

Your Excellency Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, President of the Republic of Mozambique, and Chairperson of SADC and our host

Your Excellency Dr. Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera, President of the Republic of Malawi an In-coming Chairperson of SADC.

Your Excellency Hussein Ali Mwinyi, president of the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, representing H.E. Samia Suluhu Hassan, Outgoing Chairperson of SADC.

Your Excellency, Dr. Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi, President of the Republic of Botswana, and Chairperson of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation

Your Excellency, Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa, and Incoming Chairperson of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation

Your Excellency, Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa, and President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, and Outgoing Chairperson of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation

Distinguished Senior officials and SADC Secretariat Staff;

Members of the Media;

Allow me to begin by expressing our gratitude to HE. Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, and the Government of the Republic of Mozambique for convening and hosting this Summit of SADC Troika and Organ Troika to assess progress in the implementation of SADC regional integration and development agenda. The meeting will deliberate on a number of critical issues, including efforts in addressing terrorism in the region, SADC Regional Response to Disasters and Risks Management and efforts in addressing COVI-19 and mitigating its impacts.

In the midst of the second wave of the COVID-19, the region was hit by another disaster on Saturday, the 22nd May 2021, with a volcanic eruption .on Mount Nyiragongo in the City of Goma in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The eruption resulted in the displacement of thousands of people and has destroyed property. May I express our sympathy to the Government and people of the Democratic Republic of Congo, and commend the government of the Democratic Republic of Congo for

measures taken, and thank local and international organisations that are working with the government in supporting the affected communities.

Your Excellencies

The region continues to experience frequent disasters and extreme weather events including heavy rains and flooding with increasing frequency and severity, compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic. These have affected the socio-economic wellbeing, and deepened vulnerabilities of communities, thereby further weakening capacities to respond to such recurrent events. The projections are that these disasters are likely to increase in severity and frequency in the sub-Saharan Africa, which highlights the need for the region to put in place adequate measures to increase adaptive capacities and the resilience of our communities and people, as well as preparedness and response measures.

Your Summit today will note the efforts being made by region to enhance collective action in addressing such disasters including the establishment and operationalisation of the SADC Humanitarian and Emergency Operations Centre to be hosted by Mozambique, which will be responsible for coordination of disaster response. Once operationalised, it will enhance the region's capacity to prepare and respond to disasters. Allow me to express our gratitude to the Republic of Mozambique for her commitment to host the SADC Humanitarian and Emergency Operations Centre.

I am optimistic that with our collaborative efforts and commitment, and in line with the measures being operationalised, the region will be able to alleviate the suffering of those affected by these natural disasters, minimize the loss of lives and disruption of livelihoods and damage to socio-economic infrastructure.

Your Excellencies

Under your leadership, the region developed the SADC Vision 2050 and the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP 2020-2030) which were both approved by the last Summit in August 2020 under the Chairpersonship of Mozambique. The SADC Vision 2050 sets out the strategic direction for the region for the next years envisioning a peaceful, inclusive, middle to high income industrialised region, where all citizens enjoy sustainable economic well-being, justice and freedom by 2050. The RISDP 2020-2030 implements the Vision through three interrelated pillars

namely: Industrialization and Market integration; Infrastructure Development in support of regional integration; and Social and Human Development; and supported by cross cutting issues – gender, climate change, disaster risk management. An action plan for the implementation of the RISDP 2022-2030, which includes disaster risk management has been finalized.

As I conclude, allow me to thank H.E Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, President of the Republic of Mozambique, and Chairperson of SADC for his continued guidance and leadership in the discharge of SADC regional integration agenda.

**Thank you very much. Merci beaucoup. Muito obrigada.
Asante Sana.**