



STATEMENT

BY

**HONOURABLE SIMBARASHE S. MUMBENGEWI,
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

OF

**THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE, CHAIRPERSON OF
THE SADC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS**

ON

**THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF
THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE SADC
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AT MEIKLES HOTEL,
HARARE, ZIMBABWE ON 27 APRIL, 2015**

Honourable Members of the SADC Council of Ministers;
The Executive Secretary of SADC, Dr. Stergomena Lawrence Tax;
The Chairperson of the Standing Committee of Senior Officials,
Ambassador Joey Bimha being the Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the
Republic of Zimbabwe;
Senior Government Officials from SADC Member States;
Your Excellencies, Ambassadors and Members of the Diplomatic
Corps;
Representatives of International Organisations;
Deputy Executive Secretaries and Officials from the SADC Secretariat;
Distinguished Delegates;
Members of the Media;
Ladies and Gentlemen;
Comrades and Friends;

On behalf of the Government and people of Zimbabwe, I welcome you to Harare. I would like to thank you all for your presence at this Extraordinary Meeting of the SADC Council of Ministers, tasked with considering and recommending the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap, for consideration and approval by the Extraordinary Summit of SADC Heads of State and Government scheduled to be held on 29 April, 2015.

Honourable Ministers,

Only last month, Council met here in Harare and reviewed the progress report of the Ministerial Task Force on Regional Integration on the development of the Draft Strategy and Roadmap for Industrialisation as mandated by the 34th SADC Summit held in Victoria Falls in August 2014. While noting the significant progress that had been made, Council endorsed the decision of the Task Force to meet again with the view to finalising the Draft Strategy and Roadmap.

Pursuant to this decision, the Ministerial Taskforce met in Harare on April 12, 2015 and adopted the Draft Strategy and Roadmap for Industrialisation.

The Draft SADC Strategy and Roadmap before you, recognises that industrial policy formulation and implementation will largely be undertaken at the national level and that its success will depend on forging effective partnerships between government and the private sector. It also seeks to engender major economic and technological transformation and national and regional levels, aimed at accelerating growth and enhancing comparative and competitive advantages of the economies of the region.

The Roadmap outlines, among others, objectives, challenges, interventions, as well as programmes, outcomes and key performance indicators under the three Core Pillars of the Strategy, namely: Industrialisation, Competitiveness and Regional Integration. It also recognises the need to acknowledge the symbiotic relationship that exists between industrialisation and trade. The Roadmap spans over a period of forty-eight years (2015-2063). During this period, the SADC Region will see itself progress from being factor-driven to being investment-driven (2021-2050), and beyond that, to being an innovation-driven economy (2051-2063), with high levels of economic growth, competitiveness, incomes and employment.

Honourable Ministers,

I am also happy to note that the Fifth Task Force Meeting of RISDP was held in Harare from 13-15 April, 2015 with the view to revising the sequencing of targeted outputs on Priority A – Industrial Development and Market Integration of the Revised RISDP (2015-2020), in order to ensure that, at the current stage of integration in SADC, industrialisation is prioritised. As you are aware, the finalisation of the RISDP review has been an item on our agenda for quiet sometime. I am hopeful that following our deliberations, Council would be able to recommend the revised RISDP to Summit for adoption.

Honourable Ministers,

We are meeting here in Harare on the eve of the launching of the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA), as well as the negotiations for the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA). We remain alive to the realisation that we

can only derive more benefits from the expanded market by developing and strengthening our own industries. Without beneficiation and value addition to our products, trade liberalisation would only serve to perpetuate unsustainable trade imbalances.

Honourable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Allow me to conclude my remarks by thanking the Ministerial Task Force on Regional Economic Integration for developing the Draft Strategy and Roadmap that is before us today. I would also like to recognise the pivotal role played by UNECA and our cooperating partners in supporting this process. My gratitude also goes to the Standing Committee of Senior Officials for their sterling work in preparing for this meeting. Let me take this opportunity to commend the SADC Executive Secretary and her team for working tirelessly to prepare and present the reports and related documents in a timely manner in spite of the odds heavily weighted against them by the very tight time frames.

Last but not least, I also recognise the remarkable team of experts that worked day and night on the Draft Strategy and Roadmap, which, notwithstanding the many challenges it encountered, was able to deliver on time, thus making it possible for this Executive Council to execute its mandate in this Extraordinary meeting.

Honourable Ministers,

It is my honour to declare officially open this Extraordinary Meeting of the Executive Council and wish you fruitful deliberations.

I thank you.