



## **WELCOME REMARKS**

**BY**

**HIS EXCELLENCY MR ELIAS M MAGOSI,  
SADC EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE VISIT TO THE SADC  
SECRETARIAT BY HIS EXCELLENCY MR. FÉLIX ANTOINE  
TSHISEKEDI TSHILOMBO, PRESIDENT OF THE DEMOCRATIC  
REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (DRC), AND CHAIRPERSON OF SADC**

**10<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2023**

**GABORONE, BOTSWANA**

**Your Excellency Mr. Félix-Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo, President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Chairperson of SADC;**

**Your Excellency Mr. Christophe *Lutundula* Apala Pen'Apala, Deputy Prime Minister, and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Republic of Congo;**

**Your Excellency Mr. Antipas Mbusa Nyamwisi, Minister of Regional Integration and Francophonie of the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Chairperson of the SADC Council of Ministers;**

**Honourable Dr. Lemogang Kwape, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Botswana;**

**Your Excellency Mrs. Emilie Ayaza Mushobekwa, Ambassador of the Democratic Republic of Congo to the Republic of Botswana, and the DRC's SADC National Contact Point;**

**Your Excellencies, Ambassadors and High Commissioners of SADC Member States Accredited to the Republic of Botswana and SADC;**

**Deputy Executive Secretaries;**

**Members of the DRC Delegation;**

**SADC Directors and All Secretariat Staff;**

**Members of the Media;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen;**

**Good morning!**

Your Excellency, it is a distinct honour and privilege to stand before you today, to welcome you and your delegation to the Secretariat of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). I am sure that I speak for the entire Secretariat, that we are very excited to have you in our midst, and are extremely grateful for setting aside time from your busy schedule, including the State Visit to Botswana, just to visit and interact with us on this day. We must also thank His Excellency Dr Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi, your host, to permit you to grace our offices and take time from the State visit's agenda. We know you are also here to appreciate the work of the Secretariat in facilitating your region's quest for deeper regional integration and development.

On behalf of the Secretariat, and my own behalf, I wish to express our profound gratitude, for Your Excellency's exemplary leadership, guidance and insights provided to the Secretariat in dealing with issues of regional integration from the time you assumed the role of the Chairperson of SADC in August last year. I am also reminded of our in depth conversation in matters of critical importance to the Government and your aspirations for the DRC. Your visit therefore, provides yet another opportunity for the team and I to listen to you once more, and benefit from your wisdom in dealing with matters of economic integration, politics, peace and security, for the benefit of SADC citizens.

Before I proceed Your Excellency, we wish to express our heartfelt condolences to the Government and the people of the Democratic Republic of Congo for the loss of lives, in excess of 400 people, following torrential rains and landslides experienced in the South Kivu Province in the past week. We are also aware that many more are still missing, and with others injured, and that the disaster caused extensive damage to property and infrastructure. May the souls of the departed rest in eternal peace and the affected families be comforted [*moment of silence*].

Your Excellency, the Secretariat is working with the Civil Protection Unit of the DRC to identify the extent of the impacts of natural disasters and to determine how best to assist those that are affected. In view of the increasing recurrence and severity of disasters in the region, the Secretariat continues to work with Member States towards improving early warning systems and in developing annual contingency plans to ensure Member States' readiness to disasters. In addition, the SADC Secretariat, together Member States are also working hard to fast-track operationalization of the SADC Humanitarian and Emergency Operations Centre as well as the Emergency Response Teams, all these geared towards enabling support to Member States affected by disasters.

**Your Excellency**, as highlighted during the briefing meeting with the Management Team earlier this morning, infrastructure development in support of regional integration remains critical, and the Secretariat continues to facilitate interconnection and integrated infrastructure to promote intra-regional trade.

The region also remains focused on industrialisation in line with the current SADC Theme of “**Promoting industrialization through agro-processing, mineral beneficiation, and regional value chains for inclusive and resilient economic growth**”. In this regard, the Secretariat is supporting Member States to promote and develop identified value chains, namely agro-processing, minerals beneficiation, pharmaceuticals, consumer goods, capital goods and services, in an effort to strengthen and leverage optimal benefits for both regional and global value chains.

With regard to the implementation of the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP 2020-2030), and as directed by SADC Council, the Secretariat has rationalised and reprioritised programmes and projects to be deliberate and focus more on critical and impactful interventions to the SADC Region. Given the enormous funding required to implement the prioritised projects, we have started exploring innovative ways of financing these projects, including fast-tracking operationalisation

of the SADC Regional Development Fund, to unlock resources from various sources including the private sector, to implement the prioritised projects.

Related to the reprioritization of the RISDP projects, I wish to highlight that your Secretariat is embarking on a strategic direction to institutionalize the SADC Balanced Scorecard, which will assess and reflect the impact the region is making. We will thus measure at regional, Member State and Secretariat levels to ensure that we achieve the set targets for deeper regional integration for the realization of the SADC Vision 2050. Your Secretariat will therefore work very closely with and support Member States in this making this reporting framework come to life.

Your Excellency, today is not for me to address you and your delegation. Rather, it is for me and Secretariat team to listen to you. Allow me in conclusion, therefore, to thank the following:

- the former Chairperson of Council, Honourable Mukanzu for his support and guidance given to me and the Secretariat in executing Council decisions and SADC mandate;
- the SADC Secretariat staff for their professionalism, commitment, dedication and personal sacrifice in continuing to serve our region. Many of us here remain committed and determined to deliver on our mandate and assigned responsibilities, and do our utmost to provide the best possible service;
- the Deputy Executive Secretaries, not only for being instrumental in facilitating the activities of the Secretariat, but more importantly for supporting me in this demanding role and enabling the Secretariat to function seamlessly and deliver;
- the President, the Government and the people of Botswana for the continued support and dependability enabling us to work the region seamlessly and effortlessly.

With these few remarks, may I now humbly invite Your Excellency to address the SADC Secretariat Staff.

**Merci beaucoup! Muito obrigado! Asante Sana! I thank you!**