



REMARKS

BY

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SADC STANDBY FORCE COS**

DURING

THE OFFICIAL OPENING

FOR EXERCISE UMODZI

SALIMA, MALAWI

07 OCTOBER 2018

The Guest of Honour

The Commander of the Malawi Armed Forces, General Supini Phiri,

The Exercise Director, Major General Mhone;

The Head of Mission and all Exercise UMODZI participants,

General Officers, Commissioners and Senior Officials here present,

Exercise Mentors and Evaluators,

SADC Secretariat Staff

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning to you all,

Allow me programme Director to begin by thanking on behalf of the Executive Secretary of SADC, Dr Stergomena Lawrence Tax, all SADC Member States for coming to participate in the SADC Command Post Exercise, Exercise Umodzi 2018, that has been organized as part of **Force Preparation** for the SADC Standby Force. Let me also convey particular appreciation to our host, the Republic of Malawi for accepting to host the SADC 2018 CPX and for the warm reception and hospitality extended to all the member states who are participating in Exercise UMODZI.

Guest of honour, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, allow me to also acknowledge the positive response displayed by member states through the level of participation across the Components, during this exercise which is indicative of the commitment they ascribe to conflict resolution initiatives, and

the strong desire to see the successful attainment of the envisioned Exercise UMODZI objectives.

Accordingly, Exercise Umodzi is being conducted in order to enhance the Full Operational Capability (FOC) of the SADC Standby Force so that it is better ready to conduct peace support operations within and without the SADC region. The exercise is also conducted with a view to make the region ready to assume the African Union Roster duties for the provision of peace support capabilities beginning January 2019, within the framework of the African Standby Force (ASF), and under the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). In doing so, the preparedness of the SADC Standby Force would allow it to effectively assume the continental Rapid Deployment Capability (RDC) role for peace support operations as envisioned by the declaration of the 9th AU Special Technical Committee on Defence, Safety and Security on 4th June 2016.

In the same way, as we undertake efforts to enhance the Full Operational Capability of the SADC Standby Force, in this case, through the successful conduct of Exercise Umodzi, it is our hope that, the net effect of the gains realized will subsequently add towards a heightened conflict resolution capability status for the SADC Region and indeed the entire African continent. In effect, this invariably speaks to the partial fulfilment of **Aspiration 4, of the African Union Agenda 2063** –that Aspires for a **“Peaceful and Secure Africa”**, in which one of its core values is; **“Silencing the Guns in Africa by the year 2020”**.

Guest of honour, ladies and gentlemen, the conduct of Exercise Umodzi began on 17th September 2018 at the SADC Headquarters in Gaborone, Botswana with the issue of the **Mission Mandate and Directives** to the Senior Mission Leadership of this mission. In that regard, Her Excellency the Executive Secretary of SADC, Dr Stergomena Lawrence-Tax, took the opportunity in accordance with **Article 11** of the SADC Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, relating to “**Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution**”, to issue the mission mandating documents to Mrs Eunice Luambia, the Head of Mission for this exercise, together with her fellow Senior Mission Leaders in preparation for them assuming the role of the mission leadership for the conduct of the **African Union Mission in Kunta (AMIK)** as Exercise Umodzi is also known. In a similar vein, Her Excellency also gave an encouraging message wherein she looked forward to the successful execution of this mission.

Accordingly, the Exercise, which is being conducted under the strategic Theme of “**Africa for Peace and Prosperity**”, “**A4P2**”, is designed to practice the mandating process for a PSO mission; test and harmonize the existing SADC Standby Force doctrine and Standard Operating Procedures for Peace Support Operations; to practice the Integrated Mission Planning Process (IMPP); and Civil Military Cooperation in Peace Support Operations. Therefore, it is our sincere hope that after the Exercise you will be able to pinpoint the shortcomings and gaps that need to be looked at and improved on in order to make the SADC Standby Force mission ready, and continue to be a viable part of the regions conflict resolution architecture.

In this connection, noting the spirit of the SADC Treaty, and the Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, I wish to note that Peace and Security remains one of the indispensable ingredients for sustainable socio-economic development of the region, and In this regard, a credible conflict resolution mechanism in the form of an effective and professional SADC Standby Force is a **“quid pro qua” for SADC’s prosperity.**

Distinguished participants, Ladies and Gentlemen

Without taking much time, let me once again take this opportunity to urge all exercise players to apply your knowledge and experiences during the conduct of the exercise in order that all may derive maximum benefit from the Exercise play, and to objectively test yourselves on the level of readiness of the SADC Standby Force. Likewise, in closing, may I wish the Head of Mission and all Exercise players, the successful conduct of Exercise UMODZI.

With these few remarks, I wish you all the best.

I thank you