



**CLOSING REMARKS BY HON. NETUMBO NANDI-
NDAITWAH, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION OF THE
REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA, AND CHAIR OF THE SADC
MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE OF THE ORGAN (MCO)**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE MEETING OF THE
25th ORDINARY MEETING OF THE MCO**

21 JULY 2023

WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA

Honourable Stanley K. Kakubo, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Zambia, and Incoming Chairperson of the Ministerial Committee of the Organ;

Honourable Dr. Naledi Pandor, Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of the Republic of South Africa, and Outgoing Chairperson of the Ministerial Committee of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation;

Honorable Jean-Pierre Bemba, Deputy Prime Ministers and Minister of Defence of DRC;

Honourable Ministers and Heads of Delegation;

Your Excellency Mr. Elias Mpedi Magosi, SADC Executive Secretary;

Chairperson of the Senior Officials Meeting;

Distinguished Senior Officials, Chiefs of Defence and Security Institutions, as well as Delegates from SADC Member States;

Members of the Media;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

We have now come to the end of the 25th Ordinary Meeting of the Ministerial Committee of the Organ (MCO). I am sure you will agree with me that it has been a very important meeting for our regional body. Our regional efforts towards regional integration have been strengthened and deepened considerably and this is, indeed, a moment which we all can be proud of.

Let me take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the Honourable Ministers for having honoured our invitation to attend this important Meeting. I, therefore, wish to commend you for the cordial and active participation during our deliberations.

Allow me further to extend my appreciation to our Senior Officials, who have worked tirelessly over the past few days to make the 25th MCO a success. The progress we have made here, has indeed prepared the ground for the upcoming Summit, to be held in Luanda.

With much appreciation, our meeting received updates and progress reports on our programmes and efforts to consolidate peace, democracy, and good governance in the Region. The said reports included, among others:

- The proposed amendments to the revised SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections, in light of the upcoming elections in the region, specifically, in the Republics of Zimbabwe and Madagascar, the Kingdom of Eswatini and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The proposed amendments were complemented by the reports of the Pre-Election Assessment Missions of the SADC Electoral Advisory Council (SEAC).
- Lastly, the meeting was updated on Political and Security situation in the Region, Defence, Public Security, Police and State Security, which are areas that are equally important contributors to the Peace and Security Architecture of the Region.

Honourable Ministers,

Notwithstanding the financial difficulties that countries are facing, I wish to express my gratitude to Member States for their pledges towards matters on peace and security, particularly in the Eastern DRC and Northern Mozambique. I further wish to extend my gratitude to the Governments of the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Republic of Mozambique, for their Cooperation towards through the SADC Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM) and the envisaged SADC Mission in the DRC (SAMIDRC), respectively.

Therefore, as we continue to assist our sister countries that have security challenges, I'm pleased to note that, through the Panel of Elders (PoE), our interventions in the Kingdom of Lesotho are yielding results, as per the report presented in our meeting and we are looking forward to the eventual removal of Lesotho from the Agenda of the Organ soon.

As we reflect on the Decisions of the MCO Meeting held in July 2022, I wish to take this opportunity to commend both the Secretariat and Member States for successfully implementing forty-two (42) out of fifty-eight (58) Decisions, while the implementation of the remaining seven (7) Decisions are ongoing, making a total of 86% implementation. At the same time the Organ was able to propose coordination of the situation in DRC by the African Union which culminated into the Quadripartite Summit which was held on the 27th June 2023, Luanda, Angola.

Progress has also been made in the implementation of the Uni VISA which will soon be submitted for approval.

At this juncture, I wish to encourage ourselves to continue implementing Decisions of the Summit and those we set ourselves in order to ensure the sustainable peace, security and political stability in the Region.

Honourable Ministers,

Given the little time remaining before we handover the Chairship of the MCO, I wish to extend my gratitude to you, Honourable Ministers, for supporting me during my tenure on the helm as Chair of the MCO. I would have not carried out this mandate without your valuable support. I further wish to pledge my support towards the incoming Chair of the MCO, Honourable **Stanley K. Kakubo**, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Zambia, and to wish you success in this important regional task. Equally, I would also like to extend my gratitude to my sister, Honourable **Naledi Pandor**, Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of the Republic of South Africa and Outgoing Chair, for your unwavering support that you have rendered to me during my tenure.

As we are leaving the Chairship of the Organ, and Cognisant that this could possibly be the last full MCO meeting that Namibia will be chairing during our current tenure as Chair of the Organ, let me take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt appreciation to all delegates for your support. Furthermore, my appreciation goes to the Secretariat your support, the professionalism and level of efficiency with which you have carried out the tasks and responsibilities entrusted to you are commendable. I also thank the interpreters and translators who made sure that we communicate and understood each other, as well as those who worked behind closed doors to make sure that our meeting is a success.

**Honourable Ministers,
Dear Delegates,**

It is always good to say welcome, but it is not always easy to say goodbye. However, I am now at a point where I have no choice but to say, I now declare the 25th Ordinary Meeting of the MCO, officially closed.

And have safe travel to your destination.

I Thank You!