



POST- COUNCIL MEDIA BRIEFING

BY

**HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE HLANGUSEMPHI MINISTER OF
ECONOMIC PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF
SWAZILAND AND**

CHAIRPERSON OF THE SADC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

ROYAL SWAZI HOTEL

SWAZILAND

16th MARCH 2017

Distinguished members of the Press, good evening, and welcome to the Media briefing on the outcomes of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Council of Ministers that was held on Thursday and Friday, the 16th and 17th of March 2017 here at Royal Swazi Hotel in Ezulwini, Kingdom of Swaziland to prepare for the Extraordinary Summit of SADC Heads of States and Government that will take place on the 18th March 2017 at Lozitha Palace (Mandvulo) Swaziland.

The Council of Ministers was preceded by the meetings of Senior Officials of the Ministerial Task Force on Regional Economic Integration; the Finance Committee; the Standing Committee of Senior Officials; the Ministers of Justice; the Ministerial Task Force on Regional Economic Integration and the Ministerial Retreat from the 6th to the 14th of March 2017 here in the Kingdom of Swaziland.

Council received the Annual Performance Report of the SADC Secretariat covering the implementation of the approved Corporate Plans for 2016/2017, and approved the SADC Secretariat's Corporate Plans for 2017/2018 with an estimated expenditure of US\$71.195 million.

Council received the Draft Costed Action Plan of the SADC Industrialization Strategy and Roadmap 2015-2063 and recommended it for approval by the Extraordinary Summit.

Council requested SADC Member States to determine and provide national indicative public coordination costs once the Costed Action Plan is approved by Summit; and directed the Secretariat to support Member States who may need assistance in determining national indicative public coordination costs for the Costed Action Plan.

Council also reviewed the status of economic integration at the Tripartite and Continental levels. Specifically, the status of implementation of the Tripartite Free Trade Area Agreement and preparatory work on the commencement of the Continental Free Trade Area negotiations. Council urged Member States to expedite implementation of outstanding activities of the Tripartite Free Trade Area Agreement; and directed the Secretariat to report status of implementation of outstanding activities of the Tripartite Free Trade Area Agreement at its next meeting.

Council received resolutions from the special Strategic Ministerial Retreat on Regional Integration which was held on the 13th-14th March 2017 under the Theme; '*The SADC we want*' and recommended for Summit approval. Council noted that the Strategic Ministerial Retreat on the Regional Integration to take stock of what SADC has achieved since its establishment in 1980, the challenges it was facing and what needed to be done to accelerate the pace and level of the SADC integration agenda.

Council also directed the Secretariat to, among others:

- develop effective compliance, monitoring and assurance mechanisms to track progress in implementation of SADC programmes and compliance to Protocols and legal instruments including drawing lessons from the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM);
- prioritise SADC programmes by focusing on infrastructure development, industrialization and market integration, with peace and security as a prerequisite for economic development. In so doing, observe the principles of subsidiarity and additionality and develop an engagement mechanism to strengthen participation of the private sector at all levels;

On the operationalisation of the 36th Summit Theme: ***“Resource Mobilisation for Investment in Sustainable Energy Infrastructure for an Inclusive SADC Industrialisation and for the Prosperity of the Region”***, Council noted progress and directed the working group developing the SADC Resource Mobilisation Framework to finalise the Framework and submit it for consideration at its meeting in August 2017.

Council also approved the convening of a High-Level Ministerial Workshop and Regional Investors Conference on Regional Energy Projects to showcase investment opportunities in the energy sector, and directed the Secretariat to report progress.

On the operationalisation of the SADC University of Transformation Council noted progress made, which included a development of a Concept Note and Roadmap which will be considered by the SADC Technical Committee on Higher Education and Training, Research and Development in March 2017 for recommendation to the SADC Ministers responsible for Education and Training in June 2017 and subsequent submission to Council in August 2017 for approval.

Council approved operationalisation of the SADC Administrative Tribunal (SADCAT) and appointed the seven (7) recommended candidates for the positions of Judges of the SADC Administrative Tribunal (SADCAT) from: Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Members of Media, as you are aware, our region launched a Regional Humanitarian Appeal in July 2016 and on this regard, Council noted that since the launch of the Humanitarian Appeal, an amount of about U\$979 million of which U\$222million came from Member States and U\$757 million from the international community, representing 34% of the required amount of US\$2.9 billion has been raised.

Council noted that all Member States that have been negatively affected by the El-Niño-induced disaster made various interventions using their resources to support affected populations. The interventions included, among others, humanitarian food, water, health and agricultural inputs.

Council noted the outbreak of Fall Armyworm in the SADC Region, which has affected a number of countries including Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, Swaziland, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The Fall Armyworm has potential to devastate livelihoods and food security as it can affect a wide range of plant species, some of which are the main staple food and cash crops.

Council urged Member States to improve coordination and collaboration efforts to promote a harmonised approach in the management of the Fall Armyworm; monitor and timeously disseminate information about crop pests in a manner that is understandable to farmers and other stakeholders for appropriate actions.

Council endorsed the Regional Agricultural Investment Plan, 2017 – 2022 that operationalises the Regional Agricultural Policy with the aim of guiding, promoting and supporting agricultural actions at regional and national levels in contribution to regional integration and attainment of the SADC Common Agenda.

Council urged Member States supported by the Secretariat to urgently operationalise regional disaster preparedness and response mechanisms and recommended to Summit for Ministers of Finance and Investment supported by Ministers responsible for Disaster Management to urgently finalise preparations and operationalisation of the Regional Disaster Preparedness and Response Fund.

Members of the Media, this summarises the issues that Council deliberated on.

I thank you for your attention, and we are here to take any questions on the issues raised in this brief.

