



REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA



REMARKS

BY

**HONOURABLE O.K. MATAMBO
MINISTER OF FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING,
REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA**

AT THE

SADC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING

**HELD AT
THE GABORONE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE**

14TH AUGUST 2015

**GABORONE
BOTSWANA**



Director of Ceremonies;

**Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Zimbabwe,
and outgoing Chairperson of the SADC Council of
Ministers, Honourable Simbarashe Mumbengegwi;**

Honourable Ministers from the SADC region;

**Executive Secretary of SADC, Your Excellency Dr.
Stergomena Lawrence Tax;**

**Your Excellencies Deputy Executive Secretaries of SADC
and officials from the SADC Secretariat;**

**Chairperson of the Standing Committee of Senior Officials,
Dr. Taufila Nyamadzabo;**

Senior Officials from the SADC Member States;

Members of the Media;

Distinguished Delegates;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

1. It is my pleasure to welcome you to the meeting of the SADC Council of Ministers being held here in Gaborone for the next two days. On behalf of the people and Government of Botswana, and indeed on my own behalf, I wish to welcome you, Honourable Ministers and Senior Officials, to Botswana.

I hope that you will find your stay to be reasonably comfortable and that you will have an opportunity in between the meetings to experience what our country has to offer in terms of, for example, culture, heritage and fascinating places of leisure.

2. **Ladies and Gentlemen**, I wish at this stage, to thank and commend Honourable Simbarashe Mumbengegwi, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Zimbabwe and the outgoing Chairperson of the Council of Ministers for his able leadership that led to the adoption of key strategic decisions such as the one to industrialise the region, taking advantage of the region's abundant resources, including the front loading of the industrialisation programme within the framework of our blue print – the Revised Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP).

Consequently, we witnessed a remarkable milestone in Harare, Zimbabwe, in April 2015, when the Extra-Ordinary Summit adopted the Revised RISDP and the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Road Map. I trust, Honourable Minister, that we shall all work hard and accelerate the implementation of the SADC programme of Action, from where you left.

3. **Distinguished Delegates**, we are meeting here today at a critical time for the region. There is an urgent need for SADC economies to broaden their industrial and economic bases, in order to create employment and intensify the fight against poverty. The adoption of the Industrialisation Strategy is therefore a welcome move to catalyse regional co-operation and integration to ensure that we move ahead in unison as a region. Today's meeting gives us an opportunity to address strategic issues salient to the implementation of this Strategy.

4. **Ladies and Gentlemen**, the need for adequate budgetary provisions for financing SADC activities and ensuring assumption of greater financial responsibility by Member States, while prioritising the region's activities in order to focus on those issues that would deepen regional integration within a short timeframe, cannot be over-emphasised. Let us therefore ensure implementation of high impact activities, policies and strategies.
5. **Honourable Ministers**, I wish to point out that once priorities and strategies are agreed upon for implementation, it becomes imperative to put in place a strong monitoring and evaluation system. The available capacities for implementation also need to be assessed, as it would be self-defeating to come up with good strategies and plans that merely gather dust.

The spirit of the Front-line States should therefore invigorate the region into action that would make SADC emerge as the most purposeful, most powerful and most successful African regional economic community.

6. **Distinguished Delegates**, let us ensure that major economic and technological transformation at national and regional levels accelerate economic growth and enhance comparative and competitive advantages of our economies, the importance of which are highlighted in the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap. In executing our regional plans, cognisance should be given to people-centred development, to ensure our unity in participating effectively in the African Union Agenda 2063. We also need to implement all the Protocols that have been ratified in order to drive the region forward.

7. **Director of Ceremonies**, before concluding my remarks, let me take this opportunity to call upon all of us to continue to look at ways and means of improving the standard of living of our peoples, as well as improving efficiency in the use of the limited resources at our disposal. Let us move with speed to effectively implement all the policy issues that are critical for the region's growth and development.
8. **Ladies and Gentlemen**, I wish to urge all of you that as we discuss the agenda for the next two days, you should openly air your views on ways and means which could strategically improve our region, going forward. I also believe that our task will not be a difficult one, because our Senior Officials have already prepared the documentation to facilitate our discussion. Let us therefore pursue our shared vision, the vision that should propel the SADC region to greater prosperity through deeper regional integration.

9. I thank you for your attention.