SADC TERTIARY INSTITUTION ESSAY COMPETITION 2027

"Which theory on regionalism best suits the era, fraternity and works of the SADC Founders?"

SADC Secretariat is calling for submissions of essay entries from active tertiary institution going learners. The wordings of the think piece and content should aim at promoting the role played by the Founders of SADC taking into account the prevailing peace and security which contributes to the SADC's Objectives and Common Agenda

1. ELIGIBILITY:

All active tertiary institution-going learners from all 16 Southern African Development Community (SADC) Member States are welcome to participate in the competition.

2. TOPIC:

The topic of the competition is:

"Which theory on regionalism best suits the era, fraternity and works of the SADC Founders?"

The SADC Council of Ministers, during its meeting in August 2020, directed the SADC Secretariat to operationalise the initiative to recognise and honour the Founders of SADC. The initiative, as approved by the SADC Council, is aimed at providing due recognition to the Founders of SADC for their contribution to the establishment of SADC and subsequent pursuance of a regional integration agenda.

To this end, the SADC Secretariat is calling for submissions of essay entries from active tertiary institution going students . The wordings of the think piece and content should aim at promoting the role played by the Founders of SADC taking into account the prevailing peace and security in the region which contributes to the SADC's Objectives and Common Agenda.

The SADC objectives, as stated in Article 5 of the SADC Treaty (1992) are to:

- achieve development and economic growth, alleviate poverty, enhance the standard and quality of life of the peoples of Southern Africa and support the socially disadvantaged through regional integration;
- evolve common political values, systems and institutions;
- promote and defend peace and security;
- promote self-sustaining development on the basis of collective self-reliance, and the inter-dependence of Member States;
- achieve complementarity between national and regional strategies and programmes;
- promote and maximise productive employment and utilisation of resources of the region;
- achieve sustainable utilisation of natural resources and effective protection of the environment; and
- strengthen and consolidate the long-standing historical, social and cultural affinities and links among the peoples of the region.

The SADC Common agenda is linked to the SADC Objectives and is underpinned by a series of principles and policies including:

- promotion of sustainable and equitable economic growth and socio-economic development that ensures poverty alleviation with the ultimate objective of its eradication;
- promotion of common political values, systems, and other shared values, which are transmitted through institutions that are democratic, legitimate and effective; and
- promotion, consolidation and maintenance of democracy, peace and security.

3. BACKGROUND

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) is a Regional Economic Community comprising of 16 Member States, namely; Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

The SADC, as an institution in 2020, commemorated the 40th Anniversary of its journey from 1st April, 1980 when its forerunner, the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) was officially established, in Lusaka, Zambia and later transformed to SADC on 17th August 1992 in Windhoek, Namibia. Since its inception, SADC has demonstrated unwavering commitment to the advancement of the regional integration agenda, specifically socio-economic development, peace, stability and security in the region.

From 1977, active consultations were undertaken by representatives of Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Eswatini, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, working together as Frontline States. Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC-precursor to SADC) was officially formed on 1 April, 1980 comprising all the majority ruled states of Southern Africa, Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Eswatini, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The Heads of States and Government of the Frontline States and representatives of the governments of Lesotho, Malawi, and Eswatini signed the Lusaka Declaration "Towards Economic Liberation" in Lusaka, Zambia and thus SADCC was born.

The Founders of SADC are: Presidents Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, Seretse Khama of Botswana, António Agostinho Neto of Angola, Robert Gabriel Mugabe of Zimbabwe, Samora Machel of Mozambique, Dr Kamuzu Banda of Malawi and Kings Moshoeshoe II of Lesotho and Sobhuza II of Eswatini.

4. OVERALL OBJECTIVE

To enhance awareness of SADC citizens, through evidence-based research, of the historical genesis and process of regional integration and the pivotal role played by Founders of SADC.

To honour SADC Founders, and increase SADC citizens' awareness of the history of the liberation of Southern Africa, regional cooperation and regional integration, as well as to recognise the pioneering contribution of the Founders of SADC.

5. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of this competition essay are as follows:

- Conduct a research on the history of the Founders and the roles they played in the liberation of Southern Africa, and the establishment of SADC;
- Outline their achievements as individuals, their roles, watershed speeches and quotes;
- Outline the SADC Founding fathers' heritage; and
- Produce a write-up which will be used to raise awareness among SADC citizens, in particular the youth, regarding the history and Founders of SADC, and in so doing, preserve their legacies.

6. INSTRUCTIONS

Essays are coordinated by the Ministries of Education in all respective SADC Member States. It is the responsibility of Government officials in SADC Member States to submit the top 3 essays to SADC Secretariat for adjudication at regional level. NOTE: The SADC Secretariat will not accept entries from individuals and as such those entries will be automatically disregarded and disqualified. The essay should be 3000- 4000 words. The deadline for submission of entries to Ministries of Education in respective SADC Member States is 31st January 2027. The deadline for submission of entries to the SADC Secretariat by Ministries of Education, through their respective National Contact Points, is 28th February 2027.

All entries should be typed and submitted in both hard copies and electronic version in Microsoft Word document format. Entrants should sign and initial each page of the hard copy document to make sure that they have not been altered. All essays entering the competition should be in one of the SADC working languages, i.e. English, Portuguese and/or French. All submissions must be accompanied by a SADC Tertiary Institution Essay Competition Entry Form which should contain full contact details of the entrant, including, passport-sized photograph, physical address, telephone number, copy of national Identification card, copy of valid Student National Identification Card, and email address, and contact details of the entrant.

7. MARKING GUIDELINES:

The set of questions below are meant to guide entrants in constructing their essay accordingly. In answering the research question above, tertiary students should ensure that they address the sub-questions listed below in their essays:

- **Historical Context:**
  How has SADC evolved politically and economically as a region since its foundation in 1980?
  (1000 words, 25 points)

- **The Founders' Vision and Values**
  How did the principles of solidarity, fraternity, liberation and regional cooperation shape the work and vision of the SADC Founders?
  (1000 words, 25 points)

- **Identifying the Most Relevant Theory**
  Which theory of regionalism best reflects the ideals, actions and legacy of the SADC Founders, and why?
  (1000 words, 25 points)

- **Relevance for Present and Future SADC**
  How relevant is the chosen theory of regionalism to the current and future development of SADC?
  (1000 words, 25 points)

Judging criteria are as follows:

Uniqueness - unique in its genre or create something entirely new, exciting, original material that stands out from the pack.

Creativity – Creation of new dimension, twist to a style of writing and great new spin.

Communication – Communicating positive message of the region, with brilliance, creativity and imagination in use of words.

The brief - The essay type, subject and content focus, word limit and any other set requirements in conformity to the guidelines

Knowledge and understanding - Assessing how well one has understood the question and how much they know and articulate the subject matter, and see breadth and depth of knowledge.

Argument and critical thinking - This is an area to give attention to convincing the reader of your argument, and how one uses information to tell the story or make your particular point.

Use of sources– This examines all type and range of sources used in the construction of your essay to demonstrate analysis beyond any core texts to include current, respectable works, and maybe even discuss controversial ones.

Style and presentation - This is how one manages to package substance and content, e.g. such as spelling, punctuation, grammar and sentence construction, etc.

Note: The essay should not depict violence, sexually explicit language, or substance abuse, profanity by substituting symbols or words, and should be overly sensitive on matters of race, culture, tribe, religion and freedom of association.

Competition rules and guidelines

The entrants' work should not have been published/broadcast by a registered and/or authorized broadcast company, newspaper, blogs, radio station, television station or agency or carried on an online of a registered and/or authorized agency in any of the SADC Member States.

The competition will only accept one (1) submission per writer and is open to all registered tertiary School learners with a valid Student ID.

All writers/candidates who are SADC nationals may enter the competition, except those in institutions contracted by SADC, subsidiaries of SADC and the SADC Secretariat staff.

All essays entering the competition should be in one of the SADC working languages, i.e. English, Portuguese and/or French. However, the writer can use some inserts in any national indigenous language of the SADC Region, but provide translation in the glossary.

The tone/composition of the essay must be reflective of the SADC region; and relate to the people and culture of its inhabitants.

Entries will be initially screened and judged by the Ministries of Education in all respective SADC Member States which will consequently submit the top three (3) essays per Member State to SADC Secretariat for adjudication at regional level and selection of the top three (3) overall winners.

Entry through adjudication by the three (3) selected SADC panelists/judges, and the decision of the Secretariat shall be final.

Entries from lecturers/ tutors and employees of tertiary schools will not be accepted, and shall not be entered for adjudication.

The use of Artificial Intelligence is strictly forbidden. Entries that have utilised Artificial Intelligence will be disqualified.

In a spirit of fairness, all past winners are urged not to participate.

The SADC Secretariat reserves the right not to award a prize in any of the essay if the entries do not satisfactorily meet the competition requirements.

8. WINNER AND PRIZE

The winning entry will receive a once off prize money which will cover the outright payment of the Intellectual Property Rights of the essay. The monetary prize will be accompanied by a certificate signed by the SADC Executive Secretary. The prize will be paid directly to the winner in his/her home country through the Secretariat.

The prizes are as follows;

- 1st prize = USD2000
- 2nd Prize = USD1500
- 3rd Prize = USD1000
- the top 10 winners will all receive certificates signed by the SADC Executive Secretary.

Announcement of the winners will be done through the SADC website (www.sadc.int) including its social media platforms on 17th August 2027.

The Secretariat reserves the right to use the essay as and when required, and the writer reserves the right to share/ distribute the essay outside the SADC Secretariat sphere without consequences, but will not distort the original content and meaning of the piece. The writer will not claim any future additional royalties or fees for the piece for future use by the Secretariat. The winning entry will remain the property of the SADC Secretariat.

ISSUED BY SADC SECRETARIAT
GABORONE, BOTSWANA
DATE: 27 OCTOBER 2026

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SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY SECRETARIAT

SADC TERTIARY INSTITUTION ESSAY COMPETITION ENTRY FORM

Photograph

PART I

A. PARTICULARS OF PARTICIPANT (to be completed in block / capital letters)

1. Full name: _____

   Surname: _____

   Other / First: _____

2. Residential Address: _____

   _____

   Phone:_____Fax:_____Email:_____

3. Business / Employer's Address: _____

   _____

   Phone:_____Fax:_____Email:_____

4. Nationality:_____

   Date and Place of Birth: _____

   Passport No: _____

   Date and Place of Issue: _____

   Date of Expiry: _____

Member States:

Angola	Lesotho	Malawi	Namibia	Eswatini
Botswana	Madagascar	Mauritius	Seychelles	United Republic of Tanzania
Comoros		Mozambique	South Africa	Zambia Zimbabwe
Democratic Republic of Congo				