

## Visit by the SADC Chairperson, His Excellency Lt. Gen. Seretse Khama Ian Khama, the President of the Republic of Botswana

### TREE PLANTING CITATION

Your Excellency, your visit to the SADC Secretariat is a great honour and privilege to us. Your planting of this tree today signifies the value and importance that the region attaches to trees and nature conservation.

Trees have multiple functions, which include provision of ecological services, sustenance of livelihoods, and support to the tourism industry in the region.

Your Excellency, the tree you are planting today is scientifically called "*Trichilia Emetica*". Its common English name is "Natal Mahogany". It is locally known as mosikiri. It is indigenous to the SADC region. In Botswana, it is found in the Chobe district.

The tree is evergreen and ideal for planting as a shade tree around homesteads. It grows to a height of up to 30 metres.

This tree can be used as a source of timber, medicine and as an additive to food. The wood is an important source of timber for the rural carving industry in southern Africa. It is used for traditional carvings, musical instruments, furniture, boats and canoes.

The powder made from its bark is a popular remedy for stomach and intestinal ailments while the roots can be used for the treatment of fever and as a laxative. The oil from the seed is used as a skin moisturizer, for making soap and treatment for rheumatism.

The United Nations recognizes the global challenges to forest and nature conservation. In this regard, the United Nations at its General Assembly held in September 2015, adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which aim at lowering global poverty, hunger, inequality, and address environmental challenges. One of the goals is to "***Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss***", which is in line with this event.

Your Excellency, this tree is a living gift to SADC and a contribution towards attainment of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Its multiple characteristics symbolize the multiple benefits of

trees to the peoples of the world at large and to the SADC region in particular.

It is now my singular honour at this point to invite Your Excellency to plant the tree.

I THANK YOU, YOUR EXCELLENCY!!