



**STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE SADC ORGAN
ON POLITICS, DEFENCE AND SECURITY COOPERATION,
HIS EXCELLENCY MOKGWEETSI E. K. MASISI, ON THE
KILLING OF THE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR TO DRC**

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has learnt with dismay the sad news of the killing of the His Excellency Luca Attanasio, Ambassador of Italy to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), his Bodyguard, and Driver, on 22 February 2021, near Goma, in the DRC's Northern Kivu Province.

What is even more troubling is that the Ambassador was on a mission to assist the local communities in the DRC. SADC condemns in the strongest possible terms this barbaric and heinous act of cowardice. It is our fervent hope that the perpetrators will be quickly arrested and brought to justice.

We wish to express our heartfelt condolences and sympathies to the Governments of the DRC and Italy on the untimely demise of their loved ones.

There is no doubt that this unfortunate development is a serious setback to the ongoing efforts to restore normalcy in the Eastern part of the DRC. It threatens not only the peace and stability in the DRC, but also the region as a whole. It also calls for a thorough assessment of the security situation in that part of the DRC, as the United Nations Mission is working on its withdrawal process from the country.

SADC wishes to reassure the people of DRC, and the international community that it remains seized with the situation in the Eastern part of the DRC, in partnership with the Government of the DRC and the United Nations, in the efforts to bring about lasting peace and security in the country.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Masisi', is positioned above the printed name of the chairperson.

Dr. Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi
Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics,
Defence and Security Cooperation

GABORONE, BOTSWANA
23 FEBRUARY 2021