 200 women and men are expected to be employed by the industry.



Reduction in Deforestation

The loss of trees and other vegetation can increase the impacts of climate change, desertification and soil erosion, with fewer crops, more flooding, increased greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, and a host of other problems. Deforestation in southern Africa is largely due to the cutting down of trees by farmers, both men and women, and women in search of wood fuels for cooking and other household tasks. The introduction of fuel-efficient cookstoves has been one of the innovations in the renewable energy sector that has the potential to help to reduce deforestation. Fuel efficient cookstoves were designed primarily to improve the efficiency of heat transfer to the cooking pot, thereby saving fuel and reducing pressure on forest resources. Fuel-efficient cookstoves can reduce fuel use by 20–50 percent relative to the three-stone fire. The Centre for Gender and Community Development in Zimbabwe (CGCDZ) is implementing training projects teaching women without access to grid electricity to make fuel-efficient cookstoves in an effort to reduce deforestation and the laborious tasks and time spent in walking long distances to fetch wood.

FUEL-EFFICIENT COOK STOVES IN ZIMBABWE



CGCDZ has trained women and raised awareness on how to use firewood more efficiently to help to reduce the time spent fetching firewood and the number of trees that are harvested to get firewood. The reduced need for fuel means less time is spent looking for firewood, a task mainly undertaken by women and girls. The reduced time spent on collecting firewood has resulted in women engaging in more livelihood-enhancing activities. For example, the CGCDZ trained 25 women to make fuel efficient stoves and this has resulted in increased income.

CLEAN COOKING CATALOGUE

The Clean Cooking Catalogue is a global database of cookstoves, fuels, fuel products, and performance data. It includes information on features and specifications, as well as emissions, efficiency and safety, based on laboratory and field-testing. The Catalogue is driven by partner submissions and serves as documentation of innovation in the clean cookstove and fuel sector. Core functions of the Catalogue are to champion the adoption of international clean cookstove standards and to serve as a tool for delivering robust monitoring and evaluation information to key stakeholders, including:

- Consumers, investors, and donors, as a resource for stove assessment and comparison
- Manufacturers, for visibility of their product performance, quality and innovation
- Researchers seeking data for advanced analysis and study
- Testing centres, to distribute results and facilitate collaboration

Socio-Economic Empowerment

Projects such as harnessing solar power from the sun for food-processing and the drying of vegetables and fruit can save time while increasing efficiency through the use of creative enterprise in packaging and marketing their products. Harnessing water for irrigation through the use of solar-powered boreholes has the added advantage of access to safe and clean drinking water, while enabling women to actively participate in horticultural projects for both local and export markets. With more time available, women are able to share and learn from each other about more efficient ways of capitalising on renewable energy sources for socio-economic development, significantly addressing poverty and wealth creation.

A study conducted by SARDC in September 2018 on the impact of mainstreaming gender in transboundary water management, documented the multiple benefits that energy access can bring to communities, particularly women in rural areas, who generally have inadequate access to modern technologies. The study was conducted in eastern Zimbabwe, in a small community near the border with Mozambique, revealed that without access to electricity, there was no lighting at the local clinic and this had a negative impact on the women who went into labour overnight. Women had to bring their own light sources such as candles, torches and kerosene lamps, which are not a reliable source of illumination. Medication storage was a challenge as the clinic had no access to electricity for refrigeration of drugs which required such storage.

At the local school, it was difficult for teachers to teach their pupils subjects related to Information Communication Technology (ICT), as there was no means of doing practical lessons. It was an additional difficulty for teachers to stay after hours to mark books and prepare for lessons due to the unavailability of reliable light sources. The headmaster of the school noted that the school was understaffed because teachers did not want to be employed at this school due to the unavailability of electricity. People living in the community had limited access to information, as only a few had solar panels to listen to the radio and charge cellphones, community members did not have access to TV and radio broadcasts because of the unavailability of electricity in the community. However, since the Micro-Hydro and Irrigation Scheme was introduced in 2010, the community now has access to electricity.

CHIPENDEKE MICRO-HYDRO AND IRRISCHEME

The micro-hydro scheme draws water from a river in the community which it uses to power the community with electricity. The establishment of the scheme has had many benefits for women which include,

- Water – Water can be pumped for agricultural and other purposes, rather than carrying in buckets.
- Health - Women can now deliver their babies overnight with lighting in the rooms, and the clinic can stock drugs that require refrigeration.
- Education - The Chipendeke Primary School is now connected to electricity and can attract more teachers, reducing the teacher-pupil ratio as well as offering a night-school facility for adults in the community.
- Access to media - Women and children can now watch television as well as use devices such as cellphones which allow access to entertainment and information services.



CONCLUSION

The contributions and perspectives of women, and sharing of effective practices, are essential in supporting the access and use of renewable energy in this period, during transition to a more sustainable energy system for the benefit of people and their communities (IRENA, 2020). Enabling more women to invest their skills and talents in the renewable energy sector can ad-

vance gender equality and empowerment objectives as well as fulfil the need for skills in the sector. Renewable energy innovations are a key factor in addressing the gender gaps in the renewable energy sector, and more efforts are needed to focus on research and documenting these innovations for learning and sharing, and for replication and adaptation in the context of climate change resilience. ▲

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Towards a fully integrated regional power network ...as Malawi-Mozambique Interconnector is commissioned

by Clarkson Mambo

MALAWI WILL soon become the latest member of SADC to join and integrate its power network with the rest of the region.

This development will ultimately interconnect all mainland SADC Member States to the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP) except Angola and the United Republic of Tanzania, allowing countries in the region to share surplus energy.

The island states of the Union of Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius and Seychelles who are SADC members, are not part of the regional SAPP market.

Interconnected SAPP member states are Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe, meaning that any new generation project that is commissioned in Angola, Malawi or Tanzania is not available to the nine other members.

Therefore, the commissioning of the Mozambique-Malawi Interconnection Project in November 2021 is a giant step towards integrating the regional power network and achieving deeper integration in southern Africa.

Construction of the Malawi-Mozambique Interconnector will allow Malawi to have access to the regional SAPP market through Mozambique's interconnected grid with Zimbabwe (Songo-Bindura) and South Africa (Songo-Apollo).

This will also enable other SADC countries to access power from Malawi, as it will

be connected to the regional grid.

The Mozambique-Malawi Interconnection Project involves the construction of a 218 km, 400kV high voltage transmission line from Matambo in Tete Province in Central Mozambique, past the Malawian border to Phombeya in Balaka district, at a cost of US\$154 million.

Speaking at the commissioning ceremony, the current chairperson of SADC, President Lazarus Chakwera of Malawi said the interconnector will be a boost for Malawi and Mozambique, but also for the rest of the SADC region as it will ease some of the energy challenges faced by other countries.

"This interconnection project is yet another milestone in the linkages between our two countries," President Chakwera said, adding that, "it is a step in the right direction of integrating infrastructure across SADC for sustainable economic development."

His Mozambican counterpart, President Felipe Nyusi added that joint infrastructure projects between and among SADC Member States are key to advancing integration as well as promoting sustainable development.

He said the construction of the Malawi-Mozambique Interconnector is long overdue given the power shortages in the region where demand far outweighs supplies.

"I am glad to see this coming to pass as a step in the direction of integrating infrastructure across SADC for sustainable economic development," President Nyusi said.

Construction of the Malawi-Mozambique Interconnector is expected to be completed in 2023.

Access and availability of energy is key to the developmental agenda of SADC hence the commissioning of the Malawi-Mozambique Interconnector is a welcome move for southern Africa to improve its energy sector.

SADC has been facing challenges in meeting its energy requirements due to a combination of factors, including growth in demand.

One of the major challenges has been limited investment in the energy sector, particularly in the construction of new transmission lines to promote the smooth movement of surplus energy across the region.

The SAPP coordinates the planning, generation, transmission and marketing of electricity on behalf of Member State utilities in SADC and has identified a number of transmission lines for commission over the next few years.

Some of these transmission projects are contained in the Energy Sector Plan of the Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan (RIDMP), which covers the period 2012 to 2027.

The planned priority transmission projects include the Zimbabwe-Zambia-Botswana-Namibia (ZiZaBoNa) interconnector project, the Mozambique-Zimbabwe-South Africa (MoZiSa) transmission project and the Zambia-Tanzania-Kenya interconnector project.

The ZiZaBoNa project has the capacity to increase power trading among participating utilities, as well as providing

an alternative route to decongest the existing central transmission corridor that passes through Zimbabwe.

When fully operational, the ZiZaBoNa line will make it possible for Namibia to import power directly from Hwange in Zimbabwe. Currently electricity from the Hwange Power Station is being routed to Namibia through South Africa.

The MoZiSa interconnector will complement other regional transmission lines and facilitate power transfers within the SAPP network.

Furthermore, it will increase stability in the power pool through additional interconnection between the strong network in the South and the weak network in the North of the region, which has been a source of SAPP grid instability.

The proposed Zambia-Tanzania-Kenya interconnector will connect the power grids and create a link between SAPP and the East African Power Pool, thus making it possible to transmit power between southern Africa and eastern Africa.

The main objective of the Zambia-Tanzania-Kenya interconnector is to facilitate the creation of a Pan-African power market from Cape Town in South Africa to Cairo in Egypt. sardc.net □

SADC develops tools to curb GBV across the region

SADC HAS developed tools to address Gender Based Violence (GBV) in the region.

Speaking at a virtual regional dialogue held in November on GBV in refugee and other humanitarian settings, the Human Security Officer in the Directorate of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Affairs at the SADC Secretariat, Jacinta Hofnie, said the overall objective of the tools is to strengthen the capacity of law enforcement and other first responders to address Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) in the SADC region.

The regional dialogue on GBV coincided with the launch of the commemoration of 16 Days Activism against GBV whose theme this year is "Orange the World: End Violence against Women Now!"

She said the dialogues aim to demonstrate the operationalisation and implementation of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development and the SADC Strategic Plan of Action on GBV.

The tools include SGBV Training Guidelines; and Regional Guideline to Develop Standard Operational Procedures (SOPs); while the Regional Strategy on Rehabilitation of GBV perpetrators/offenders and Regional Migration Policy Framework are still being developed.

The SGBV Training Guidelines provide information related to international conventions, responding to victims/survivors of SGBV-related crimes and working with stakeholders to enhance partnerships in combating and prosecuting these offences.

Zambia becomes first SADC country to benefit from GBV Training Guide

ZAMBIA WAS the first SADC Member State to benefit from a Training Guideline on addressing Gender Based Violence (GBV), approved by SADC Ministers responsible for Gender/Women Affairs to strengthen the capacity of law enforcement agencies in this regard.

The training guideline was used at a workshop for the Zambia Police Services (ZPS) conducted in November.

The guideline is intended to be used as a framework for the development of detailed training curricula for law enforcement which can be adapted to national laws, policies and procedures.

Speaking at the training workshop, Senior Officer, Public Security at the SADC Secretariat, Kealeboga Moruti said the training is aligned with the SADC policies and plans that explicitly speak to the elimination of GBV in the region and the provision of coordinated, effective and timely services to victims of violence.

These include the SADC Vision 2050, the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2020-2030, the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, and the SADC Regional Strategy and Framework of Action for Addressing GBV (2018-2030). □



It covers issues related to the definitions of gender and GBV; international, continental/ regional protocols on SGBV; perception and bias in law enforcement; rights of victims/survivors and victimology; communication and crisis intervention; crime scene management and evidence collection; interviewing survivors of SGBV, and interagency and non-governmental organisations cooperation.

The development of the SGBV Training Guideline is in response to the Article 24 of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development on the Training of Service Providers, and the Regional Strategy and Framework of Action for Addressing GBV (2018-2030) which highlight the need to address capacity of key programming areas such as prevention, protection, care and support; as well as knowledge management, women, peace and security strategy.

The tools and guidelines had extensive input by Member States and were presented to the SADC Chief of Police Sub-Committee in June 2021 and subsequently approved by Ministers responsible for Gender/Women's Affairs in August 2021.

The guidelines and tools provide standardised training for law enforcement personnel, criminal justice practitioners and social workers, and aim to ensure quality and consistent training on GBV across SADC Member States as well as ensuring that the rights of survivors and victims are uniformly protected. They also

provide an overarching framework for Member States on developing detailed/in-depth national level training manuals that will be country and context specific.

The guideline outlines the steps to follow when developing GBV SOPs and referral pathways, and discusses key considerations when developing GBV SOPs in conflict and post-conflict situations.

The SADC Secretariat continues to roll out and disseminate the Regional GBV tools to ensure that Member States develop their own context-specific national tools. sadc.int □

Draft regional Model Law on Gender Based Violence adopted

THE SADC Parliamentary Forum (SADC-PF) has reviewed and validate the draft SADC Model Law on Gender Based Violence.

The review and validation were done in November during the Forum's 50th Plenary Assembly under the theme "Celebrating a New Era of Democracy Towards Consolidating the Vibrant Voices of SADC Parliamentarians" hosted in Johannesburg, South Africa on 15-17 November.

The model law aims to eradicate GBV so that individuals in the region can live decently and enjoy fundamental human rights without fear of violence. □



SADC engages cooperating partners

THE SADC Secretariat convened its annual dialogue with the International Cooperating Partners (ICPs) in November to discuss joint collaborations in addressing the impact of COVID-19 and approaches for coordinated support for the implementation of the region's strategies and priorities.

The SADC-ICP meetings facilitate the exchange of ideas, creating mutual understanding on approaches for support towards the SADC Regional Integration agenda.

Participants included members of the SADC Double Troika (Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa), a majority of SADC ICPs, representatives of Diplomatic Missions of SADC Member States in Gaborone, as well as officials from the SADC Secretariat.

This dialogue was co-chaired by Mr Chauncy Simwaka, Secretary to Treasury in the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Malawi on behalf of the Chair of SADC Standing Committee of Senior Officials, and His Excellency Ambassador Jan Sadek, the Head of Delegation of the European Union to Botswana and SADC, and current Chairperson of the ICPs.

Speaking at the dialogue, Simwaka expressed satisfaction at the support that ICPs render to SADC in implementing its regional programmes, particularly now in the advent of COVID-19.

He said that despite the reduction in the number of positive cases in the SADC Region, COVID-19 remained a hindrance to regional integration, and urged ICPs to continue supporting the region in its ambition to manufacture vaccines and other pharmaceuticals locally.

SADC Executive Secretary, Elias M Magosi commended the ICPs for their support to SADC's regional programmes, and emphasized the importance of global partnerships and universal cooperation in tackling emerging challenges while ensuring alignment to SADC Vision 2050 and the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2020-2030.

He urged the partners to heed SADC's call for the unconditional and immediate lifting of all sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe to facilitate socio-economic recovery.

"The sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe, whether targeted or restrictive, are a fundamental constraint and hindrance to the country's prospects of economic recovery, human security and sustainable growth, as cooperation spirit cannot be optimally advanced in an environment of sanctions," he said.

Sadek commended the high-level participation of both ICPs and SADC Member States and pledged the ICPs commitment to continue working with the SADC Secretariat in ad-

vancing the regional integration agenda.

He also said that the ICPs recognize SADC's ownership of the regional integration agenda and will align their development cooperation support with SADC priorities, as presented in Vision 2050 and RISDP 2020-2030.

Both sides committed to continue working together by supporting SADC Member States in increasing the local production of medical supplies, including COVID 19 supplies and other pharmaceuticals, in line with SADC priorities.

Other measures include implementing economic recovery plans, mobilizing resources to enable the procurement of vaccines in countries where vaccines are not easily available, and facilitating support towards vaccine-sharing between the industrialized countries and SADC Member States who have inadequate vaccines.

On peace and security, SADC extended appreciation for the continued support in ICP-funded initiatives. SADC

assured the ICPs of commitment in finding home-grown and lasting solutions through existing structures for the purpose of addressing peace and security challenges in the region.

The dialogue also witnessed the valuable progress made by the respective Thematic Groups through the development of eight Multi-Year Action Plans 2021-2023. This was hailed as a major achievement further enabling alignment of support to the RISDP.

The SADC-ICP Dialogue Platform and the Thematic Groups seek to establish constructive engagement, information and experience exchange and promote best practices at the technical level; improve coordination between ICPs and SADC; ensure alignment, harmonization and streamlining of operational procedures, rules and other practices in the delivery of development assistance to SADC; and ensure synergy and complementarity of assistance provided at the national and regional levels. □

SADC partners with IOM

SADC MEMBER States are making progress on migration management, with a number of policy frameworks already in place while others are still under development

This was said by the acting SADC Executive Secretary, Ambassador Joseph Nourrice during a courtesy call by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) Regional Director for Southern Africa, Charles Kwenin in November.

The meeting considered ongoing SADC-IOM cooperation in thematic areas such as labour migration and mixed

m i g r a t i o n health, immigration and border movement as well as migration data.

Ambassador Nourrice noted the progress that is being made at the regional level through active implementation of the SADC-IOM Memorandum of Understanding which was signed in November 2016, adding that SADC was at an advanced stage in developing a Regional Migration Policy Framework to harmonise and coordinate the initiatives of



Member States on migration.

The framework is designed to maximise the developmental impact of migration and stem irregular migration, which gives way to insecure border and increased migrants vulnerabilities to trafficking and smuggling, among other challenges.

The IOM agreed to extend technical support towards the full establishment of the SADC Humanitarian and Emergency Operations Centre, which is based in Mozambique. □

Media key to regional integration

SADC RECOGNISES the critical role that the media plays in disseminating information and educating citizens about its activities, programmes and policies across the region.

This was said by the SADC Executive Secretary, Elias M. Magosi in his opening remarks at a webinar for SADC National Media Coordinators (NMCs) in November.

The webinar was convened to discuss interventions to facilitate enhanced awareness, communication and visibility of SADC in Member States.

Delivering the speech on behalf of Magosi, the SADC Deputy Executive Secretary for Corporate Affairs, Ambassador Joseph Nourrice said that SADC considers the National Media Coordinators as key partners and important purveyors of information about regional integration as espoused under the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan 2020-2030 (RISDP 2020-2030) and the SADC Vision 2050.

He said information is power and that the NMCs as the custodian of SADC public information in the respective Member States is a huge responsibility as they work closely with national media in the Member States.

"The NMCs play a critical role in empowering the media in the region to accurately and objectively inform and educate the SADC citizens about its programmes, policies and activities which are aimed at improving their livelihoods," he said.

Magosi said continued collaborative work by the NMCs and the Secretariat will go a long way in promoting and in-

creasing the visibility of regional integration.

"With the advent of new information and communication technologies," Magosi said, "information is moving at the click of a button and called upon the NMCs to devise and craft sound communication and visibility plans that will ensure that accurate information about SADC programmes and activities are disseminated timeously and to the wider audiences."

In fact, the region has seen the growth of a number of websites and social media platforms which churn out information faster than the traditional media and there is therefore a need to ensure that these timeously receive accurate information so as to avoid erroneous information about the SADC region.

"We therefore consider your role in bridging the information gap between SADC and the media in your respective countries as of paramount importance. This is because the media has an important role to play in ensuring that SADC Regional Integration issues are publicised and spread across the Region and beyond," he said.

Magosi highlighted that the SADC Regional integration agenda is being championed through the RISDP 2020-2030 and the SADC Vision 2050, which were adopted by the 40th SADC Summit in Maputo, Mozambique, in August 2020.

An important objective for each SADC Member State is to

achieve sustained economic growth and sustainable development so that people in the Region have better living standards and employment opportunities.

He said since its inception, SADC has formulated policies and strategies for regional integration in support of economic growth and development.

The economic benefits expected from regional integration include increased market size, improved intra-regional trade and investment flows, and increased transfer of technology and experience.

Through the establishment of the SADC Common Market, the overall goal of economic development and regional integration is to facilitate trade and financial liberalisation, to establish competitive and diversified industrial development, to increase investment, and eradicate poverty.

To achieve this goal, SADC has identified as its specific objectives, Market integration; Macro-economic convergence; Strengthening of financial and capital markets; Attainment of deeper monetary cooperation; Increasing levels of investment; and Enhancing competitiveness.

RISDP 2020-2030 and Vision 2050 represent the long-term vision that sets out the aspirations of the region and further deepen regional integration. SADC envisions the removal of all barriers to deeper regional integration, guided by the objectives and principles of the SADC Treaty and Common Agenda.

In its quest to strengthen regional integration as enunciated through Vision 2050 and RISDP 2020-2030, SADC aspires to create a conducive environment to foster regional cooperation and integration and uphold free and fair movement of goods, people or labour, capital and services;

Magosi also highlighted the aims and objectives of Vision 2050 and RISDP 2020-2030, pointing out that SADC expects the media, through support from the NMCs, to continue to inform and educate our citizens.

Both plans envision a peaceful, middle- to high-income industrialised region, where all citizens enjoy sustainable economic wellbeing, justice and freedom. □

THE DECLARATION and Treaty clearly acknowledges the critical role of the media in its integration agenda, and states that "regional integration will continue to be a pipe dream unless the peoples of the region determine its content, form and direction, and are themselves its active agent." The SADC Communications and Promotional Strategy of 2016 adds that, "without effective communication, SADC will continue to be misunderstood and its achievements will remain invisible and the organisation will not fully realise its developmental goals." □





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December 2021 – February 2022

December	
10 November – 10 December	16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children The annual worldwide campaign to oppose violence against women and children aims to raise awareness of the negative impact that violence and abuse have on women and children and to rid society of abuse permanently. The theme for this year is "Orange the world: End violence against women now!"
1, Global	World AIDS Day The commemoration of World AIDS Day in 2021 is an opportunity to recognize the essential role that communities have played and continue to play in the AIDS response at the international, national and local levels. The theme for the 2021 observance is "Ending the HIV Epidemic: Equitable Access, Everyone's Voice."
1, Malawi	Extra-ordinary Meeting of SADC Ministers responsible for Disaster Risk Management The extra-ordinary meeting will review progress on the development of a Draft SADC Humanitarian and Emergency Operations Centre (SHOC) Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). The SHOC will be responsible for the coordination of activities to address disasters in the region.
2, Malawi	Joint Committee of SADC Ministers Responsible for Energy and Water The hybrid meeting delivered and chaired from Malawi will deliberate on a wide range of issues including programmes of regional dimension in support to the implementation of the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2020-30 and particularly programmes for infrastructure development in the two sectors of energy and water.
2 – 4, Cape Verde	African Economic Conference The conference brings together various stakeholders, including policymakers, the private sector and researchers, to examine ways and means to expand Africa's development finance sources sustainably.
January	
11-12, Malawi	SADC to hold an Extra-ordinary Summit The SADC Extraordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government will review progress of the SADC Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM) which was deployed to support Mozambique to combat terrorism and acts of violent extremism.
17 – 19, UAE	World Future Summit Stakeholders will discuss ways to harness clean energy and promote innovation in the energy sector.
25, Virtual	SADC Meeting of the Committee of Ministers of Justice/ Attorneys-General The meeting is expected to consider a number of draft SADC legal instruments including draft amendments to the SADC Treaty, the SADC Administrative Tribunal (SADCAT) Statute and the Protocol on the Development of Tourism in SADC with the aim to create a conducive legal framework to advance efforts to achieve the SADC Common agenda.
February	
2, UN Global	World Wetlands Day Government agencies, non-government organisations and community groups have celebrated World Wetlands Day since 1997 with actions to raise public awareness of wetland values and benefits, and to promote the conservation and wise use of wetlands.
5 – 6, Ethiopia	Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly The 35th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly African Heads of State will be held under the theme "Building Resilience in Nutrition and Food Security on the African Continent: Strengthen Agriculture, Accelerate the Human Capital, Social and Economic Development," as Africa aims for deeper integration and increased sustainable development.
17-19, Belgium	AU and EU Summit SADC leaders will join others from Africa to deliberate partnership with EU.
22 February – 15 March	Capacity-Building Training for Project Preparation The SADC Secretariat will conduct virtual capacity-building training sessions for project preparation to ensure regional projects are well prepared. The trainings are part of the implementation of the Project on Sustainable Financing of Regional Infrastructure and Industrial Projects in the SADC.



SADC Parliamentary Forum @50

by Hon. Professor Peter H. Katjavivi

The Parliament of the Kingdom of Lesotho was the gracious host of the 50th Plenary Assembly Session of the SADC Parliamentary Forum (SADC PF), which was hosted virtually from 10-12 December 2021.

Held under the theme, "Celebrating a New Era of Democracy Towards Consolidating the Vibrant Voices of SADC Parliamentarians," the Plenary coincided with SADC PF's golden jubilee.

The President of SADC PF, Hon. Christophe Mboso N'Kodia Pwanga, who is the Speaker of the National Assembly of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) gave a progress report on the activities and achievements of the Forum, including the celebration of the transformation of SADC PF into a SADC Regional Parliament, which happened in Malawi in August 2021 at the SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government.

The Rt. Hon. Dr. Moeketsi Majoro, the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho and Guest of Honour, gave the Keynote Address at the 50th Plenary Assembly Session, and also in attendance was His Majesty King Letsie III, Head of State of the Kingdom of Lesotho.

The Assembly discussed two key topics:

- ❖ The Windhoek initiative and the birth of the SADC Parliamentary Forum: Celebrating the emergence of the voice of Parliaments in SADC Regional Integration; and
- ❖ Taking stock of SADC PF's key milestones.

Several important issues stood out during the course of the Plenary, notably the transformation of the SADC Parliamentary Forum into a SADC Regional Parliament; and the need to document and share with SADC citizens, the history of SADC PF lest it be lost and forgotten. Other issues included making model laws, monitoring and observing elections, among others.

The objective of having model laws is to encourage the SADC Region to benchmark and enforce measures to combat related challenges.

The Plenary unanimously endorsed an important and one-of-a-kind initiative to set up a Trust Fund to be up and running in early 2022 to spearhead fundraising activities to support the work of the SADC PF.

A eulogy was made in form of a motion by the Speaker of the Zambian Parliament paying tribute to the late Dr. Kenneth Kaunda, Founding President of Zambia, and acknowledging his great contribution and that of the people of Zambia to the liberation of southern African in particular, and Africa in general.

As we conclude this year, we would be remiss if we failed to acknowledge the fact that this December 2021 marks the 60th Anniversary of the Independence of Tanganyika, now Tanzania.

Against this background, we congratulate the people of the United Republic of Tanzania for their uhuru (freedom) on 9 December 1961.

Let us continue to acknowledge and celebrate the role played by the late *Mwalimu* Julius K. Nyerere in tandem with his fellow leaders who were part of the Frontline States alongside Dr. Kenneth Kaunda, Sir Seretse Khama and Sir Ketumile Masire of Botswana, Samora Machel of Mozambique, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, Dr. Agostinho Neto and Eduardo dos Santos of Angola. Dr Sam Nujoma, Founding President of Namibia later joined this illustrious group.

Hon. Prof. Peter H. Katjavivi is Speaker of the National Assembly of Namibia.



Tanzania@60

ON 9 DECEMBER 1961, Captain Alex Nyirenda of the Tanganyika Rifles climbed to the top of Mt Kilimanjaro, Africa's highest peak and the world's tallest free-standing mountain... and as the British flag was lowered at the national stadium down in Dar es Salaam, he planted the new flag and the Freedom Torch on top of the high-est peak, named from that day, Uhuru peak.

The definition of freedom was broader than national political liberation, but extended geographically to all of Africa, as the first stage in a broader vision of economic and cultural freedom. The United Republic of Tanzania at 60 years continues to be a beacon in that regard.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS IN SADC

December 2021 – February 2022

8 December	Immaculate Conception	Seychelles
9 December	Independence Day	Tanzania
10 December	International Human Rights Day	Namibia
16 December	Day of Reconciliation	South Africa
22 December	National Unity Day	Zimbabwe
	Incwala Day	Eswatini
25 December	Christmas Day	All SADC except Angola and Mozambique
	Family Day	Angola, Mozambique
26 December	Boxing Day	Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Eswatini, Tanzania, Zimbabwe
	Family Day	Namibia
	Day of Goodwill	South Africa
1 January	New Year's Day	All SADC
2 January	New Year Holiday	Botswana, Mauritius
3 January	New Year Holiday	Zimbabwe
4 January	Martyrs Day	DRC
12 January	Zanzibar Revolution Day	Tanzania
15 January	John Chilembwe Day (+16,17)	Malawi
16 January	Heroes' Day (Laurent Kabila)	DRC
17 January	Heroes' Day (Patrice Lumumba)	DRC
18 January	Thaipooosam Cavadee	Mauritius
1 February	Abolition of Slavery	Mauritius
	Chinese Spring Festival	Mauritius
3 February	Heroes' Day	Mozambique
4 February	National Armed Struggle Day	Angola
21 February	National Youth Day	Zimbabwe
28 February	Leilat al-Meiraj	Comoros
	Carnival Holiday	Angola