

CLOSING REMARKS BY OLEEN NDORI; CHAIR OF THE 30TH REGIONAL ADJUDICATION COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE SADC MEDIA AWARD COMPETITION; 26 JUNE 2025.

Head of SADC Communication and Public Relations Unit, Ms. Barbara Lopi;

Incoming Chairperson of RAC; the Republic of Madagascar

SADC National Media Coordinators;

Distinguished members of the Regional Adjudication Committee of the SADC Media Awards Competition;

Senior Government Officials here present;

Members of the Fourth Estate;

Ladies and Gentlemen, Comrades and Friends;

Good morning colleagues from member states. Good morning the SADC Secretariat. First, let me take this opportunity to congratulate the Republic of Madagascar as it celebrates 65 years of independence today.

In my capacity as chair of the 30th Regional Adjudication Committee of the SADC Media Awards Competition, I kindly invite colleagues to join me in wishing the Republic of Madagascar peace, prosperity and growth as the country marks 65 years of independence.

Turning to today's business; I am humbled and grateful to have been the chair for the past three days where we witnessed collaboration, cordiality and candid exchange of ideas as we adjudicated this year's entries. The dedication, patience and commitment from member states during the past three days must be commended and taken as a yardstick for similar future cooperation.

It is this spirit of unity and togetherness that the region needs to achieve its set goals of enhanced regional integration for sustainable development that benefit citizens of our region.

As indicated by Zimbabwe's Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Ministry's Permanent Secretary, Mr Nick Mangwana, in his opening remarks, we all need to take heed of the fast evolving nature of technology by ensuring that we incorporate modern tools in our story telling so as to enhance the packaging and dissemination of our content.

All this speaks directly to the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan 2020-2030 goal number 4, which calls for enhanced visibility and awareness of SADC, its activities and impact in all member states and globally. None but Ourselves can tell our own story better.

In line with this strategy, the Media Awards Competition is an essential tool in strengthening the region's voice on an array of issues- be it social, cultural, economic, climate, political- all captured and reflected in the entries for the 2025 SADC Media Awards Competition.

Indeed, the level of competitiveness and the quality of work submitted continue to improve. We urge our respective media organisations in the region to encourage media practitioners to take the regional story as an existential story that determines the survival and collective development of the region.

As we progress into the future, we note the importance of increasing journalists' participation by increasing not only the award stipend but also diversifying the categories for adjudication to reflect the ever-evolving media terrain and be able to attract as much eyeballs to different regional stories.

I humbly submit that the introduction of categories like the best **Multimedia Content/Reportage**, which uses a combination of different media elements like text, images, audio, video, and interactive features to create a dynamic and engaging experience. It's a way to present information using multiple forms of media, rather than relying on a single type like text or audio alone. This approach is particularly effective in digital environments, where it can enhance user engagement and communication.

I also suggest the introduction of another category for **Inforgraphics**, which comprises of clear and visual representation of data and information. Leaning on elements like imagery, symbols, charts and diagrams, an infographic can make complex ideas easy to understand. The simple meaning of an infographic is to tell a story through visual aids.

I believe these categories are essential as they both contribute in increasing visibility and capturing the SADC story in a unique different format and cater for audiences that exclusively consume digital content on various alternative platforms. These are mere suggestions that are up for further distillation and refinement from member states and the Secretariat.

As I conclude, allow me to thank your support during Zimbabwe's Chairmanship of the RAC meeting in telling SADC's story. I also want to thank my predecessor here in Zimbabwe, Mr William Chikoto, whose experience and deep knowledge of the media and regional issues have been invaluable to the smooth stewardship of the SADC Media Awards Competition.

I Thank you,

Merci Beaucoup,

Muito Obrigado,

Ndatenda,

Ngiyabonga,
Twalumba,
Asante Sana.