



MEDIA STATEMENT

SADC Ministers for ICT, Information, Transport and Meteorology meet in the United Republic of Tanzania

20th September 2019 - The Ministers responsible for Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), Public Information, Transport and Meteorology from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) met on the 19th and 20th September 2019 in Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania, and deliberated on several issues of importance to the region in the four sectors in relation to Infrastructure in support of regional integration.

The meeting was hosted by the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, and was attended by Ministers or their representatives from Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The meeting was also attended by representatives from SADC partners and implementing agencies from the four sectors, and was preceded by meetings of Senior Officials from the ICT, Public Information, Transport and Meteorology sectors, and a SADC High Level Ministerial Round Table Dialogue on Innovative and Emerging High Capacity Broadband Access Technologies.

The High Level Ministerial Round which was held on the 19th of September 2019, under the theme, "*Emerging Technologies to Support SADC Regional Integration and Sustainable Industrial Development*", provided a platform for an interactive discussion on high impact infrastructure projects and technology-related-priority issues that the region need to immediately address.

Hon. Kassim Majaliwa Majaliwa, the Prime Minister of the United Republic of Tanzania, officially opened the meeting, and H.E Amb. Seif Ali Iddi, the second, Vice President of the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar closed. In his keynote address, Hon. Majaliwa highlighted that the government of the United Republic of Tanzania was committed to corporate and share experiences with other Member States in the region to make SADC an eminent body that plays an important role in enhancing social economic development of the citizens of all Member States.

The Minister of Works, Transport and Communication and Chairperson of the SADC Committee of Ministers for ICT, Information, Transport and Meteorology, Eng. Isack Kamwele said the Ministers have a critical role to play in ensuring that goals set by the regional body in developing infrastructure programmes were reached, and challenges faced by the four sectors of ICT, Information, Meteorology and Transport were addressed.

In her remarks, the SADC Secretariat Director of Infrastructure Ms Mapolao Mokoena presented an overview of the Secretariat's implementation of programmes in the revised Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2015-2020 to bridge the identified gaps, thereby unlocking the regional potentials in the areas of ICT, Information, Transport and Meteorology.

Ms Mokoena said it was important for SADC Member States to continuously embrace innovative and emerging technologies and explore new ways for SADC Governments to work more effectively and establish collaborations with the industries and the private sector to accelerate infrastructure development and regional integration.

The Ministers received reports on the implementation of decisions taken during the last sectoral ministerial meetings, provided guidance and approved several decisions to facilitate Infrastructure in support of regional integration and enhanced awareness and promotion of SADC Programmes.

In the ICT and Information Sectors, the Ministers approved the Multi-Stakeholder Intra-regional and Trade Facilitation Project which is aimed at promoting and facilitating the participation of Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) in the regional e-commerce ecosystem.

The Ministers urged Member States to provide access to their national public Television Channel via the Internet and mobile app to enhance information dissemination, and to consider ratifying the African Union Convention on Cyber Security and Personal Data Protection which has set out obligations for businesses and organisations that collect, process and store individuals' data.

The Ministers approved several frameworks and guidelines for implementation, which included the: SADC Mobile Broadband Gap Analysis Guidelines;

- Framework for Setting up the SADC Regional Computer Incident Response Team CIRT;
- Framework for SADC Shared Satellite Programme;
- Competition Assessment Framework for Communications Sector in SADC;
- SADC Universal Postal Service and Access Regulatory Guidelines;
- SADC Postal E-commerce and Trade Facilitation Guidelines.
- SADC Regional E-commerce Hub Framework; and
- Action Plan 2019 on SADC Women and Youth Empowerment in ICT.

In the Transport Sector, the Ministers reviewed progress on the implementation of SADC Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan and noted the completion of critical infrastructure such as the opening of the new Walvis Bay Container Terminal in Namibia, and associated Dry Ports, rehabilitation and upgrading of critical sections of the Regional Trunk Road Networks in most regional corridors and the One Stop Border Posts at Kazungula which links Botswana and Zambia, the Nakonde/Tunduma which links the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia and the Mwami/Mchinji which links Zambia and Malawi.

The Ministers:

- Expressed appreciation of the support rendered by regional institutions such as the African Development Bank and the Development Bank of Southern Africa towards infrastructure development and committed to enhance stakeholder engagement in infrastructure planning and financing.
- Emphasized the need for local solutions in equipment manufacture such as railway rolling stock and invited the international financing institutions to help finance local manufacture as part of simulating Africa's industrialization.
- Noted progress on the implementation of the Tripartite Transport and Transit Facilitation Programme (TTTFP) which is assisting Member States to harmonise road transport laws, policies, regulations, systems and standards, and approved their programmes. The TTTFP is a programme of the three RECs-COMESA, EAC and SADC, assisting with preparations of two Tripartite Agreements on Vehicle Load Management and Cross Boarder Road Transport and draft model laws to establish the legal and statutory basis for harmonization. The programme is in furtherance of the implementation of the Tripartite Free Trade Agreement under which there is a need to lower transport costs and reduce travel times in order to boost interregional trade. COMESA, EAC and SADC have agreed to jointly plan, coordinate and harmonise transport infrastructure and policy development.

In the Meteorology Sector, the Ministers urged Member States and Stakeholders to uptake the Southern African Regional Climate Outlook Forum (SARCOF) advisories, season early warning and advisories in decision-making and planning for multi-sectoral socio-economic development.

The Ministers directed the Secretariat to accelerate the process towards the designation of SADC Climate Services Centre as World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Regional Climate Centre, and urged Member States:

- That are not International Organization of Standardization (ISO) 9001-2015 compliant to take necessary actions to comply to avoid being flagged as high safety risk zones;
- To sign the Meteorological Association of Southern Africa (MASA) Constitution as soon as possible to ensure its sustainability and operationalization;
- To ratify the Minamata Convention on Mercury, formulate a regional project proposal that will ensure compliance to the convention, and to identify National Focal Points to facilitate the planning;

- To sign the African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology (AMCOMET) Constitution and begin paying the annual subscriptions in line with the provisions of the Constitution;
- To make full use of the WMO Regional Institutions to harmonise meteorological activities in the SADC Region.

The Ministers commended the United Republic of Tanzania for the manner in which the meetings were hosted, and resolved that the next sectoral meeting will be held in the Republic of Mozambique, in September 2020.

Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania, 20th September 2019