



**REMARKS BY MS ANGELE MAKOMBO N'TUMBA
DEPUTY EXECUTIVE SECRETARY-REGIONAL INTEGRATION**

DURING THE OFFICIALS OPENIING

OF THE

**MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR DISATER
RISK MANAGEMENT**

VICTORIA FALLS, ZIMBABWE

27 NOVEMBER 2024

Our guest of Honour, Honourable Retired General Dr. C. G. D. N. Chiwenga, Vice President of the Republic of Zimbabwe;

Your Excellency, Senator Thulisile Dladla, the Honourable Deputy Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Eswatini

Honourable Daniel Garwe, Minister of Local Government and Public Works of the Republic of Zimbabwe and Chairperson of the SADC Committee of Ministers responsible Disaster Risk Management;

Hon Richard Moyo, M.P., Minister of State for Provincial Affairs-Matebele North

Honourable Ministers and their representatives present;

Permanent Secretaries and other Senior Government Officials from SADC Member States;

Our International Cooperating Partners;

Officials from SADC Member States;

Partners from the Media;

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen;

It is a great privilege and honour to welcome you all to this 5th Ordinary meeting of the Committee of Ministers responsible for Disaster Risk Management, on behalf of His Excellency Elias Magosi Executive Secretary of SADC Secretariat.

Honourable Vice President, I wish to thank you most sincerely for accepting to grace this occasion despite your busy schedules. We don't take it for granted. It is testament to the importance that you, and the Government of Zimbabwe attaches to the regional approach to effective disaster risk management.

Allow me also, Honourable Vice President, through you, to thank our host, the Government and People of the Republic of Zimbabwe for

hosting us in this beautiful city of Victoria Falls and for availing these magnificent facilities at our disposal.

Let me also take the opportunity to thank all Honourable Ministers and their representatives present here for your unwavering commitment to our common resolve to reduce the impacts of the recurrent disasters that continue to claim lives and erode our hard won development in the region. Your presence here demonstrates the commitment to sustainable disaster management.

Honourable Vice President,

Since the last meeting of Ministers responsible for Disaster Risk Management in May 2023, significant progress has been made in implementing activities, interventions and programmes to ensure the region's preparedness to disasters but also in ensuring that Member States are facilitated to enhance effective disaster risk management.

During this meeting, Ministers will review progress made on a number of regional disaster management activities and programmes. Among others, Honourable Vice President, Ministers will review and discuss modalities for the full operationalization of SADC Humanitarian and Emergency Operations Centre (SHOC); a Centre that the SADC Secretariat in collaboration with Member States, at the directive of Council has established to facilitate coordinated disaster preparedness and response, including supporting Member States affected by disasters. Ministers will also review progress on the operationalization of the Regional Appeal for Humanitarian Assistance launched by the His Excellency João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, President of the Republic of Angola in his capacity as Chairperson of SADC in May 2024, in response to the devastating impacts of the El Nino induced drought and floods. Ministers will further consider an Addendum to the Regional Appeal that has been prepared by the Secretariat with support from Member States and Partners, following the finalization of national vulnerability assessments by all Member States to determine the impacts of El Nino in various sectors.

Honourable Vice President

This meeting is taking place at the backdrop of a huge number of people requiring humanitarian assistance due to the impacts of the El Nino induced drought, and resources required to meet these needs are high. The wisdom of the Republic of Zimbabwe in bringing such a meeting to Victoria Falls is timely, as Ministers and partners will testify that the El Nino induced drought has affected even the majestic Victoria Falls.

This meeting comes at a time when the SADC region is transitioning from an El Nino which resulted in a drought that affected various sectors of the economy with particularly devastating impacts on food security, to a La Nina that projects normal to above normal rainfall with likelihood of torrential rains, floods and landslides.

Honourable Vice President,

It is expected that the current 2024/25 tropical cyclone season will have between 9 and 13 systems including tropical storms and cyclones that could develop with 4 to 7 of them reaching tropical cyclone level.

These projections and figures, should not scare us, but give us renewed zeal and impetus to scale up preparedness and Anticipatory Actions to strengthen our resilience to disaster risks.

May I therefore call upon Member States to ensure that they put in place adequate contingency plans and resources to make sure that we are able to protect the major development gains we have made and support vulnerable populations and communities that do not have the capacity to cope and withstand the impacts of these recurrent and persistent disasters.

Honourable Vice President

As I conclude, may I once again thank you for gracing this meeting. I am confident that with our renewed commitment and concerted efforts, the region will emerge victorious against the disasters that we continue to face. It is my hope that with the measures that continue

to put in place and upscaled, we will be able to alleviate the suffering of those affected by these natural disasters, minimize the loss of lives, disruption of livelihoods and damage to socio-economic infrastructure. May I also call upon Member States to continue to enhance environmental protection and management with a view to mitigate climate change and climate related phenomena that contribute to these disasters. There is no tomorrow against disasters, we all need to act now.

Finally, may I thank the Senior Officials and SADC Secretariat staff under the leadership of the Chairperson of the Committee of Senior Officials, for the excellent work done in preparing for this meeting.

With these few remarks, I wish you, fruitful deliberations and a successful meeting.

Thank you
Muito Obrigada
Merci Beaucoup
Asante Sana!