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Republic of Zambia

**DRAFT STATEMENT FOR POSSIBLE USE BY HON. JOSEPH MALANJI, M.P.,
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DURING THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE
MINISTERIAL SESSION OF THE SADC 21ST MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE OF THE
ORGAN (MCO) ON 19TH JULY, 2019.**

Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
July, 2019,
LUSAKA.

- HONOURABLE MINISTERS OF SADC MEMBER STATES;
- SERVICE CHIEFS;
- DR. STERGOMENA LAWRENCE TAX, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF SADC;
- YOUR EXCELLENCIES THE AMBASSADORS AND HIGH COMMISSIONERS ACCREDITED TO THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA;
- SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS;
- DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES;

It is a great pleasure to sincerely welcome you all to Lusaka. I feel deeply honoured and privileged to host the 21st Meeting of the Ministerial Committee of the Organ (MCO) on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation. I hope you will find time to enjoy the various sites of our vibrant city. I urge you all to feel at home and enjoy our modest hospitality in line with our true African spirit.

Distinguished Colleagues,

Zambia has been closely associated with SADC since its inception. Not only was Zambia the birth place of SADC, known then as the Southern Africa Development Coordination Conference, (SADCC), Zambia was also home to several Liberation Movements across the Region. Hosting this meeting therefore reinforces Zambia's traditional role as a strong advocate for peace and contributor to stability and security efforts in the region.

Distinguished Colleagues,

You will agree with me that the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation is an important institution of our Organization which seeks to promote peace and security and stability in our Region. I need not over-emphasise the importance we all attach to peace and security both in our respective countries and in the region. They are essential components needed to create an enabling environment for inter-state cooperation. This cooperation provides a platform for Member States to develop common policies and strategies aimed at fostering economic and social development within the SADC region.

Distinguished Colleagues,

As you are aware, Zambia assumed Chairmanship of the SADC Organ on Politics Defence and Security Cooperation in August, 2018. As Chair of the Organ, His Excellency Mr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu, President of the Republic of Zambia has continued to spearhead initiatives and programmes aimed at addressing challenges that could potentially threaten peace and security in the SADC region.

Since assuming Chair, Zambia has led Observation Missions to the recently held peaceful elections, in line with the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections, in the following countries; the Kingdom of eSwatini, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republics of Madagascar, South Africa and Malawi. I am confident that the remaining SADC Member States scheduled to hold elections

later in the year will proceed accordingly and ensure that political stability is maintained in the region.

In addition, Zambia has also led two (2) SADC initiatives aimed at bringing stability to the Kingdom of Lesotho. These initiatives include the deployment of the SADC Preventive Mission in the Kingdom of Lesotho (SAPMIL), whose mandate ended in November, 2018, and the SADC Oversight Committee. These initiatives worked in collaboration with the SADC Facilitation Team to achieve progress in the Kingdom of Lesotho.

Distinguished Colleagues,

I am delighted to note that our region has remained relatively stable and peaceful while promoting the shared values of peace, security, democracy and good governance among all Member States.

However, we remain alive to the emerging threats in the region such as terrorism, transnational organised crime and climate change. As you may be aware, terrorism instills fear and creates a sense of helplessness in people. It also results in, among others; injury, death, destruction of property and disruption to political systems.

The effects of the changing weather patterns have most recently brought severe flooding and drought situations in many of our countries. We, therefore, need to redouble our efforts in implementing the necessary measures to mitigate and adapt to the reality of climate change.

Distinguished Colleagues,

I hope this session will also have fruitful discussions on the way forward on initiatives to address Free Movement of Persons considering the fact that the region's potential to becoming an industrial hub lies in its ability to utilize its human resources.

As we begin the Ministerial Session, I wish to thank you for attending this important meeting of our region and encourage you all to actively participate. I am confident that our deliberations will be fruitful as we forge ahead on this important path of regional integration.

With these few words, I declare the 21st Session of the Ministerial Committee of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security, officially open.

Merci beaucoup!

Muito Obrigado!

Zikomo Kwambili!

I thank you!