

SADC concludes the Joint Committee of Ministers Responsible for Energy and Water in Luanda, Republic of Angola

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) held a Joint meeting of the SADC Committees of Ministers responsible for Energy and Water which was hosted by the Republic of the Angola on 30th May 2024 in Luanda.

The meeting reviewed progress on regional programmes and projects in the Energy and Water sectors that are aligned to the SADC's objectives and targeted outputs articulated in the second short term action plan of the SADC Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan Strategic Development Plan (RIDMP) 2023-2027 that is meant to complement the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan Strategic (RISDP) 2020-2030 and Vision 2050.

Honourable Diamantino Pedro Azevedo, Minister of Mineral Resources, Oil and Gas of the Republic of Angola and Chairperson of the SADC Joint Committee of Ministers Responsible for Energy and Water presided over the meeting. In his opening remarks Honourable Azevedo stated that the SADC region is faced with challenges brought by El Niño induced drought and floods, it is therefore imperative to consider adaption and mitigation measures. On this note, the Minister proposed some measures such as improving water management strategies, including water conservation, efficient irrigation practices, and investment in water infrastructure. He also stated that embarking on diversification of energy sector by investing in alternate sources of energy to reduce overdependence on hydropower and mitigate the impacts of El Niño related disruptions.

In her remarks on behalf of the SADC Executive Secretary, His Excellency Mr. Elias Magosi, SADC Deputy Executive Secretary responsible for Regional Integration Ms. Angéle Makombo N'Tumba commended all stakeholders in the two sectors for working hard to implement the previous Ministerial decisions. This also includes those decisions that emerged from the Council meetings and Summit of Heads of State and Government to ensure that the programmes and interventions of the two sectors are coordinated and managed effectively.

The Ministers among other issues, evaluated the status of implementation of key initiatives adopted by the SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government that was also held in Luanda, Republic of the Angola in August 2023. The Committees of Ministers also examined and deliberated on the status of implementation of the decisions from their previous joint meetings, as well as programmes and projects leading to the attainment of energy and water security for the region.

In the Energy sector, Ministers noted with appreciation the status of implementation of energy power generation and transmission projects aimed to increase security of energy supply. Ministers further considered renewable energy programmes and directed SADC Secretariat to fast track to facilitate development Just Energy

Transition as well as energy regulatory issues by approving SADC Regional Grid Code and expressed their concern on vandalism of energy infrastructure in the Region. The meeting further deliberated on petroleum and gas issues where they reiterated their willingness to support gas related projects.

As for the SADC Water Programme, Ministers assessed work being undertaken to increase access to clean water and sanitation in the SADC region. The Ministers also observed work and projects being undertaken by the Regional River Basin Organisations and as well progress on funding regional flagship water supply projects. The meeting engaged the World Bank on a new programme aimed to promote energy trading in the SADC region through the electricity sector through the Regional Energy Transmission, Trade and Decarbonisation (RETRADE) initiatives, new regional integration priorities focusing on the Development of Power Pools and Transboundary waters and natural resources management including development of SADC Groundwater Management Phase III programme.

The Ministers meeting was preceded by a meeting of the Senior Officials responsible for Energy and Water from 27 to 29 May 2022 who discussed in length documents consideration and cleared 38 decisions that were subsequently approved by the Joint meeting of Committees of Ministers responsible for Energy and Water.