



KEYNOTE ADDRESS

BY THE

**MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE AND WILDLIFE
HONOURABLE DR SITHEMBISO G. G. NYONI**

**OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE TWENTY NINTH SOUTHERN AFRICA
REGIONAL CLIMATE OUTLOOK FORUM (SARCOF 29)**

26 AUGUST 2024

RAINBOW TOWERS HOTEL, HARARE

SALUTATIONS!

Members of the Senate from the climate change committee:

Honourable Senator T. Mohadi

Honourable Senator Sengezo Tshabangu

Members of Parliament from the Portfolio Committee of Environment, Climate and Tourism;

Honourable Albert Nyakuedzwa and

Honourable Nomathemba Ndlovu

Permanent secretaries here present,

Directors and Director Generals of government ministries here present,

WMO representative for Eastern and Southern Africa... and members of the United Nations family here present,

Members of the diplomatic corps,

Members from the European Union Delegation here present,

SADC Director of Infrastructure, Transport and Meteorology: Ms Mopolao Mokoena,

Senior Officials and members from the SADC Secretariat,

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

I am honoured to welcome you all to Zimbabwe for the twenty ninth Southern African Regional Climate Outlook Forum (SARCOF-29) meeting which is being held here in Harare. We are gathered to share the rainfall seasonal forecast for the period 2024/2025 and come up with its implications for different sectors.

I have been briefed that our weather and climate experts from all the SADC member states arrived here in Harare on the 18th of August 2024 and have been working tirelessly over the past week to come up with a consensus seasonal rainfall forecast.

The Southern African Regional Climate Outlook Forum (SARCOF) and the Climate Experts Meeting (CEM) represent pivotal moments for collaboration and knowledge-sharing among our nations within the region. These platforms allow us to collectively learn from each other, come up with weather and climate projections, share best practices and present these to the different sectors.

The effects of climate variability and change is a major concern for us as SADC member states. We have witnessed first-hand the devastating effects of the extreme weather events, erratic rainfall patterns and prolonged droughts. These threaten our ecosystems, food security and socio-economic stability. It is

incumbent upon us to enhance our capacity in terms of coming up with more accurate and finer forecasts. These should include more parameters such as start of season, end of season and expected cumulative dry days or dry spells, as we call them in Zimbabwe. Our countries will be able to respond with determination and foresight using the scientific information provided by our National Meteorological and Hydrological Services.

Ladies and gentlemen.

The Regional Seasonal Rainfall forecast is a document that is used to inform member states to make informed decisions which cut across almost all economic sectors. During their 44th SADC Summit, the Heads of States and Governments emphasised the role of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services as and I quote "Summit of Heads of State and Governments emphasised the need to continue monitoring weather and climate risks, including the forecasted La Nina event and develop contingency measures to integrate the impact of disasters." This shows that your work is recognised by all the governments of the region.

Through this communique I would like to urge my counterparts in the region to ensure that the National Meteorological and

Hydrological Services are well resourced. This will enable them to monitor the weather and climate as well as to deliver reliable weather and climate forecasts. The Government of Zimbabwe has already started equipping the MSD with state-of-the-art weather observing equipment such as Automatic weather stations and weather radars in line with the **Early Warning for All** initiative.

Ladies and gentlemen.

The theme of SARCOF-29 is, “**At the frontline of climate action towards improved climate services in the SADC region.**” In this light, I therefore urge all member states to adequately resource their national Meteorological and Hydrological services in order to implement the National Framework for Water and Climate Services.

As we deliberate over the coming days, let us remain steadfast in our resolve to translate our discussions into tangible actions that inform decisions in the weather and climate sensitive sectors of our economy. Youths, women and children are key pillars of our communities and their involvement in weather and climate issues is crucial. I urge member states to involve them more.

In closing, I extend my deepest appreciation for the hard work that our climate scientists have put in behind the scenes. I also extend my appreciation to all of you the participants for your unwavering commitment to our shared goals. Let us seize this moment to strengthen partnerships, build everlasting collaborations through the SADC Climate Services Centre and leave a lasting legacy of weather stewardship for future generations.

I thank you.