



INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

BY

**HIS EXCELLENCY MR. ELIAS M. MAGOSI
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF SADC**

**AT THE OPENING OF THE EXTRAORDINARY SADC SUMMIT OF
HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT**

20TH NOVEMBER 2024

HARARE, REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE

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

Your Excellency Mr. Andry Rajoelina, President of the Republic of Madagascar, and incoming Chairperson of SADC;

Your Excellencies, SADC Heads of State and Government and Representatives;

Your Excellency Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi, President of Zanzibar, representing the Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence, and Security Cooperation, Her Excellency Dr Samia Suluhu Hassan;

Honourable Professor Amon Murwira, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade of the Republic of Zimbabwe, and Chairperson of the SADC Council of Ministers;

Honourable Ministers and Deputy Ministers;

Senior Officials from SADC Member States and SADC Secretariat Staff;

Members of the Media;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

A very good afternoon to you all!

Your Excellencies,

It is with a deep sense of respect and utmost humility that I deliver these introductory remarks at this Extraordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government that we are holding here in Harare, capital of the Republic of Zimbabwe, to discuss matters of peace and security in our region. While the SADC region remains peaceful and stable generally, we do have, unfortunately, some security challenges in some parts, which require our continued collective response to address. Political stability, peace and security are vital ingredients and enablers for SADC's socio-economic

development and integration. Any disturbance or compromise to any of these tenets of development threatens the lofty aspirations of the Member States and the region itself. It is for this reason that we are meeting yet again, almost one year since the region deployed the SADC Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (SAMIDRC), as a regional response to assist the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo address the deteriorating security situation in the eastern DRC.

I, therefore, express my profound gratitude to you, **Your Excellences**, for creating time from your very demanding schedules to attend this Extraordinary Summit, and deliberate on matters aimed at promoting peace and security in our region. We do not take your presence here lightly as it is testament to level of importance you, as the apex decision making body of SADC, place on matters of peace and security in our region. We are expectant with hope that your decisions today will provide worthwhile solutions to the eastern DRC, and the region at large.

I also wish to express our sincere gratitude to His Excellency Dr. Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa and the Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe, for graciously hosting this Summit and all preceding meetings at short notice, and for the exceptional hospitality that we have become accustomed to when we meet and integrate here in Harare. All these signify Zimbabwe's commitment to the promotion of peace, security and stability of the SADC region.

Your Excellencies, This Summit has been convened to take stock and appreciate the progress made in the eastern DRC, where over 6.9 million people have been displaced internally, a countless number of civilians have

been killed, and women, girls and the disabled face an endless dire humanitarian crisis as a result of armed conflict.

The Summit will also receive an update on the post-election political and security situation in the Republic of Mozambique following the violence that erupted immediately after the elections. We do not expect that elections processes could deteriorate to the extent of serious conflict, disruption of economic activity, threat to human lives, and even loss of lives, as well as damage to property and infrastructure. There are appropriate structures under the electoral laws and constitution of Member States that deal with complaints and any misgivings about elections. We plead with all those that are aggrieved with the election process to follow these lawful procedures and ensure safety of citizens and stability of the country.

Your Excellences, the deployment of SAMIDRC is consistent with the provisions of the SADC Defence Mutual Pact which, among others, calls for collective security to protect SADC Member States from all forms of aggression. The Mission was deployed on 15 December 2023, and has created some stability for the population affected by the armed conflict, especially those who have sought refuge in the areas of SAMIDRC operation. It has also created an enabling environment for political and diplomatic initiatives undertaken over the past four months, including the Ceasefire Deal struck on 4 August this year between the Governments of the DRC and Rwanda.

This notwithstanding, the reported violations of the ceasefire by some parties to the agreement are worrisome and should be treated with the contempt that they deserve. We had hoped that the ceasefire would create an opportunity for progress, enable enhanced solution-focused dialogue

between the parties, and facilitate a seamless flow of humanitarian support to those who are at the receiving end of the armed conflict. We reiterate the clarion call for all parties to observe all the stated obligations of the ceasefire. As I mentioned during the Extraordinary Organ Troika Summit this morning, the security situation in the eastern part of the DRC remains a source of regional concern. No effort must, therefore, be spared to ensure that this crucial ceasefire is nurtured and sustained.

In addressing the need for additional resources to sustain SAMIDRC operations, the Secretariat has undertaken several engagements with our International Cooperating Partners (ICPs) in a bid to mobilise resources in support of the Mission. To this end, we are continuing to explore various options with the African Union Peace and Security Council, and the United Nations Secretary-General, among others, to support the SAMIDRC. However, there is an urgent need for Member States to continue to honour their remittances towards the SAMIDRC budget to sustain operational effectiveness of the troops and consolidate the gains that we have recorded thus far.

As I have said before, **Your Excellences**, the attainment of a lasting peace in the eastern DRC needs complementary response strategies, including multiple political and diplomatic interventions such as the Luanda process, led by His Excellency President João Lourenço, President of the Republic of Angola, and the African Union Champion for Peace and Reconciliation in Africa, to address the core issues and conclude an agreed set of resolutions relative to the conflict.

I believe that we should focus more effort and the limited resources at our disposal, on dialogue between the parties, especially given the financial

constraints we have. And, with a great sense of humility, I advocate for Your Excellencies to consider having very robust but intimate and in- camera conversations with those Member States experiencing conflict as well as other stakeholders outside our region who are negatively affecting our peace and stability. We must work with all these stakeholders to change the narrative, and work towards peace. Peace should be the denominator for all our engagements with these stakeholders. I believe, Your Excellencies, that we can find lasting peace in our region. I believe that we can create a safe and enabling space for dialogue and peace to thrive. We cannot buy peace, I believe; it is very costly! We cannot achieve peace and stability by military interventions alone. Therefore, such interventions as the Luanda Process are a launching pad for Your Excellencies to use and build on. Again, with the same great sense of humility, I advocate, once more, for Your Excellencies to lead these robust but intimate and in- camera conversations.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence, and Security Cooperation, Her Excellency Dr Samia Suluhu Hassan, President of the United Republic of Tanzania, for her leadership and commitment to peace, security and stability of the region.

With these few remarks, may I humbly invite His Excellency Dr. Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa, the Chairperson of our regional bloc SADC, to deliver his remarks and officially open the Extraordinary Summit.

**I Thank you for your attention! Merci beaucoup! Muito
Obrigado! Asante Sana! Tatenda!**