



## PRESS RELEASE

### **SADC to host a Youth Dialogue in collaboration with Alliance for African Partnership and the University of Botswana**

**02 April 2022, Gaborone, Botswana** - The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Secretariat in partnership with the Alliance for African Partnership (AAP) and the University of Botswana (UB) will on 4<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022 host a Youth Dialogue at the UB Conference Centre in Gaborone. Under the theme, **“Youth Empowerment Through Employment and Entrepreneurship Development in SADC”**. The Summit will bring together youth leaders from the SADC Region, regional innovation ecosystem institutions, national governments and the private sector to dialogue on key socio-economic issues specific to policy, education, life and entrepreneurial skills.

In response to the significant challenges that the youths experience, such as unemployment, access to education and poverty, the dialogue seeks to provide an enabling platform for the youth to co-create solutions and opportunities with key stakeholders.

Acknowledging the critical role that academic institutions play in the regional innovation system, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Botswana noted, “With two years into our Strategy 2029 that speaks to creating a future for the knowledge generation, the University of Botswana is ready and open to playing the critical role of the regional convener to co-create with the youth the knowledge required for economic impact alongside Governments, Industry and Universities”.

The Youth Dialogue is the second in a series of dialogues to be held throughout the SADC Region which from a sustainability and impact perspective, will in the form of a report, provide consolidated recommendations on relevant approaches and solutions to the challenges faced by youth. These recommendations will be submitted to the Executive Secretary of SADC, His Excellency Mr Elias Magosi for further action.

The AAP Director, Professor Richard Mkandawire said, “We aim to discuss ways to open universities to communities and industry in order to initiate and strengthen hubs, centres of excellence and think-tanks that will enable the flow of innovations from universities into society and from industry into universities.”

The Youth Dialogue is funded by the European Union under the SADC Dialogue Facility (SDF) which seeks to strengthen cooperation and support the SADC regional integration agenda. The SDF aids regional integration goals so that the citizens of the

SADC Region benefit from stronger, equitable and sustainable economic growth, increased collective leverage in global platforms and enhanced social opportunities.

**The SADC Secretariat invites the Media fraternity to cover the following events:**

**The SADC-AAP Youth Dialogue:**

4<sup>th</sup>- April 2022, 08:00 am – 18:00

5<sup>th</sup> April 2022, 8:00 am- 14:00

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**SADC in Brief**

SADC is an organisation of 16 Member States established in 1980 as the Southern African Development Coordinating Conference (SADCC) and later in August, 1992 transformed into the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The mission of SADC is to promote sustainable and equitable economic growth and socio-economic development through efficient, productive systems, deeper cooperation and integration, good governance and durable peace and security; so that the region emerges as a competitive and effective player in international relations and the world economy. Member States are Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.