



REMARKS

BY

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

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE
SADC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS**

27 APRIL 2015

**HARARE
ZIMBABWE**

Dr Simbarashe Mumbengegwi, Minister of Foreign Affairs for the Republic of Zimbabwe and Chairperson of the Council of Ministers;

Honourable Ministers from the SADC Member States;

Representatives of International, Continental and Regional Organisations;

Chairperson of the Standing Committee of Senior Officials;

Deputy Executive Secretary – Regional Integration

Senior Officials from SADC Member States;

Your Excellencies, Ambassadors and High Commissioners;

SADC Secretariat Staff;

Partners from the Media;

I feel greatly honoured and humbled to be accorded this opportunity to deliver some remarks at this meeting of the SADC Council of Ministers. Allow me at the outset, to express our profound gratitude to the Government and People of Zimbabwe, for the warm welcome, hospitality and excellent facilities placed at our disposal.

We are gathered here today, on the eve of the Extraordinary Summit on Industrialisation that will consider the progress made in the preparation of the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap, pursuant to the SADC Heads of State and Government historic decision of August, 2014, for the region to re-orient its regional integration focus to an industrialisation trajectory.

Honourable Ministers:

Based on the August 2014 Summit Theme, ***“SADC Strategy for Economic Transformation: Leveraging the Region’s Diverse Resources for Sustainable Economic and Social Development through Beneficiation and Value Addition”***, the region resolved to prepare a Strategy and Road Map on Industrialisation.

I wish to report that the draft Strategy and Roadmap are ready and will be presented for your consideration. The Strategy is expected to be a living policy framework that will guide our region, in its quest to socio-economic transformation through industrialisation, contributing to sustainable development, poverty reduction and thus improved livelihood.

I sincerely thank all Member States for your collective will, commitment and determination during all stages of preparing the Strategy and the Roadmap. I also thank the team of experts for working tirelessly to complete this task in record time. We received invaluable support from the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and GIZ, in order to push this process this far. We are very grateful for their invaluable technical and financial support throughout this journey.

I am also proud of the work undertaken by the Secretariat Team, which has tirelessly pursued and implemented the Summit directive with a passion and determination, which has not only enabled the Secretariat to finalise the draft Industrialisation Strategy, but also fill the missing link in the revised RISDP (2015-2020), to re-focus our efforts on frontloading industrialisation as a new trajectory for our regional community. In this regard, as directed by Summit in August 2014, priority A of the RISDP, Industrialisation and Market Integration has been finalised, with the needed attention on frontloading Industrial development, with proper sequencing of targeted outputs on industrial development and trade liberalisation in order to ensure that industrialisation is prioritised. The revised RISDP and Implementation Plan will also be tabled for your consideration.

We are confident, that both the Regional Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap, and the Revised RISDP once approved by the Summit, will set the Region's path to industrialisation and socio-economic prosperity of our citizens.

The strategy is anchored on three pillars, namely: Industrialisation as a champion of economic and technological transformation; competitiveness as an active process to move from comparative advantage to competitive edges, and Regional integration and

geography as the context for industrial development and economic prosperity.

The strategy is premised on the fact that regional integration is an important vehicle to accelerate industrialisation. The strategy seeks to engender a major economic and technological transformation at national and regional levels within the context of deeper integration. It also aims at accelerating growth momentum, while recognising that industrial policy and implementation will largely be undertaken at national level, and success depends, on forging partnerships between governments, the private sector, non-state actors, and development partners. Focused programmes aimed at enhancing economic inter-linkages to unlock regional potentials, scaling up productive capacities and competitiveness, stimulating beneficiations and value chains, enhancing technological set-ups, and improving the business enabling environment, are of critical importance. Implementation will thus build on policies and efforts already made nationally and regionally.

Honourable Ministers,

While the decision to re-orient SADC regional integration path with proper linkages between Industrialisation and Market liberalisation, is indeed a timely decision, the strategy will bear the intended results only if matched with practical actions, and the needed resources, both human and financial. This will no doubt require not just goodwill and hope, but a robust financing strategy, commitment and determination from all concerned, to stay the course that we have chosen. It will be therefore important to expeditiously finalise the costed implementation plan of the Strategy and Roadmap and the investment plan, in line with the short, medium and long-term parameters outlined therein. We also need to ensure that the related actions and decisions at national, regional and global levels, and across different sectors of socio-economic development are complementary so as to promote industrialisation to the fullest extent possible. Taking such an approach will help to situate and provide an enabling environment for achieving the goals that we have set ourselves to frontload and prioritise industrial development.

Honourable Ministers,

In order to achieve the feat we have set for ourselves, it is clear that the region is embarking on a long term project of economic and social transformation, to be supported by concerted efforts, and commitment during the three-phased duration of 2015 to 2063. Our goal as a region is clear, that is, to ensure the realisation of the Strategy's target of progressively higher rewards in income, employment and broader social well-being.

The benefits of inter-linkages between SADC Industrial Development and market integration agenda with Tripartite and Continental initiatives cannot be over-emphasised.

In 2011 during the 2nd Tripartite Summit, our Heads of State and Government set out a Roadmap for the completion of Phase 1 by June 2014. A Tripartite FTA is expected to be launched during the 3rd Tripartite Summit to be held in Egypt on 10 June 2015. Nonetheless, Phase 1 of the Tripartite remains with significant outstanding work, which will be pushed to the post-launching period, thus delaying meaningful implementation, and with a possibility of hampering activities envisaged under Phase 2. Work in the other pillars of the Tripartite namely, Industrial development and infrastructural development has also encountered slow progress.

In the same vein, the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA), the AU Heads of State and Government set 2017 as the indicative target for its establishment. The negotiations on the CFTA will be launched this coming June 2015, meaning that we will have only 2 years to complete the negotiations process, that is expected to be complex, involving twice the size of the Tripartite membership, with eight AU recognised RECs and a negotiation menu that spans across trade in goods, services and trade-related issues.

Honourable Ministers,

It is critical that as we expedite work on the Tripartite FTA, we prepare adequately for the forthcoming CFTA negotiations, both at national and regional levels.

We are thankful to the Ministers responsible for Trade and Industrialisation for their concerted efforts, and SADC positions with regard to Tripartite FTA and CFTA as prepared by them will be presented for your consideration, and to be submitted for Summit consideration and approval. A common position will guide us through the murky waters of trade negotiations ahead of us.

As I seek to conclude my remarks, I can confidently say that notwithstanding the daunting challenges that confront us, there is no doubt that as a region we have the pedigree to overcome them and achieve our objectives, the critical ones of which are market integration, industrialisation and infrastructural development, as the essential pillars of RISDP, and as such accelerate our regional integration, and prosperity of our SADC citizens.

SADC will continue to be guided by its founding vision **“to create a Community with Common Values, a Common Future and a Common Destiny, underpinned by decent jobs and high standards of living of its citizens”**.

I wish you fruitful deliberations, and I am confident that with your usual wise counsel, as we come out of Harare, we will be equipped with an irreversible resolve to attain the much needed industrialisation, underpinned by a clear road map for industrialisation, and its attendant initiatives of market integration and infrastructure development.

Thank you

Merci

Obrigado.

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