



**Launch Ceremony for the
11TH EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENT FUND (EDF)
“SUPPORT TO PEACE AND SECURITY IN THE SADC REGION” PROGRAMME
Friday, 5th April, 2019
AVANI HOTEL Gaborone, Botswana**

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY MR. JORGE C. CARDOSO
DIRECTOR, ORGAN ON POLITICS, DEFENCE AND SECURITY
AFFAIRS**

Your Excellency, Ambassador Jan Sadek, Head of Delegation of the European Union to Botswana and SADC;

Your excellencies, Members of the Organ Troika

**Ambassadors and High Commissioners of SADC Countries to Botswana and
Ambassadors and Representatives of Foreign Missions to the Republic of
Botswana**

**Your Excellency, the United Nations Resident Coordinator in the Republic of
Botswana;**

Representatives of the Electoral Commissions Forum of SADC Countries;

Esteemed Presenters and Guests;

Members of the Media;

Bom dia; Good Morning; Bonjour; Dumelang.

On behalf of the Executive Secretary of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Dr Stergomena Lawrence Tax, I wish to extend the Secretariat's gratitude for your vivid and lively participation at this launch of the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) "Support to Peace and Security in the SADC Region Programme".

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you have heard from the presentations earlier today, the new Programme follows a number of co-operation initiatives between the European Union (EU) and SADC, of which the most recent was the Regional Political Co-operation (RPC) Programme which was nested in the 10th European Development Fund (EDF), ended in September 2018.

The '*Support to Peace and Security in the SADC region*' Programme builds upon the lessons learnt, challenges encountered, and indeed, opportunities identified under its predecessor, the RPC Programme, in aiming to strengthen SADC's capacity to meet the benchmarks in our Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO) as revised.

Let me take the opportunity to underline and re-emphasise the benefits that the region has gained from the technical and material support rendered by the EU through the RPC programme as clearly illustrated by the presentation made by my colleague, earlier:

- a) The support from the EU has assisted us to bolster our capacities as a Secretariat – enabling us to systematically build the requisite skills, tools, systems and knowledge bases that will no doubt strengthen our regional integration agenda as it relates to peace and security;
- b) At regional level, the RPC Programme has also enabled us to develop a specialised pool of mediators to the tune of 395 across the region many of whom are women; more than 1000 election observers, of whom more than 120 have been exposed to modern ICT technology of assessing the electoral cycle;
- c) in the thematic area of disaster risk reduction and management; and humanitarian affairs, through various partnerships the Programme, has enabled us to produce and institutionalise strategic policy documents such as the *Disaster Preparedness and Response Strategy and Fund*, which is also guiding the region in addressing the impact of the Cyclone Idai. Although the Fund is yet to be operationalized through the Regional Development Fund (RDF), its establishment will position the region to tap into its own resources with stronger coordinated approaches to calamities in the future. Allow me inform you that in the interim, efforts to alleviate the suffering of the populations in the three Countries (Mozambique; Malawi and Zimbabwe) are being done through SADC Contingency Fund, which has enabled to contribute with US\$ 500,000;
- d) you will agree with me that the issue of Human trafficking has become one of major challenges globally and certainly in the SADC region. Our awareness raising, capacity building and technical support to Member states through the RPC programme has contributed to the establishment of national action plans, databases, policies and legislation which will render it easier for us to identify, record and prosecute cases of *Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children*. In addition, the revision of the Strategic Plan of Action (SPA) with

contributions of the RPC, enjoins us to strengthen our means of prosecuting such crimes within our Member States

- e) Earlier this morning, you have also listened to presentations related to peace and security in the SADC region, focussing on the notion of Women, Peace and Security which flows from resolution 1325 of the UN Security Council (UNSC);

These few examples, clearly indicate the complexities of sustaining the peace and security and the multifaceted efforts required to develop effective mechanisms to address emerging challenges.

With the support of the EU, for which we are most grateful, SADC has been able to build these strategic policy instruments, training tools, and information management systems, in addition to instilling skills and capacities in Member States, that would enable us to address some of the key challenges highlighted today, in the near future.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

The RPC Programme built the foundation upon which we are now launching its successor programme namely, the *'Support to Peace and Security in the SADC region'*(SPSS).

The *'Support to Peace and Security in the SADC region'*(SPSS) programme will seek to strengthen national and regional infrastructure for peace, meaning we have to deepen and institutionalise internal capacities to respond to crisis within the Member States, while consolidating regional mechanisms. The Programme will leverage the skills, tools and strategic policy documents developed under RPC to ensure their practical application in the field, thereby assuring the region of continuity beyond the expiry of the programme in 2022.

In this regard, I wish to emphasise that SADC is committed to ensuring that there is continuity of these activities beyond the life of ICP programming. It is therefore

important to note that that the SADC Secretariat absorbed a number of strategic positions from the RPC programme into the revised structure of the SADC Secretariat as part of its sustainability strategy. These positions, which include portfolios on *elections and governance, mediation, disaster risk reduction and human security*, previously supported by the EU, are now fully funded by Member States. To give an illustration, the RPC programme at its onset had 17 staff funded under the programme. The staff complement of the SPSS stands at 04 programme staff. The RPC programme not only increased capacity of staff, but also promoted sustainability of operations in the SADC Secretariat.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

In closing, let me acknowledge the invaluable insights you have provided regarding the future direction of the interventions in the peace and security framework of this region, through your various contributions.

On behalf of the Secretariat, I assure you that your insights will assist us to deliver on the critical expectations of the on-going EU-SADC co-operation.

With this commitment, it is my honour and privilege, on behalf of the Executive Secretary Dr Stergomona Lawrence Tax, to declare the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) *“Support to Peace and Security in the SADC Region Programme”* officially, launched.

I thank you.