



**Statement by His Excellency**

**Armando Emillio Guebuza**

**President of**

**the Republic of Mozambique**

**On the Occasion of EU - Africa Summit  
Deliberations**

**Brussels, Belgium, 3 April 2014**

## **SALUTATIONS.....**

### ***Chairperson,***

It is with profound honour, gratitude and humility, that I take to the podium, to address this august EU – Africa Summit on behalf of my Colleagues, the Heads of States and Government of the Southern African Development Community. I am elated Chairperson, to be associated with the deliberations of this milestone event. I bring you greetings and best wishes from the people of Southern Africa, who are looking forward to the positive outcomes and ensuing collaborative action between Africa and the European Union post this event. The Southern African Development Community's (SADC) vision is one of a common future that will ensure economic well-being, improvement of the standards of living and quality of life, freedom and social justice, and peace and security for all the peoples of Southern Africa. I would like to share with you on this occasion, some perspectives around Higher Education and also the all important subject of Nutrition, based on the SADC experience, from which there are many lessons learnt.

We firmly believe that education is the foundation of human capital, and will continue to shape the progress of mankind for years to come. The provision of education and training in the SADC Member States is underpinned by the SADC Protocol on Education and Training, which is guided by the provisions of Article 2 of the Protocol, which seek to promote the gradual implementation of equivalence, harmonisation, and standardisation of education and training systems. Coupled with these initiatives, the region is engaging on the establishment and promotion of regional Centres of Specialisation and Centres of Excellence, which we believe is a major instrument for providing efficient and effective education, training and research in the Region.

### ***Your Excellencies;***

In the area of higher education, SADC Member States are undertaking a number of reforms to address issues of access, gender disparities and responsiveness of higher education to socio-economic development. Our efforts continue to border around policy implementation pertaining to quality assurance systems, mobility of students and related factors (especially lecturers), expansion of universities and reorganisation of higher education in general. We have hitherto worked on establishing a regionally harmonised regulatory framework for higher education to ensure our capacity to enforce quality standards to prescribed international benchmarks. Already, the region has created national and regional higher education funds through, among others, public – private partnerships, as well as promotion of social responsibility. In addition, the SADC Region conducted an assessment of cost barriers to access to higher education and student mobility in the region. The findings indicate that the SADC Member States have a high outbound mobility rate and that much of the student mobility is within the region. South Africa

hosts nearly half of the mobile students from the SADC region; and worldwide South Africa is ranked as the 11th largest in terms of host countries.

***Chairperson;***

In our efforts to promote higher education, SADC has agreed on some key policy priorities which include measures to enhance access and participation rates, quality and relevance, enhanced funding for education infrastructure, monitoring and evaluation measures. This has been made possible through Open and Distance Learning, training in local languages, establishment of a budgetary allocation threshold for higher education within the recommended 6% GDP for investment in education; promotion of appropriate use of ICT in teaching and learning to increase knowledge creation and development in higher education, establishment of a regional clearing house of higher education qualifications to promote portability of qualifications and to develop, review and maintain quality standards in higher education, as well as accreditation of qualifications. A SADC Regional Qualifications Framework Concept Document has been developed, and outlines the key components of a Regional Qualifications Framework consisting of 10 levels with descriptors, a qualifications portal and quality assurance guideline. This initiative is in line with the continental Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees and other Academic Qualifications in Higher Education in African States, which was revised in 2010 and adopted in Africa in May 2011.

***Your Excellencies,***

We firmly believe that education and training is central in uplifting the quality of lives of our people, and we continue to condemn ignorance as an unwanted and unwelcome disease. In our efforts to empower women within the framework of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, priority is being given to removal of bottlenecks for women to access education and training, as we believe that such an initiative is the most powerful tool to address gender disparities in the long term. We continue to provide support to vulnerable learners as well as enhance their progression to higher levels. In terms of relevance, we continue to focus on disciplines and curricula that continue to experience demand in our labour markets. We invite the European Union and rest of the global community to join us in our profound efforts to ensure adequate facilities and resources remain at the disposal of women tenable at local and overseas institutions.

***Your Excellencies, My Dearest Colleagues;***

The issue of nutrition continues to touch our hearts as Heads of States and Governments of SADC. We remain guided by the SADC Protocol on Health and the Dar es Salaam Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security, which was signed by the SADC Heads of States in May, 2004, in the United Republic of Tanzania. The SADC Programme of Action, takes on board the key tenets and provisions of the above statutes, which we believe underpin our consensus on delivering quality nutrition to all our people. Within the continental framework, SADC has worked closely with the African Union

Commission, NEPAD and other Regional Economic Communities, through the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP), which sought to integrate nutrition in National Agricultural and Food Security Investment Plans, and also seeks to place nutrition at the core of agricultural strategies and programmes in our region.

It is also noteworthy, that the SADC Health Sector Policy Framework on Food and Nutrition also laid out key objectives which included:

- Improvement of food security and nutrition,
- undertaking capacity building in the area,
- promote breastfeeding for at least four to six months,
- develop a nutrition data base and research with regular updates on nutrition in the Region,
- develop an integrated Plan of Action on food security and nutrition, based on multi-sectoral collaboration (sectors and stakeholders) at regional and national levels.

Sadly, our challenges we confront today, have resulted in Sub-Saharan Africa having the highest rates of child mortality, where 1 in 8 children die before the age 5, more than 17 times the average for developed regions (1 in 143).. Chairperson, this cannot be acceptable, and calls for urgent mitigations.

As SADC, our ongoing efforts seek to facilitate:

- adherence to International food safety norms and standards for easy movement of food within the region;
- provide mechanisms to strengthen nutrition surveillance, and regional early warning systems; and
- to monitor and evaluate progress towards implementation of the nutrition enhancement initiatives.

### ***Distinguished Delegates;***

As SADC we remain concerned with food borne diseases to pregnant women, which can also have serious and even fatal consequences for the fetus and the new-born child. We need to ensure the local availability, safety, affordability and accessibility of foods. However, local shops in poorer neighbourhoods in our region are often over-priced and low on choice and quality. In many cases, the quality and safety of water is not always guaranteed, requiring our collective action.

To date, we are seeking to improve malnutrition in children under 5 years in SADC to above the current 26%, based on which 30% of the children are under-weight. Without doubt, the majority of the victims of malnutrition in our region are the poor, the elderly, the sick, orphans, children and unfortunately women, given the gender dimension of this phenomenon. We firmly believe

that the responsibility to address this challenge lies squarely on government, none state actors and all other stakeholders, who should work together within the framework of integrated action, based on the adopted continental and regional programmes, as well as national road maps.

We acknowledge that the main indicators of food insecurity include food accessibility (quality and quantity), diversity and utilisation. In the SADC region, the common challenges with nutrition entail protein energy malnutrition, micro-nutrition deficiencies and diet related communicable diseases arising from inadequate food intake, inadequate child and maternal child caring practices, and the pre-disposing diseases like TB and HIV/AIDS. In our efforts to address these challenges, the region as alluded earlier, promotes excessive breast feeding in the first six months of livelihood, followed by the introduction of complimentary food at six months, with continued breast feeding up to two years, of course depending on personal professional and other exigencies of the mothers.

### ***Your Excellencies;***

In an effort to address the challenges of nutrition, our region has made a deliberate effort to put into place a number of strategies, which include:

- Instituting Vulnerable Groups Feeding Schemes;
- Feeding Programmes for Children Under 5 Years;
- Orphan Care Feeding Programmes;
- Community Based Care Feeding Programmes for the terminally ILL;
- Primary School Feeding Programmes; and
- Old Age Pension Schemes, to mention but a few.

As far back as 1998, assisted by FAO, SADC concluded a Regional Food Security and Nutrition Information System, which project identified institutional linkages and a framework for data collection within the nutrition information system. As a result, in the SADC region, it has become important that nutrition interventions are planned, budgeted for and implemented as an integral part of the National Agricultural Annual Plans.

In 2012, SADC and WFP signed a landmark agreement to work together to fight food insecurity and malnutrition in all its Member States. This provided SADC with access to a range of specialised foods to improve the nutritional intake of the people to be assisted. This included Fortified Blended Foods, Ready for Use Foods and High Energy Biscuits. Sustainability of these initiatives remains our primary concern.

### ***My Dearest Colleagues;***

As SADC, our objective is to ensure access to safe and adequate food at all times. We have also recognised that poverty, drought and chronic diseases can result in food system failures or even chronically inadequate nutrition, and based on which food security constitutes a top priority in Southern Africa, as espoused by the Dar es Salaam Declaration on Agriculture and Food

Security. We believe food security and nutrition are not only a moral right, but are a matter of pride and dignity for our region, and indeed for Africa as a whole. Our efforts will continue to be underpinned by the quest for sustainable food security, food access, nutritional value and safety to consumers going forward.

As part of our response strategy, we have also developed a framework for Nutrition and HIV/AIDS, whose objective is to ensure that nutrition plays a pivotal role in inspiring the health of people living with HIV and AIDS. This entails supplements, enforcement of a regionally harmonised regulatory framework, guiding the use of food supplements and therapies approved on science based evidence in respect of benefits of such supplements to nutrition.

***Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen;***

Going forward, our resolve as a region, working with continental and global partners, is to ensure that enhancement of nutrition especially for children and mothers must be the basis of Primary Health Care. There is a need to invest in nutritional growth and monitoring if we are to reverse the adversities of this challenge. It is critical that we maintain our efforts to mitigate this phenomenon at all costs.

Finally, allow me to pay tribute to the European Union, for all the support we have received through the sound EU – Africa and EU - SADC relations and cooperation. No doubt, these are two continents with a common destiny. I wish to encourage your good selves as the EU, to continue working together with the African nations, to develop our regions on a win win basis.

With these remarks, I thank you Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, ladies and Gentlemen. Long live the EU – Africa Relation, a People to People Cooperation.