



WELCOME REMARKS BY

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

**AT THE
*SADC MINISTERIAL WORKSHOP ON WATER AND ENERGY
CRISIS IN THE SADC REGION***

Held on the 20th JUNE 2016

**AT
GABORONE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE,
BOTSWANA**

Theme:

***“Accelerating Energy Delivery and Access to Water
Resources in the SADC Region – A Collective Approach”***

**Your Excellency, Lt. Gen. Dr. Seretse Khama Ian Khama,
President of the Republic of Botswana and Chairperson of
SADC;**

Honourable Ministers;

International Cooperating Partners;

Chief Executive Officers;

Representatives of the Private Sector;

Representatives of the Non-Governmental Organizations;

Distinguished Delegates;

Distinguished participants;

Warm greetings to you all this morning!

I am deeply honoured and humbled, to officially welcome you to this important Ministerial Workshop on Energy and Water Crisis in the SADC Region whose theme is “**Accelerating Energy Delivery and Access to Water Resources in the SADC Region – A Collective Approach**”. I wish to express our sincere gratitude to you all for honoring the SADC Chairperson’s call to attend this important workshop, which offers a platform for all of us to discuss water and energy challenges in the Region, and come up with practical solutions.

Your Excellency,

Energy and water play a vital role in regional economic growth, and access to the same has a direct impact on the quality of lives of our people. Energy and water are fundamental enablers to economic development, and thus for industrialization, which SADC has frontloaded, a major focus of the region. SADC is home to more than 292 million people, out of which about 61 percent live in rural areas and derive their daily energy needs for space heating and cooking by collecting firewood, agricultural residues and animal waste by walking long

distances. A large majority of our citizens do not have access to modern commercial energy and electricity. Less than 40% of the population has access to electricity.

Water is one of the most shared resources through river basins and groundwater. Despite the water occurrence in relative abundance in the region, the situation is still very variable in both time and space. The prevailing drought induced by the El Nino phenomenon, continues to cause havoc, and will most likely further intensify the already volatile situation in the Region.

It is in recognition of these, and more related challenges, that the Chairperson of SADC, His Excellency, Lieutenant General Dr. Seretse Khama Ian Khama, President of the Republic of Botswana, has called for this workshop that brings together a number of key stakeholders from different sectors to act collectively in addressing the prevailing energy and water supply insecurity in the Region. The objective of the workshop is to facilitate exchange of ideas and forge practical and sustainable solutions in addressing energy and water crisis in the Region, with a view to mapping out a strategic direction. I am confident therefore, that this workshop will offer us an opportunity to deliberate on persistent challenges and come up with ways to address these challenges.

Distinguished Participants

Allow me once again to welcome all of you to this very important Workshop. I wish to pay tribute to the Government and People of the Republic of Botswana for having put such wonderful facilities at our disposal. I would also like to express our gratitude to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Ministry of Minerals, Energy and Water Resources and other sectors for their diligence and team spirit in preparation for this Workshop.

In particular, allow me to take this opportunity on your behalf, to thank His Excellency, Lt. Gen. Dr. Seretse Khama Ian Khama, President of the Republic of Botswana and Chairperson of

SADC, who in his own wisdom, convened this important and timely workshop, that affords us an opportunity to contribute to efforts that are geared towards addressing the energy and water crisis in the Region.

May I end my remarks by appealing to you, Honourable Ministers and all Stakeholders to actively participate in this workshop, and come up with practical solutions, and appropriate strategies, which will enable SADC to effectively implement the resolutions of this unique workshop, and as such contribute to the improvements of the livelihoods of our citizens.

On this note, may I now, humbly invite His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Botswana and Chairperson of SADC, to deliver his Keynote Address.

Your Excellency, Sir!!!!

Ke a leboga!!!!!!!! Pula !!!!!!!!!!!!!