



## **REMARKS**

**BY**

**MS. ANGÈLE MAKOMBO N'TUMBA**

**SADC DEPUTY EXECUTIVE SECRETARY FOR REGIONAL  
INTEGRATION**

**AT THE**

**LAUNCH AND ORIENTATION OF THE SADC COMMUNICATION,  
AWARENESS AND VISIBILITY STRATEGY 2025–2030**

**GRAND PALM HOTEL – GABORONE BOTSWANA**

**18<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2025**

**Your Excellencies, Ambassadors and High Commissioners from  
SADC Member States;**

**Ms. Simone Goertz, Head of Economic and Development  
Cooperation, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in  
Botswana;**

**Mr. Christoph Schmidt, GIZ Country Director for Botswana;**

**Representatives from the SADC National Contact Points;**

**Representatives from the SADC National Media Coordinators;**

**Programme Manager and team from the Strengthening National-  
Regional Linkages in SADC (SNRL);**

**SADC Secretariat Staff;**

**Representative from the Southern Africa Editors Forum;**

**Representative from the Southern Africa Broadcasting Association**

**Representative from Southern African Research and  
Documentation Centre;**

**Representative from the Media Institute of Southern Africa –  
Botswana Chapter**

**Communications Practitioners;**

**Esteemed Guests;**

**Members of the Press;**

Good morning.

It is with immense pride and heartfelt gratitude that I welcome you to this landmark occasion, the official launch and orientation of the SADC Communication, Awareness and Visibility Strategy 2025–2030. Your attendance underscores the important role you play in shaping how we communicate the essence, achievements, and aspirations of Southern African Development Community (SADC).

Let me begin by expressing our sincere appreciation to the Governments of the SADC Member States for their invaluable support in developing this

Strategy. In particular, we acknowledge the technical contributions of the SADC National Contact Points and the SADC National Media Coordinators.

In the same spirit, I extend our deep thanks to the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany for its financial support through the SADC-German cooperation project, *Strengthening National-Regional Linkages in SADC (SNRL)*, implemented by GIZ. We value your support which has been instrumental in enabling us to gather here today.

In August 2025, the SADC Council of Ministers approved the Communication, Awareness and Visibility Strategy 2025–2030 and directed the SADC Secretariat to commence its implementation in close collaboration with Member States, particularly the SADC National Contact Points, SADC National Media Coordinators, and all relevant stakeholders.

The SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2020–2030, our guiding blueprint for regional development and integration, places enhanced awareness and visibility of SADC, its mandate, activities, and impact, at the heart of its strategic objectives. This emphasis is both timely and well-founded. Each year, our Member States and International Cooperating Partners generously commit resources to support SADC programmes, while our Ministers invest significant time and expertise in Council and other meetings to assess progress, shape strategic direction, and endorse the annual operational plan and budget. It is our collective responsibility to communicate the outcomes and benefits of these efforts, to showcase the relevance of SADC initiatives across our region and highlight their tangible, positive impact on the lives of our citizens.

SADC serves as a trusted platform for harmonising policies, pooling resources, and addressing shared challenges, ranging from trade and infrastructure to security and governance. It empowers Member States to achieve collectively what would be difficult to accomplish individually. At its core, SADC is about building a regional community where citizens can connect, prosper, and share in the promise of a better future. Since its establishment in 1980, SADC has developed a suite of policies and instruments that continue to deliver transformative outcomes across the

region, enhancing trade, streamlining systems, facilitating mobility, and uplifting communities.

These regional instruments are not merely policies; they are engines of transformation. Let me share a few stories that illustrate the tangible impact of SADC programmes:

- **Lesego**, a long-haul truck driver from Botswana, once worried whether his license would be accepted across borders. Thanks to the harmonised SADC driver's license system, his license is now recognised in South Africa, Namibia, Zambia, and many other countries in the region. Bureaucratic hurdles have given way to seamless mobility, turning paperwork into freedom.
- **Anna**, a seamstress in Windhoek, Namibia, sews school uniforms for clients in Botswana. Cross-border payments used to take days, sometimes weeks. But with the SADC Real-Time Gross Settlement System, payments now arrive the same day. Anna can grow her business, build savings, and plan for a delivery van. For her, this system is more than infrastructure, it's peace of mind.
- **Thabo**, a cross-border driver, used to endure exhausting delays at border posts. But in 2023, everything changed. With the rollout of SADC's Electronic Certificate of Origin and customs system, Thabo now clears his goods in the borders in hours. His documents are processed electronically, sometimes before he even arrives. This system has streamlined trade, reduced costs, and improved health and safety.
- **In remote villages**, where banks are scarce, mobile phones are becoming tools of financial inclusion. SADC's Mobile Money Guidelines, introduced in 2024, are helping Member States harmonise regulations and expand access to financial services. This initiative is especially transformative for women, youth, and informal traders, groups historically excluded from formal banking. By supporting mobile money, SADC is modernising finance and ensuring opportunity reaches every corner of the region.

These are just a few of the many stories that showcase the impact of SADC programmes. I encourage you to highlight and share more of such

stories, so that citizens across the region understand that behind every SADC policy is a person, and behind every strategy is a life transformed.

SADC's achievements are remarkable, but without effective communication, they risk going unnoticed. As the saying goes, "winking in the dark" achieves little without a spotlight.

The Communication, Awareness and Visibility Strategy 2025–2030 that will be launched this morning is designed to enhance public understanding of SADC's mandate, priorities, and impact and leverage multiple platforms to reach diverse audiences across Member States.

This Strategy embraces our region's rich diversity, linguistic, cultural, and social, and ensures inclusivity for women, youth, persons with disabilities, and marginalised communities.

I call upon the SADC National Contact Points and the SADC National Media Coordinators, to work hand-in-hand with the Secretariat to implement this Strategy with passion and purpose. To our stakeholders, regional institutions, development partners, media houses, and civil society, I invite you to help us build a regional narrative that inspires pride and unity.

To our technical teams and communication professionals, embrace this Strategy with creativity and dedication. Let us innovate and ensure that every citizen knows they are part of something greater, something transformative.

To everyone who contributed to the development of this Strategy, thank you. Your insights, expertise, and passion have laid the foundation for enhanced regional communication.

Following today's launch, you will be oriented on the contents of the Strategy so that we begin to identify activities and actions for its implementation. For us at the Secretariat, this Strategy is more than a policy document, it is a bold declaration of our shared vision for a connected and empowered Southern Africa.

The future of SADC is bright. And together, we will make it visible.

I thank you.

**Merci Beaucoup.**  
**Muito Obrigada.**  
**Asante Sana.**