



SPEECH

By

**Honourable Ms Rafaravavitafika RASATA, the Foreign Affairs
Minister of the Republic of Madagascar**

**For the acceptance of the Chairpersonship of the Council of
Ministers of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC)**

12 August 2025,

Ivato International Conference Centre, Antananarivo, Madagascar

Honourable Professor Amon Murwira, Minister of Foreign affairs and International Trade of Zimbabwe and Chairperson of the SADC Council of Ministers, my very dear Brother,

Honourable Ladies and Gentlemen Ministers Members of the Council, very dear Sisters and Brothers,

Mr Elias Magosi, the SADC Executive Secretary,

Ladies and Gentlemen, partners and friends of SADC and Madagascar,

Ladies and Gentlemen the Senior Officials,

Dear Friends of the media,

Distinguished guests, all protocol observed.

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Madagascar, allow me to extend our warmest greetings and welcome to you, Honourable Ministers, and your respective delegations to Madagascar.

We are deeply honoured to host today the very first meeting of the SADC Council of Ministers in Madagascar, twenty years after joining this great regional Community. This event has a historic significance, as it is part of the preparations for the 45th Summit of Heads of State and Government, at a decisive moment for the future and integration of our Region.

Your presence in such large numbers is an honour for the Malagasy people and a sign of your deep commitment to our Community.

Tongasoa! Welcome to all of you!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would wish to congratulate most warmly and respectfully the Honourable Professor Dr Amon Murwira for fully and brilliantly accomplishing his tenure at the helm of our Council.

I would like to commend the Zimbabwe Chairpersonship of the SADC for enabling our Organisation to enhance its visibility and show a powerful presence not only when opportunities arose, but also when our Region had to go through challenges, crises and hardships.

On behalf of the Republic of Madagascar, I express our deep gratitude and assure you that the valuable achievements made under your tenure will continue to guide and inspire our collective action.

I would also like to express my gratitude to all the SADC Member States for the trust they have placed in Madagascar. As is the case with each of the other members, the membership of our Great Island in SADC is fully in line with our vision and development strategy.

It reflects our determination to deepen regional integration, boost and galvanise economic ties, promote the free movement of goods, services and know-how, and build together an area of peace, stability and shared prosperity.

Our commitment to SADC is inseparable from our goal to achieve sustainable and inclusive growth that fully benefits our populations. To us, SADC is an essential pillar for regional cooperation and solidarity, which we know we can rely on to address the challenges we are faced with and seize available opportunities together.

It is therefore with a deep sense of honour and responsibility that I accept today, on behalf of the Republic of Madagascar, the high mission of chairing the SADC Council of Ministers.

I am committed to fulfilling this mission with the firm determination to pursue and strengthen our common effort for a more prosperous, more integrated and more resilient SADC, for the benefit of all our peoples.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This handover comes at a highly symbolic and strategic moment:

the 45th anniversary of the SADC, which marks nearly half a century of cooperation, solidarity and the building of a regional identity. It is a time not only to take stock and be clear-sighted, but also make the necessary adjustments to open new windows of progress, without ever giving up on our founding values of unity, peace, dignity and shared development.

It also marks 20 years of Madagascar's membership of SADC. An age for taking more responsibilities, asserting one's voice and committing oneself even more strongly to building our common destiny.

Under the leadership of His Excellency Mr Andry Rajoelina, President of the Republic of Madagascar, as SADC Chair, we will follow a clear mandate, aligned with the regional priorities of the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP).

Our focus will be on the following:

- Industrialisation, in order to increase added value and create decent jobs;
- Agricultural transformation, in order to feed our Region with our own resources;
- Energy transition, in pursuit of clean and sustainable solutions;
- Resilience towards climate, economic and security shocks.

Special emphasis will be placed on promoting island states, which have long been on the side-lines of regional priorities. We will advocate for the full recognition of their specificities and for policies tailored to their realities in order to ensure true inclusive integration.

By joining together the maritime, economic, environmental and cultural potential of the islands with the resources and the agricultural and industrial power of the mainland States, we can build the self-reliant and competitive SADC that we want.

I am fully confident that this balanced alliance between insular and mainland Member States is key to strengthening the region and ensuring that all of them, whether big or small, move together towards common success.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our common goals can only be achieved through active cooperation and constant strengthening of our solidarity.

The challenges we face are clear:

- post-COVID economic recovery, with sluggish industrialisation and limited intra-regional trade;
- preserving regional security in the face of terrorism and protecting our seas;
- addressing the effects of climate change, including droughts and cyclones and its impacts on our natural resources;
- and lastly, global geopolitical instability, which undermines the principles of international law and multilateralism.

In response to such realities, we must embark on strategies based on joint actions and pooled resources.

The firm and constant commitment of each Member State remains critical, as our populations are counting on us to turn our goals into concrete and sustainable results.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In conclusion, I would like to commend the SADC Secretariat, for the excellent job it achieved under the leadership of its Executive Secretary, Mr Elias Magosi.

I have every confidence that we will develop a close and fruitful collaboration during our tenure to fulfil the aspirations of our Member States and our people.

I also thank the SADC Standing Committee of Senior Officials for preparing our meeting agenda and facilitating our proceedings.

In Malagasy language, we often say :

“Ny hazo tokana tsy mba ala”, which means “a single tree does not make a forest”. Together, with confidence and sincerity, we will write a new chapter of progress, prosperity and solidarity.

Lastly, from the bottom of my heart, I wish to tell you : Here in Madagascar, you are at home.

Consider our country as your second home.

Misaotra tompoko !

Je vous remercie. I thank you, Muito Obrigada, Asante Sana.