



**REMARKS BY THE SADC EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, H.E. DR.
STERGOMENA LAWRENCE TAX**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP
AND RETREAT OF THE DIRECTORATE OF THE ORGAN ON POLITICS,
DEFENCE AND SECURITY AFFAIRS**

8TH APRIL, 2015

MAFIKENG, SOUTH AFRICA

Director of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Affairs, Mr. Jorge Cardoso;
Excellency, Ambassador, Lieutenant General Fisher, Facilitator to this Workshop,
Distinguished Prof. Anthoni, from Wits University, Co-Facilitator,
Heads of Units, Senior Staff,
Ladies and Gentlemen;

Allow me to thank you profoundly for inviting me to officiate at this important Strategic Planning Workshop for the Directorate of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Affairs. I am certain that this workshop will enable you to share knowledge, information and experience, and as such provide you with the necessary skills that will enable you to strategically plan and undertake the operations of the Directorate in line with the mandate of the SADC Secretariat.

I also wish to commend you all, the Director of the Organ for steering the work at the Directorate, all Organ staff and the various teams of the Directorate of the Organ for your dedication and hard work, which enabled the Secretariat, and SADC as a whole to successfully discharge its duties. Such achievements, include successful deployment of SADC Observer Missions in SADC Member States during 2014/2015 and 2015/2016, notably elections in the Republics of Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mozambique, Mauritius, Namibia and Zambia; facilitation of the Observer Mission in the Kingdom of Lesotho, convening and servicing a number of Double Troika Summits, in particular, the three Summits which took place between September 2014 and January 2015; coordination and monitoring

of peace and security situation in the region, especially in DRC and Madagascar; and provision of timely early warning information.

Notwithstanding these commendable efforts, there are a number of shortfalls and challenges that deserve serious reflection and immediate measures. Successful teams are always open-minded, constructive and eager to learn from mistakes, and emerging developments. This retreat and strategic planning workshop, therefore, affords you the opportunity to take stock and evaluate weaknesses, shortfalls and challenges that affect the performance of the Directorate so as to strategically come up with solutions while capitalizing on achievements, opportunities and strengths. I therefore, call upon you to use this precious opportunity to strategically contribute positively through your roles within the Directorate. It may be useful during this retreat to undertake a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats/Challenges analysis).

As I said in my remarks during a Staff meeting held on 12th December, 2014, in the recent past, the Secretariat has encountered a number of challenges; the major ones relate to compliance and to performance as observed by the Council of Ministers on a number of occasions. In August last year, Council expressed its deepest concern regarding the performance of the Secretariat. In this regard, the Council was concerned particularly with:

- a) state of affairs which reflects significant control weaknesses in the management of programmes, operations and resources by the SADC Secretariat; and
- b) SADC Member States' not getting value for their money

The general message from Member States, and in particular from the Council of Ministers, is that *“we cannot and must not continue to do business as usual. We need to change, by performing better and delivering more effectively and efficiently; and in accordance with rules and procedures and decisions by Summit, Council and other Policy Organs.”*

As a Directorate, you have a critical function, in collaboration with other Directorates and Units of the Secretariat, of ensuring the achievement of the objectives of the SADC Common Agenda. It is encouraging to note that the Directorate of the Organ has found time to arrange this retreat, which falls within the ambit of the strategic planning mandate of the Secretariat. This retreat should be guided by the common purpose of SADC as a regional community geared towards improving the lives and well-being of the peoples of Southern Africa, and thereby usher in socio-economic development and political and security stability.

Strategic retreats encompass strategic planning through identification of opportunities, analyzing problems, establishing priorities and allocating available resources, according to priorities. Strategic Plan drives operations of an organisation by articulating the vision, mission, objectives and activities. It determines where an organization is going, how to get there, and how to assess if it got there and if not, why and what should be done. Strategic planning is, therefore, a systematic process through which an organization agrees on, and builds commitment to priorities that are essential to its mission and responsive to the operating environment. Effective strategic planning must be matched with functional performance

management systems that enable the organization to measure its performance, based on specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound (SMART) Performance Indicators. Successful implementation of a strategic plan depends, among others, on leadership, commitment, organizational culture (teamwork), complexity of the organization's environment, and expertise of planners, implementers, and monitors.

During the Staff meeting held on 12th December, 2014, I said, and I quote "As we close off the year 2014, we must rededicate ourselves to perform even better, and achieve additional and visible landmarks in 2015, and the years to come. Timely and quality delivery should thus, be our Moto for 2015. We must start 2015 with a greater determination to succeed with renewed vigour, and commitment to serve the organisation and the region better, through:

- **Optimizing performance:** Think smarter, get the details right, be dynamic, perform effectively and efficiently, and add value.
- **Enhancing interaction with Member States:** Prepare adequately and appropriately, communicate effectively.
- **Team work:** Support each other, communicate adequately and appropriately, consider and care about your team mates, deliver as a United Winning Team.

Dedication and commitment to actions agreed upon will lead to the improvement of the Directorate's accountability and delivery", end of quote.

In this regard, I also wish to repeat what I said on 31st October 2013 at the first Management Retreat in Gaborone, and I quote: ***"Our approach to strategic planning, human resources management and administration;***

resource mobilization and utilization; budgeting; programmes implementation; financial management; procurement management; and other Secretariat roles must, as of now, undergo a complete turn-around with a view to improve performance and deliver more effectively and efficiently according to our mandate. To deliver this noble course we need to work as a team with common purpose”.

Staff of the Organ Directorate

Let me also take this opportunity to remind you that the Council of ministers at its meeting in Harare, in March, 2015, upon recommendation of the Task Force on addressing Internal Weaknesses at the Secretariat, directed the Secretariat to address with immediate effect, the identified weaknesses including, weaknesses associated with low absorption capacity; weaknesses in performance management system which rewards performers and non-performers equally, the entrenched culture of inaction at the secretariat and culture of non-adherence to rules and procedures of the organization. These are issues which the Directorate should ponder during this retreat, and get out of the retreat with a clear direction on how to address them once and for all. **The culture of business as usual has to come to an end.**

As I said in my remarks delivered to Staff on 12th December, 2015, *“the organisation depends on you delivering. It will be a great shame to be reminded once again to perform our duties as required. You have excellent skills, experience, energy, enthusiasm, loyalty. Why should you waste it?*

We need to think quicker, think smarter, optimize our performance, support each other, and work as a team. Leaders need to lead their Teams more vigilantly with clear purpose; and the staff needs to perform diligently.

Staff of the Organ Directorate

These are few issues that I underscored in my remarks, and **I call upon you to incorporate my End of Year remarks to Staff, that were delivered on 12th December, 2014 as part of your working documents during this Retreat.**

The programme of this retreat is commendable as it addresses very important regional issues of peace and security in our region, such as the implementation of SIPO; development of a road map for implementation of policy decisions including Summit and MCO's decisions, a number of which are lagging behind; an appropriate institutional structure to enable the Directorate discharge its mandate more effectively in line with SIPO objectives, and sustainable mechanisms for funding of Organ operations, which should inform the ongoing innovative organizational resources mobilization initiatives. The agenda requires sober minds and thorough analytical debate to generate implementable solutions and plans. It is therefore, of critical importance to leave this retreat with a greater determination to succeed and with renewed vigour and commitment to serve the organisation and the region better.

Director of the Organ

I am encouraged to note that you chose some of the best minds in the region to facilitate this strategic planning workshop. Your facilitators are

people of high caliber. Ambassador, General Louis Fisher is a professional soldier, and also an academic and researcher in peace and security issues in the region. Professor Anthoni is an experienced Professor and well versed in the SADC politics, defense and security cooperation matters. He has been previously involved in assessing the implementation of SIPO. I am confident that they will steer the course and direction of the deliberations and discussions to fruitful outcomes.

I am eagerly looking forward to receiving the report of this workshop. I wish you undisturbed stay here as you put your minds and bodies to task. I wish you a fruitful retreat.

I thank you for your kind attention.

Muito Obrigado

Merci Beaucoup

Asanteni Sana

Kealeboga