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MEDIA STATEMENT ON THE LAUNCH OF SIPO II

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The Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation and President of the United Republic of Tanzania, H.E. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete launched the Revised Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO II) on November 20, 2012, in Arusha, Tanzania. The SIPO II launch comprised of a Training Workshop, an Implementation Planning Workshop and a Symposium under the theme: "Exploring the Revised SIPO".

SIPO II covers five key sectors of Politics, Defence, State Security, Public Security and Police.

The launch was attended by members of the Ministerial Committee of the Organ Troika of the SADC Organ, Heads of Diplomatic Missions & International Organisations, members of the SADC Parliamentary Forum, SADC National Contact Points, SADC National Media Coordinators, Non-state actors including the academia and research institutions, in total, over 200 delegates from all SADC Member States.

Delivering his keynote address, H.E. President Kikwete told the official ceremony that the idea of formulating SIPO was motivated by the desire to create a peaceful and stable environment necessary for socio-economic growth and human prosperity in the SADC Region. He emphasised that before the original SIPO was adopted in 2004, many efforts were made by SADC Member States to address key development challenges including security and poverty. President Kikwete appraised the ceremony on the history and achievements of the SIPO I, amongst others, the following:

- Facilitated cooperation among SADC countries in various defence and security areas.
- Enabled SADC to develop the SADC Mutual Defence Pact.

Member States:

Angola	Lesotho	Malawi	Namibia	Swaziland
Botswana	Madagascar	Mauritius	Seychelles	United Republic of Tanzania
Democratic Republic of Congo		Mozambique	South Africa	Zambia
				Zimbabwe

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- Strengthened regional commitment towards collective self-defense and the preservation of peace and security in the region through the establishment of the SADC Standby Force in accordance with the African Peace and Security Architecture of the African Union.
- Immensely contributed to the promotion and advancement of police cooperation in the region through the integration of the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organisation (SARPCCO) into the Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC).
- Enabled the establishment of Regional Early Warning Centre (REWC), which is tasked with helping to anticipate, prevent and manage conflicts. Again this has been done in line with AU's African Peace and Security Architecture that encourages the establishment of regional early warning centres.
- Establishment of the SADC Electoral Advisory Council (SEAC) and a mediation unit, which are institutions dealing with political governance and the observation of elections.

“Our intention under SIPO II now is to do better and register even greater successes in future,” the president concluded.

Honourable Bernard Membe, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Republic of Tanzania delivered welcoming remarks in which he pointed out that since its inception in 2001, SIPO has evolved as an important tool in the implementation of the SADC Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation. He said, the significant difference between SIPO I and II is the implementation Plan as the current one is premised on the prioritisation of the Key issues and it includes a Monitoring and Evaluation which would in turn gauge the progress and enable redirection where necessary.

Addressing the same ceremony, SADC Executive Secretary, Dr. Tomaz Augusto Salomão said that the review process of SIPO I emphasised the need to review and re-evaluate the SIPO every five years in order to ensure an adequate response to challenges posed to the SADC Region by, amongst others, the new international order. He said the Revised SIPO encompasses the outcome of the review of the objectives and activities undertaken by the various sectors, including the police one as a standalone sector of the Organ. Dr Salomão also commended the Symposium, training and planning workshops part of the launch, saying,

“I am confident that they will come up with a comprehensive ‘Roadmap’ and ‘work plan’ that will enable all relevant stakeholders to be true partners in the implementation of SIPO II.”

Addressing the opening ceremony on behalf on Southern African Civil Society, Executive Director of SADC Council of NGOs Mr Boichoko Ditlhake commended SADC for the inclusive process of the SIPO II launch, saying that the experience the

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SADC Region garnered over a period of time with operationalisation of SIPO has endowed it with knowledge and capacity to correct past failures and consolidate its strengths and successes.

Aimed at giving greater insight into the SADC Region's Political, Defence and Security Cooperation architecture, both the Training Workshop and the Symposium unpacked the SIPO II, tracing its relevance into the historical context and regional cooperation in this area.

The Implementation Planning Workshop came up with a list of key priorities for implementation in the short, medium and long term. There include, amongst others, the launching of the Revised SIPO in the Member States, a part of which will be information sharing activities for greater awareness creation amongst the citizens on the SADC Organ and its operations, access to certain enabling international and regional conventions as well as their domestication. It also raised the re-activation of the SADC National Committees as stipulated by Article 16 A of the SADC Treaty, to be fully functional in all Member States.

Concluding the launch, Lt. Col. Tanki Mothae, Director of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation expressed appreciation to the German Government who supported the launch and the national governments as well as non-state actors who availed resources to enable the full participation of their representatives. He said the SIPO II would be a success story as its implementation has been decentralised to the Member States. He recommended that, in order to facilitate the monitoring and evaluation, a similar engagement of the magnitude of the SIPO II launch should be held in 2013.

For further information please contact the SADC Public Relations Unit.

NOVEMBER 23, 2012
ARUSHA, TANZANIA

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