



## **WELCOMING REMARKS**

**BY**

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

**AVANI HOTEL, GABORONE, BOTSWANA**

**20 – 21 NOVEMBER 2025**

**Chairperson,**

**Distinguished Senior Officials from SADC Member States,**

**Staff from SADC Secretariat**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

***Good morning to you all.***

Allow me on behalf of the SADC Secretariat to welcome all of you to this Meeting. I would like to thank all the Senior Officials represented here today for making time to come and participate in this meeting. I would also like to express my profound gratitude and appreciation to the German Government for the support rendered through the Strengthening National - Regional Linkages (SNRL) Programme which is not only covering the costs of the meeting but also the work leading to some of the Reports which will be presented and discussed. It is my hope that they will find it necessary to continue to render assistance to the implementation of SADC's regional cooperation and integration agenda.

The objective of this meeting is to present and discuss the draft Reports emanating from Council Decisions and other initiatives undertaken by SADC, to enhance the implementation of RISDP 2020-2030. These reports to be presented are based on the following issues:

- (i) Rationalization of Number and Quality of Council Decisions;
- (ii) The Non-State Actors' Engagement Mechanism;

- (iii) The SADC National Committees Peer Learning and Review Mechanism (S-PLRM); and
- (iv) Guidelines for Establishment and Operationalization of SADC National Committees

### **Distinguished Delegates,**

Let me provide a very brief context to each of these items.

#### **(i) Rationalization of Number and Quality of Council Decisions**

You will recall that Council at its meeting held in August 2024, directed the Secretariat to develop a Position Paper on rationalizing the number and quality of Decisions as a strategic imperative to enhance SADC's institutional effectiveness, efficiency and impact in advancing regional integration. Again, in August 2025, at its meeting held in Antananarivo, Madagascar, Council further directed the Secretariat to develop a criteria/mechanism for rationalization of the decision-making process while considering the availability of resources to enhance effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation process. A draft Position Paper has been prepared which aims to provide a framework for rationalizing SADC Summit and Council Decisions to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of decision-making and implementation processes, thereby strengthening regional integration outcomes.

#### **(ii) Non-State Actors' Engagement Mechanism**

This is an issue which has been on the agenda for a long time now. We all appreciate that Article 23 of the SADC Treaty recognizes NSAs as an important stakeholder in the implementation of the SADC Agenda, and

over the years, there have been efforts to ensure that engagement with NSAs is undertaken in a formal and structured manner. These efforts culminated with the approval by Council of the Mechanism for Engagement in August 2022, and thereafter the approval by Council of the Accreditation Guidelines in March 2024.

However, at a later stage, there were concerns raised by the State Security Sub-Committee (SSSC) and thereafter the Ministerial Council of the Organ (MCO) regarding some aspects of the proposed Mechanism for Engagement with NSAs which led to another Decision by Council to defer its operationalization pending further scrutiny of the Guidelines for accrediting NSAs.

A Position Paper on the scrutiny of the Guidelines for accrediting NSAs was prepared and presented to the MCO. The recommendations from the MCO were later presented to Council which at its meeting held in Antananarivo, Madagascar in August 2025, directed the Secretariat to incorporate the recommendations of the MCO meeting, held in July 2025 in Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania into the SADC Mechanism for Engagement with NSAs, for consideration by Council in March 2026. The revised Report on the Mechanism for Engagement with NSAs, which incorporates the comments from MCO has now been finalized.

### **(iii) SADC National Committees Peer Learning and Review Mechanism (S-PLRM)**

The SADC National Coordination Structures Symposium held in Maseru, Lesotho, in July 2023, revealed significant gaps between the institutional vision articulated in Article 16A of the SADC Treaty which establishes the SADC National Committees (SNCs) as critical structures for coordinating

and implementing regional integration initiatives at the national level, and the practical reality of coordination capacity across Member States. In particular, the persistent challenges in establishing and operationalizing effective national coordination structures for regional integration were highlighted by participating Member States.

A SADC National Committee Peer Learning and Review Mechanism (SPLRM) has been developed to promote shared learning for functioning and sustaining the work of SNCs in the Member States. This framework is a result of a comprehensive multi-year consultation and development process. The objective of the S-PLRM is to create the environment and suitable conditions that can foster collective learning, strengthen capacity and accountability and provide support for actions that SADC coordination structures have committed to undertake, particularly in establishing and operationalizing SNCs in Member States. The S-PLRM was piloted in six (6) Member States, and a revised framework has now been finalized which will be presented and discussed at this meeting.

#### **(iv) Guidelines and Model Law on the Establishment and Operationalization of SADC National Committees (SNCs)**

Article 16A (1), requires each SADC Member State (MS) to establish a National Committee composed of key national stakeholders as outlined in Article 23. However, as I mentioned earlier, several Member States continue to face challenges in establishing and operationalizing their SNCs in compliance with Treaty provisions. To address these challenges the SADC Council of Ministers at its meeting in August 2016 directed the Secretariat to provide technical assistance to Member States in strengthening or establishing SNCs.

To operationalize Council's directive and promote a consistent regional approach to implementing SADC decisions domestically, the Secretariat has developed Draft Guidelines on the Establishment and Operationalization of SADC National Committees (SNCs) and the Draft Model Law on the Establishment of SADC National Committees (SNCs). The two instruments are grounded on the SADC Treaty, particularly Article 5(2)(b), Article 16A, and Article 23, which underscore the importance of people's participation in the SADC regional integration and development agenda.

### **Distinguished Delegates**

The draft Reports and instruments on the items I have just described will be presented and discussed at this meeting, the objective being to solicit the views and inputs from Senior Officials, before they are revised and subsequently presented to Council for approval through the normal process.

Let me once again, thank you for making time to participate in this meeting, and wish you fruitful deliberations.

**Thank you** for your kind attention.

**Merci Beaucoup!**

**Muito Obrigado!**

**Asante sana!**

Allow me now to invite the Chairperson to continue with the proceedings of the meeting.