

**MEETING OF SADC SENIOR OFFICIALS TO PRESENT KEY REPORTS
EMANATING FROM COUNCIL DECISIONS AND OTHER INITIATIVES**

20 – 21 NOVEMBER 2025, GABORONE, BOTSWANA

OPENING REMARKS BY CHAIRPERSON

Programme Director,

**Outgoing Chair of SADC, represented by the distinguished delegation of the
Republic of Zimbabwe,**

**Ms. Angèle Makombo N'tumba, Deputy Executive Secretary (Regional
Integration),**

Distinguished Senior Officials from SADC Member States,

SADC Secretariat,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to extend a warm welcome to all of you present in this Extraordinary Meeting of Senior Officials held here in Gaborone, Botswana.

I would like to take this opportunity to commend the SADC Secretariat for convening this important meeting, which is meant to follow up on some of the key decisions of the Council of Ministers.

Let me also express my profound gratitude to the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany for its continued technical and financial support to SADC's programmes, ably represented here today by the GiZ.

As we all know, the Standing Committee of Senior Officials is a technical advisory body to Council of Ministers and therefore we should not fail in executing this solemn responsibility.

Distinguished Delegates,

As you know, we are now midway in implementing SADC's Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2020-2030. For this reason, we are taking stock of both achievements and challenges emanating from our experiences of implementation. We have come a long way, and I believe we have made significant strides in strengthening cooperation in various areas. Our programmes continue to expand in number and scope, thus laying a solid foundation for future progress.

Despite the achievements, many challenges remain. Our economies have not been sufficiently transformed and continue to be commodity-based, with weak value addition, poor manufacturing and industrial basis. The region has still not reaped the benefits that accrue from trading with itself or with the rest of the world, resulting in a share of global trade that is not commensurate with our population or resource endowments. SADC continues to struggle to enhance the growth of its industrial base, the diversification of its economies and to ensure its full integration into the global economy.

Our region is also going through rapid and new challenges including climate change, economic shocks, security threats, intra-state conflicts and rising geo-political tensions among others. These challenges will shape the lives of current and future generations, and the path ahead can be less certain without a robust strategy, which is responsive to the contemporary challenges facing the region.

Distinguished Delegates,

The Deputy Executive Secretary has eloquently explained the objective of this meeting, which is to present and discuss the draft reports emanating from Council Decisions and other initiatives undertaken by SADC. The DES RI has also provided a brief context behind each of these initiatives. Therefore, I need not elaborate any further. Undoubtedly, we have an important agenda ahead of us. Let us give this work the requisite attention and provide the necessary counsel and direction on the way forward. After all, this is a practical way of providing technical advice to the Council of Ministers as mandated by the SADC Treaty.

I wish us productive deliberations and looking forward to constructive engagements in the coming two days.

Thank you!

Merci Beaucoup!

Muito Obrigado!

Asante sana!

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