



REMARKS

BY

HIS EXCELLENCY MR. ELIAS MAGOSI

SADC EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

AT THE OCCASION OF THE

THE 7TH SADC INDUSTRIALISATION WEEK & EXHIBITION

31 JULY 2024

HARARE, REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE

Your Excellency, Dr. Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, and Incoming Chairperson of SADC;

Your Excellency, Gen. (Rtd) Dr. Constantino G.D.N. Chiwenga, Vice President of the Republic of Zimbabwe;

Your Excellency, Amb Frederick Shava, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade of the Republic of Zimbabwe, and Incoming Chair of SADC Council;

Honourable Nqobizitha M. Ndhlovu, Minister of Industry and Commerce of the Republic of Zimbabwe;

Honourable Lucia Lipumbu, Minister of Industrialisation and Trade of the Democratic Republic of Congo;

Honourable Ministers and deputy ministers in our midst;

My colleague Ms Angele Makombo N'tumba, SADC Deputy Executive Secretary Regional Integration;

Ms. Fatou Haidara, Deputy Director General and Managing Director of Global Partnerships and External Relations of UNIDO;

Permanent Secretaries and senior government officials;

Your Excellencies, Ambassadors, High Commissioners and Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Mr Vincente Soares, Chairperson of SADC Business Council;

CEOs and captains of Industry and the region's business community;

Representatives of International Cooperating Partners and Development Finance Institutions;

Staff from the SADC Secretariat and government of Zimbabwe;

Our distinguished partners from the Media;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Good morning!

Allow me to express my profound gratitude to His Excellency Dr. Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, and Incoming Chairperson of SADC, for honouring the invitation to officially open the 7th SADC Industrialisation Week and Exhibition. Your gesture is a clear testament to Your Excellency's dedication, commitment and immense value you attach to the SADC Industrialization agenda.

Let me recognise His Honour the Vice President of the Republic, Gen. (Rtd) Dr. Constantino G.D.N. Chiwenga, and other dignitaries in our midst. I would like to thank you all for accepting our invitation to attend the Industrialisation Week. Special thanks go to the people and the Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe for their usual generous reception, and hospitality extended to us since our arrival here in Harare, and for graciously hosting today's event.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, the SADC Industrialisation Week is a decision of the SADC Council of Ministers made on 27 August 2016, in the Kingdom of Eswatini, that the Industrialisation Week should be held annually, as a forerunner to the Ordinary SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government. The intention was to build coalitions to enhance understanding and cooperation among stakeholders on how to implement the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap 2015-2063. The event also serves to enhance engagement on the implementation of the Industrialisation Strategy at both national and regional levels, encouraging regional companies, youth, and women's participation to showcase their innovations as well as learn from each other.

This 7th SADC Industrialisation segment is a partnership between the SADC Secretariat, the Republic of Zimbabwe, the SADC Business Council, and the Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries, among others, offering a platform and opportunity to interact and share experiences on how best to deliver industrialisation and structural transformation to the region's economies. This year's theme, ***“Promoting innovation to unlock opportunities for Sustainable Economic Growth, and Development towards an Industrialised SADC”***, highlights the importance of innovation in the industrialisation continuum as defined in the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan 2020-2030 (RISDP), and the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap. Pillar I of the RISDP, which focuses on Industrial Development, leverages science,

technology and innovation to unlock and exploit the region's industrial potential.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, the Secretariat developed the Protocol on Science, Technology, and Innovation in 2008 to foster co-operation and promote the development, transfer, and mastery of Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) in Member States. The consolidated report on the implementation of this Protocol, concluded in March this year, shows a decent start to implementation since it came into force seven years ago (2017). It highlights increased awareness about the Protocol in Member States especially within government, regulators, scientists, businesses, and the media. The Protocol continues to serve as a useful guide to strengthen regional cooperation and integration in Southern Africa.

This week-long event mainly focuses on private sector development through exhibitions and parallel sessions that have unique themes and focus, takes stock of the gains so far made, challenges encountered along the way, and how to respond appropriately, as well as opportunities that industrialisation provides for the region to take advantage of.

There are sessions on science and innovation, business opportunities, agro-business, energy infrastructure development in support of regional industrialisation, and promotion of value chains. Other sessions include sustainable energy investments, the Internationalisation of Start-Ups and Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in SADC, regional and continental trade, sustainable mining, standards and accreditation, all of which are geared towards regional economic development through sustainable and inclusive industrialisation.

In conclusion, allow me **Your Excellencies**, to highlight a few areas that I consider critical to the pursuit of, and the ultimate realisation of industrialisation in our region. They are certainly not exhaustive, but can certainly boost the industrialisation agenda. **First**, Member states should develop policies and regulations that actually and truly drive industrialisation; they must enable industry in the true sense of the word, and not just talk about it. **Second**, a deliberate focus must be placed on the creation of, and support to market access for those businesses and industries pursuing and leading the industrialisation effort. Real and meaningful access to markets is the oxygen that these businesses need to survive and also to achieve scale. Without it, they will suffocate and perish, which is an outcome we all dread. As they say, charity begins at home, in the member states themselves. In my view, we must love, buy

and consume these products, and accept the reality that quality and productivity should be a welcome hurdle and learning platform at the beginning, rather than using the hurdle to condemn and bury such products or businesses. **Third**, we should understand the main reason why we are industrialising. It is to make sure that no products leave the region without value addition. That way, we not only create the much needed jobs locally and make real contribution to the region's GDP, but also, we are sharing our knowledge, expertise and unique gifts with the rest of the world, as well as adding our own mark to the global value chains. **Fourth and lastly**, both member states and the Secretariat must engage directly with the businesses and industry, for the latter are the ones creating and adding value, and industrialising, as it were. We must not talk about them as we often do; rather, we should talk to them at every forum dedicated to this very subject of industrialisation. These businesses and industries ought to be at the discussion and strategizing table, guiding us on what they require to exploit the value chains, add value and truly substitute imports and create jobs.

As I close, I wish to underscore that a lot remains to be done to promote the SADC industrialisation agenda. Everyone present here today, and this week, demonstrate our collective commitment to take the regional integration agenda to greater heights, through economic and technological transformation of SADC economies.

I believe that it is a perfect coincidence, or God's plan that we are holding the SADC Industrialisation Week in Zimbabwe. We are indeed in the right location, recalling that the Republic of Zimbabwe championed the SADC industrialisation agenda during its chairing of SADC in 2014, leading to the adoption by the April 2015 Extra-Ordinary Summit, of the SADC Industrialization Strategy and Roadmap 2015–2063. The Republic is again assuming the Chair of SADC next month, and we look forward to His Excellency Dr Mnangagwa's leadership and conviction to drive the industrialisation agenda further, and lead by example. The Secretariat is ready to support and enable Your Excellency to lead us in this regard.

With these remarks, I wish you all fruitful deliberations. **I thank you for your kind attention.**

**Muito obrigado! Merci beaucoup! Asante sana! Ke a
leboga!**