



PRESS RELEASE

SADC Ministers Responsible for Gender and Women's Affairs to Meet Virtually to Advance Regional Gender Equality Agenda

Gaborone, Botswana, 16 June 2026: The Southern African Development Community (SADC) will convene the Virtual Meeting of SADC Ministers Responsible for Gender and Women's Affairs from 22 to 26 June 2026. The meeting will be chaired by the Republic of South Africa and will bring together Ministers responsible for Gender and Women's Affairs from SADC Member States to review progress and provide policy guidance on the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment in the region.

The meeting will be preceded by deliberations of Senior Officials, who will review technical matters and make recommendations for consideration by Ministers.

During the meeting, Ministers are expected to consider the region's gender performance and review progress made in the implementation of the SADC Gender Programme for 2025/2026. The discussions will cover key regional priorities, including the implementation of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, gender mainstreaming across SADC programmes, and the implementation of the Gender Equality Seal within the SADC Secretariat.

Ministers will also deliberate on initiatives aimed at strengthening women's economic empowerment, including the implementation of the Regional Multi-Dimensional Women's Economic Empowerment Programme and the SADC/AUDA-NEPAD project on Enhancing Women Entrepreneurship Development. These initiatives are aimed at promoting women's participation in economic development, entrepreneurship, leadership and decision-making.

The meeting is further expected to review progress in the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, with a focus on strengthening the role and participation of women in peacebuilding, conflict prevention, mediation and security processes across the region.

Ministers will also consider the implementation of the SADC Regional Strategy and Framework of Action for Addressing Gender-Based Violence, 2018-2030, including its Acceleration Plan. Discussions will include capacity-building on the prevention of gender-based violence, as well as strengthening GBV data management systems to

improve reporting, response and accountability.

In addition, Ministers will receive updates on regional and international gender equality and women empowerment treaties, as well as SADC's participation at the 70th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women and the Africa Pre-CSW process.

The outcomes of the meeting are expected to further strengthen regional cooperation and accelerate the implementation of commitments on gender equality, women's empowerment, gender-based violence prevention, and women's participation in leadership and decision-making.

Ms. Barbara Lopi, Head of Communication and Public Relations, email; blopi@sadc.int or Ms. Anethe Mtambanengwe, email; amtambanengwe@sadc.int and cc prinfo@sadc.int.

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SADC in Brief

SADC is an organisation of 16 Member States established in 1980 as the Southern African Development Coordinating Conference (SADCC) and later, in August, 1992 transformed into the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The mission of SADC is to promote sustainable and equitable economic growth and socio-economic development through efficient, productive systems, deeper cooperation and integration, good governance and durable peace and security; so that the region emerges as a competitive and effective player in international relations and the world economy. Member States are Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

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