



**SPEECH BY DEPUTY MINISTER FOR
EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

HONOURABLE CHIKUMBUTSO HIWA

REPUBLIC OF MALAWI

**ON THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE
MEETING OF SADC MINISTERS OF
EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

MAPUTO, MOZAMBIQUE, 19 – 20 SEPTEMBER 2013

Director of ceremony,

**Honourable Augusto Jone Luís, Minister of Education of the
Republic of Mozambique,**

**Honourable Ministers and Deputy Ministers of Education and
Training of the SADC Member States**

Senior Government Officials from SADC Members Countries;

Representative from the African Union Commission

Representatives from UNESCO

International Labour Organisation

Members of the Diplomatic Corps

Distinguished Invited Guests

Members of the Press

Ladies and Gentlemen

I FEEL GREATLY HONOURED TO BE HERE WITH YOU THIS MORNING TO OFFICIATE AT THIS VERY IMPORTANT MEETING OF THE SADC MINISTERS OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING. ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI AND INDEED ON MY OWN BEHALF, I WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME YOU TO THIS MINISTERIAL MEETING.

DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY,

I WISH TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO THANK THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE THROUGH THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF EDUCATION FOR GRACIOUSLY AGREEING TO HOST THIS MEETING. THIS IS INDEED A COMMENDABLE GESTURE AND THE GOVERNMENT OF MALAWI AND HER EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI, MRS JOYCE BANDA, ARE GRATEFUL TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE AND THE PEOPLE OF MOZAMBIQUE FOR THE WARM HOSPITALITY THEY HAVE ACCORDED US SINCE OUR ARRIVAL IN THIS BEAUTIFUL CITY, MAPUTO.

THIS MEETING IS A VERY CLEAR TESTIMONY OF YOUR COLLECTIVE COMMITMENT TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN THE REGION. WE ALL KNOW THAT EDUCATION IS NOT ONLY A BASIC HUMAN RIGHT BUT ONE OF THE MOST DECISIVE FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO ALL FORMS OF DEVELOPMENT. WHILE EDUCATION ON ITS OWN MAY NOT BE A SUFFICIENT PRECONDITION FOR DEVELOPMENT, IT IS AN INDISPUTABLE FACT THAT DEVELOPMENT IS NOT POSSIBLE WITHOUT EDUCATION.

THE CRITICAL IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION IN ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND

CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE SEEN IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH SADC WAS ESTABLISHED. I NEED NOT REMIND YOU THAT SADC WAS ESTABLISHED PRINCIPALLY TO PROMOTE EQUITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH. THE SADC PROTOCOL ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING WAS DEVELOPED TO PROVIDE A REGIONAL LOGISTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR ACHIEVING THIS.

DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY, HONOURABLE MINISTERS, DISTINGUISHED INVITED GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

DESPITE THE APPRECIABLE PROGRESS IN THE IMPELEMENTATION OF THE PROTOCOL AND COMMENDABLE EFFORTS BY MEMBER STATES TO EXPAND EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVISION, THE REGION STILL FACES MAJOR CHALLENGES THAT CONSTRAIN THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING SECTOR TO NATIONAL AND REGIONAL SOCIO – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT;

- FOR EXAMPLE, ALTHOUGH THE REGION HAS MADE SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS IN THE PROVISION OF FREE AND COMPULSORY EDUCATION WITH ENROLEMNT RATIOS RANGING BETWEEN 70 – 98 PERCENT, ACESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION CONTINUE TO BE A MAJOR CHALLENGE.
- STUDENT TEACHER RATIO IS ALSO A CHALLENGE. IT IS ESTIMATED THAT THE REGION WILL NEED AT LEAST 1 MILLION ADDITIONAL TEACHERS BY 2015 IF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS ARE TO BE REACHED.

- TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (TVET) IS UNDER RESOURCED, UNDERDEVELOPED AND FRAGMENTED.
- PARTICIPATION IN TERTIARY EDUCATION IS VERY LOW, WITH ABOUT 6 % OF THE ELIGIBLE GROUP ENROLLED COMPARED TO GLOBAL AVERAGE ON 27%.

DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY, HONOURABLE MINISTERS, DISTINGUISHED INVITED GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I KNOW THAT THE MAGNITUDE AND IMPACT OF THESE CHALLENGES VARY ACROSS THE REGION. HOWEVER THE ENORMITY OF THESE CHALLENGES REQUIRES A COLLECTIVE APPROACH TO ADDRESSING THEM. I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT YOU HAVE THE NECESSARY CAPACITY AND COMMITMENT TO DO SO.

I WOULD THEREFORE LIKE TO URGE YOU TO ENSURE THAT THERE ARE NECESSARY AND FUNCTIONING STRUCTURES TO DRIVE THE IMPELEMENTATION OF THE AU PLAN OF ACTION WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN, AT BOTH NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVELS.

IT SHOULD BE CLEAR FROM WHAT I HAVE SAID SO FAR THAT EDUCATION AND TRAINING HAS TO COMPETE WITH OTHER NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND WE NEED TO ADOPT COST EFFECTIVE WAYS OF DELIVERING EDUCATION. IN PARTICULAR OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING IS ONE IMPORTANT STRAGEY FOR IMPROVING ACCESS TO VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND HIGHER EDUCATION. IT IS MY PLEASURE TO INFORM YOU THAT THE SADC CAPACITY

BUILDING IN OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING PROJECT SUPPORTED BY THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK HAS SO FAR DELIVERED ITS EXPECTED OUTPUTS AND IS SET TO ACHIEVE ALL ITS TARGETS BY 31 JULY 2014.

I NOW WISH TO THANK AND COMMEND THE MINISTERS OF EDUCATION FOR THEIR ABLE LEADERSHIP IN DRIVING THE REGIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AGENDA. I ALSO WISH TO COMMEND THE SADC SECRETARIAT FOR THEIR HARD WORK AND HIGH DEGREE OF PROFESSIONALISM, WHICH HAVE ENABLED US TO DEVELOP STRATEGIES FOR ADDRESSING THE NUMEROUS CHALLENGES THAT WE FACE IN THE REGION.

THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE IMPLEMENTAION OF THE REGIONAL EDUCATION AGENDA WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT OUR COOPERATING PARTNERS; DONOR AGENCIES; LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL NON – GOVERNMENTAL AND GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS. I WISH TO EXPRESS OUR SINCERE GRATITUDE FOR THEIR CONITUED SUPPORT AND HOPE THAT SADC WILL CONTINUE TO DEVELOP AND NUTURE THOSE STRATEGIC PARTERNSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS.

DIRECTOR OF CEREMONIES, HONORABLE MINISTERS OF EDUCATION, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY AND OUR COOPERATING PARTNERS, I AM LOOKING FORWARD TO YOUR USUAL FOCUSED ENGAGEMENTS AND INPUTS IN MEETINGS OF THIS NATURE TO PROVIDE A STRATEGIC FOCUS FOR OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM FOR THE YEARS TO COME.

I THANK YOU.