



**MEDIA STATEMENT ON THE MEETING OF SADC MINISTERS  
RESPONSIBLE FOR COMMUNICATIONS, ICT AND POSTAL  
SERVICES  
WALVIS BAY, NAMIBIA  
26<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2015**

The Meeting of SADC Ministers responsible for Communications, ICT and Postal Services was convened from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> June 2015 in Walvis Bay, Namibia. The meeting was hosted by the Ministry of Information, Communications and Technology (MICT) of the Republic of Namibia. The Meeting was officially opened by Honourable Tjekero Tweya, Minister for ICT of the Republic of Namibia and was attended by Honourable Ministers from SADC Member States.

The welcome remarks were done by Erongo Governor, Honourable Cleophas Mutjavikua, who said he was happy to welcome delegates to the Erongo Region, and urged delegates to explore the scenery in Erongo region. He said it is time for the region to overcome the developed world. He said bottlenecks such as roaming must be dealt with by moving towards the same tariff level within the region. He said digitalization plays an important role in the lives of the people. He said natural resources are in abundance within SADC but the Region does not exploit them and establish manufacturing facilities. Instead of the region sending raw material abroad where employment are created using the same raw materials from the region. He said the Region has to move towards manufacturing in order to create jobs, particularly that there is expertise within the region.

The representative of the SADC Executive Secretary and Director of Infrastructure and Services, Mr. Remigious Makumbe expressed gratitude to the Government and People of Namibia for agreeing to host this important SADC Meeting of Ministers responsible for Communications, ICT and Postal Services as well as the 9<sup>th</sup> SADC Digital Broadcasting Migration Forum, but also for the warm welcome upon arrival of delegates in Walvis Bay and the excellent facilities that have been made available to the delegates. He noted that the meeting shall allow Honourable Ministers to take stock of progress achieved with various strategies, programmes under implementation within the Communications, ICT and Postal services sector. He mentioned Review of the Status of Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) Migration bearing in mind that the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Analogue Switch Off (ASO) date elapsed on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2015, Status of implementation of the SADC Home and Away Roaming (SHAR), Status of deployment of ICT infrastructure within the framework of the Digital SADC 2027, Implementation of the SADC Postal Strategy and the Status of our collective engagement at continental and global for a within the context of ATU, PAPU, ITU and UPU.

He paid tribute to the Honourable Ministers for their continued guidance in relation to implementation of the Communications, ICT and Postal programmes. He also observed that the ITU ASO deadline had come and gone and four (4) Member States (Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia and the

United Republic of Tanzania) have managed to meet the deadline. These, he said, deserve special commendation. He acknowledged that all Member States worked tirelessly in an effort to meet the deadline. He further said the situation on the ground suggests considerable achievement has been made for the SADC Region. He said SADC has a much greater success rate than elsewhere on the continent. This has been achieved because the Committee of Ministers opted for a collective approach and welcomed the fact that the region is addressing the critical issue of content in concurrent with DTT Migration based on which the SADC TV Bouquet has been piloted.

In his remarks, Honourable Supa Mandiwanzira, Minister of ICTs, Postal and Courier Services of Zimbabwe said that he was happy to note the overwhelming attendance to this meeting. The Honourable Minister reiterated that ICT are key enablers for achieving economic growth, environmental balance and social inclusion and that ICT facilitate the delivery of information and services across all sectors of the economy within and across Member States. He said ICT cannot be ignored as a tool for fostering fruitful and sustainable economic cooperation within and outside the SADC Region. He reiterated that it is in the interest of all at individual, National and Regional levels to build stronger Regional ties in all sectors to move with increased speed and momentum.

The Honourable Minister noted that it is their duty to do more to ensure full Regional Integration through harmonized development of ICT aimed at attaining universal access to Member States and ensuring affordable, reliable and secure broadband connectivity across the Region including rural areas and landlocked Member States.

The Honourable Minister reminded the meeting of some of the objectives of the meeting; that of taking stock, brainstorm and map the way forward in the efforts towards attaining of Digital SADC 2027 Goal. He said as Ministers responsible for Communications, ICT and Postal Services, they are going to make important decisions towards attaining the BIG but attainable goals. He urged fellow Ministers to milestone decisions on the Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan (RIDMP), the SADC TV Bouquet, SADC Roadmap on Digital Broadcasting Migration, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on cross Border Frequency Coordination, Regional and National integration of Broadband Networks, SADC Conformity and Interoperability (C&I) Test centers, Postal and regulations amongst others. At the end of the meeting a SADC Regional Digital Agenda will be set for the next twelve months. He pleaded with all to make a commitment to move from strategy to action so that the desired results can be realized for the sake of underserved sections of society.

The Honourable Minister implored all to rise above mediocrity and inaction and emerge out of the next cycle having implemented the decisions and achieve milestones. He concluded his remarks by congratulating all SADC Member States for moving into action on the DTT Migration Project.

In his keynote address, Honourable Minister Tjekero Tweya, Minister for Information, Communications and Technology, said the meeting is convened at historic time as six years ago, 2009 in Swakopmund, ICT Ministers adopted a roadmap on Digital Broadcasting Migration. He noted with pride that Namibia has been part of the journey and has successfully switched off analogue Television Broadcasting and met the ITU ASO deadline of 17<sup>th</sup> June 2015. The Honourable Minister also congratulated other SADC Member States of Malawi, Mauritius and the United Republic of Tanzania who also made it in time. He observed that availability of appropriate content is one of the immediate challenges. He noted that the Region is looking at filling the gap through SADC TV Bouquet. He announced that Namibia is ready to host the SADC TV Bouquet.

The Honourable Minister noted that for complete SADC integration some unfinished agenda has to be pursued. He further observed that the meeting must ensure access to affordable communications services through the SHAR initiative. He emphasized that the next Ministers'

meeting must receive progress results on tangible results. He also said the prerequisite for the success of SADC lies in unity of purpose and action. The Honourable Minister said the last insurance for peace, political stability and tangible economic prosperity for all is enshrined in unity.

The vote of thanks was delivered by the Honourable Tshenolo Mabeo, the Minister for Transport and Communications of Botswana. Honorable Minister Mabeo outlined the progress on a number of decisions that have been previously taken as Ministers for Communications, ICT and Postal Services. These included ICT Policy, standards and regulations, ICT Infrastructure development, Regional Postal services development; with specific discussions on development SADC Home and Away Roaming (SHAR) framework; Harmonized Frequency Allocation and Planning; implementation of the SADC Roadmap on Digital Broadcasting Migration; SADC TV Bouquet, Postal Financial Inclusion Guidelines for SADC and implementation status of the SADC Postal Strategy among others.

The Honourable Minister Mabeo congratulated those Member States that have made significant progress in the implementation of the Digital Migration, and implored the rest of the Member States to double their efforts to ensure successful implementation of Digital Migration sooner.

The Ministers' Meeting which was preceded by the Meeting of Senior Officials held from the 24<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>nd</sup> June 2015, was chaired by Dr. Engineer Samuel Kundishora, and was attended by delegates from twelve (12) SADC Member States, namely Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kingdom of Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Kingdom of Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The Meeting was also attended by the Director of Infrastructure and Services of the SADC Secretariat, Mr. Remigious Makumbe. In addition, the Executive Officers of SADC Implementing Agencies, namely CRASA, SAPOA and SATA were in attendance as well as representatives from the ITU and ATU.

The Meeting focused on the review of the implementation of the Ministers' decisions of the Ministers meeting convened in November last year in Mangochi, Malawi. The Meeting also facilitated fruitful policy dialogue which sought to ensure that the implementation of regional Communications, ICT and Postal Services Programmes contributed meaningfully to regional integration and socio-economic development. The Meeting deliberated over a number of issues and made a number of decisions including the following:

Ministers noted the formation of the CRASA Roaming Task Team (CRTT) and endorsed the Roadmap for the CRTT. The CRTT was formed to spearhead and monitor the implementation of SADC Roaming Glide paths.

Ministers considered and approved the SADC Roaming Policy Guidelines and SADC Model Roaming Regulations. Ministers re-affirmed their commitment to the implementation of the SHAR glide path, provided that the SHAR Roadmap remains on track.

Ministers considered and endorsed the revised SADC MOU on Cross Border Coordination that can be used by Member States in negotiations regarding cross border coordination of radiocommunications services and can also serve to the purpose of preventing harmful interference to the fixed and mobile services and optimizing the use of frequency spectrum.

Ministers urged Member States to consider resolving any outstanding cross border spillages, as a matter of urgency, in order to prevent harmful interference and to optimise the use of the frequency spectrum on the basis of mutual agreements.

Ministers urged Member States to ensure timely, proactively and transparent assignment of RF spectrum so as to support the on-going affordability initiatives, service universality especially for broadband and economic development.

Ministers considered and endorsed the SADC Harmonised Framework on Spectrum for Broadband Services.

Ministers considered and approved the Study Report and Recommendations on Co-Existence of Fixed Satellite Services (FSS) and Fixed Service (FS) in Ka-Band Study and approved the amendment of the SADC Frequency Allocation Plan (FAP) to conclude the co-allocation of the FSS and FS in the Ka-band.

Ministers endorsed the SADC Guideline for Development of National Broadband Plans.

Ministers considered and adopted a policy statement that seeks to meet the regional shared vision Digital SADC 2027 as well as a minimum set of targets (based on Connect 2020) for SADC Member States to strive to achieve by 2020.

For the purpose of defining broadband, SADC Members States should strive to set a minimum download speed of 512 kilobits per second (kbps) as an entry level, which shall be reviewed with an aim to set the entry level to 1 Megabit per second (Mbps) after two (2) years.

In order to provide enabling environments ensuring broadband access, all Member States were encouraged to have a National Broadband Policy/Plan/Strategy or include broadband in their universal access/service definition by 2017.

Ministers directed the SADC Secretariat to develop a SADC Roadmap for Broadband Implementation.

Ministers considered and endorsed the adoption of the ITU Guidelines on Child Online Protection (COP) targeting COP education and awareness-raising to children, parents and caregivers, industry and policymakers.

Ministers urged Member States to continue with their efforts to conclude the DTT Migration process as soon as possible considering that the deadline stipulated in the GE06 Agreement has passed.

Ministers urged the Member States to continue with their risk mitigation efforts relating to cross border frequency coordination in order to maintain good relations amongst Member States of SADC.

Ministers directed the SADC Secretariat to create a position of a Programme Officer for Broadcasting, Information dissemination and management of the related matters.

Ministers directed the SADC Secretariat in collaboration with SABA, to develop content classification document to establish the role the public broadcasters can play in developing regional and local content to also better understand the challenges faced by the public broadcasters when it comes to producing compelling and relevant content.

Ministers instructed the SADC Secretariat to implement the recommendations of the 9<sup>th</sup> SADC Digital Broadcasting Migration Forum.

Ministers directed the SADC Secretariat to conduct a comprehensive study on the Impact of DTT Migration in the Region in order to measure the success, identify the shortcoming in the implementation of the programme, lessons learnt which can shape other projects including

broadband and the effect the programme has attained in contributing towards the objective of regional integration.

Ministers urged Member States to consider allocating the Digital Dividend (DD) to International Mobile Telecommunication (IMT) thus giving the SADC Citizens multiple platforms to address the issue of cost to communicate and access to various available technologies.

Ministers directed SADC Secretariat to facilitate the setting up of the SADC ICT Think Tank comprising of policy, regulatory and technology professionals for the region in order to harness the skills available in the region outside the formal bodies in order for a non-aligned body which can produce relevant policy driven studies on the effects of technology to benefit the Citizens of SADC.

Ministers encouraged Member States, in collaboration with the SADC Secretariat and SADC Public Broadcasters, to pilot the SADC TV Bouquet.

Ministers considered and adopted the SADC Resolution on the Establishment of a SADC TV Bouquet.

Ministers urged Member States when implementing the SADC TV Bouquet to utilise domestic entities whose operations are based in the SADC region so as to support regional economic and skills development.

Ministers urged Member States to adopt the Radio Frequency (RF) exposure limits for mobile communications infrastructure and mobile devices such as the ICNIRP guidelines on limits for human exposure to EMF which are recommended by the ITU and World Health Organisation (WHO) to allow for improvement in QoS/QoE in utilisation of wireless technologies and provide confidence and trust in wireless technologies utilisation and adapt them to their own national requirements and conditions.

Ministers urged Member States to adopt international guidelines on measurements and numerical prediction of EMF for assessment of compliance with human exposure limits for wireless technologies installations.

Ministers urged Member States to review their policies and provide regulations that oblige wireless service providers and equipment manufacturers to comply with limits for human exposure to EMF.

Ministers urged Member States to bring together the relevant Government and public agencies, such as the Department of Health, Consumer Bodies etc, to provide consumer awareness and education on EMF-related matters.

Ministers urged Member States to submit to the SADC Secretariat their nominations for Focal Point for the Digital SADC 2027 ICT infrastructure projects before the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015.

Ministers endorsed the convening of a SADC ICT Expo (Investment Conference) before 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016, to further promote ICT infrastructure projects for both the RIDMP and the recently revised RIDSP to potential funders.

Ministers urged Member States to provide the relevant information on the missing ICT broadband links for the gap analysis.

Ministers urged Member States to submit to the SADC Secretariat their nominations to be part of the SADC Policy and Regulatory Framework Committee before the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015.

Ministers urged Member States to submit to the SADC Secretariat their nominations to be part of the SADC C&I Committee which will also comprise of SATA and CRASA before the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015.

Ministers urged Member States to encourage their Operators and Service Providers through their respective NRAs to keep SADC-to-SADC traffic within SADC utilizing the regional infrastructure and connectivity.

Ministers urged Member States to host their own National Infrastructure Database.

Ministers urged Member States to encourage all ICT Network Infrastructure Operators, including Rail and Power Utilities through their respective NRAs to upload their fibre optic infrastructure information and data to the Infrastructure Database.

Ministers directed the SADC Secretariat in collaboration with CRASA and SATA to promote the development of regional guidelines or policy and regulations that keep pace with innovation.

Ministers considered and approved the setting up of a small Group to draft and present a proposal to the ATU Executive Council for proportional representation by sub-region/REC for the elected ITU Council seats for the Africa region at the next SADC ICT SCOM meeting.

Ministers urged Member States to start indentifying their nominees for leadership positions in the next elections for continental and international organisations such as ATU, AUB, PAPU, UPU, ITU,

Ministers considered and approved the SADC Model Policy Guidelines on Postal Services for implementation.

Ministers considered and approved a new list of SADC Regional Priority Projects to be undertaken during the year 2016/2017 pertaining to Infrastructure Development, Policy and Regulatory Framework, Postal Operations and Regulation, Regional Coordination.

Ministers noted the presentation by Zimbabwe for their candidature nomination Dr. Cosmas Zavazara for the post of Director of Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) of the ITU and urged Member States to support him during the upcoming elections in Dubai at the ITU PP-18.

Ministers endorsed Swaziland as the host for the next ordinary meeting of Ministers during the period April – June 2016.

Ministers noted that the next SADC ICT SCOM will be convened in September 2015 in Zimbabwe

26<sup>th</sup> June 2015

Walvis Bay, Namibia