2027 SADC SECONDARY SCHOOL ESSAY COMPETITION

1. Eligibility:

All secondary/high school going students from all 16 Southern African Development Community (SADC) Member States are welcome to participate in the Competition.

2. Topic:

In 1980 the SADC Founders officially formed the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), in Lusaka, Zambia which was later transformed into SADC on 17th August 1992 in Windhoek, Namibia. Since its inception SADC has demonstrated unwavering commitment to peace, stability, and security in the region through adoption of several instruments aimed at ensuring peace and stability, as preconditions for socio-economic development.

The topic for the 2027 SADC Secondary School Essay competition is; ***"How Can Infrastructure Development, Agricultural and Critical Minerals Transformation Promote Industrialisation and Help Build a Better SADC Region?"***

The topic is derived from the theme of the 46th Ordinary SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government held in the Republic of South Africa, Durban on 17th August 2026, which is; "*Resilient, Sustainable, and Inclusive Industrialisation through Infrastructure Development, Agricultural and Critical Minerals Transformation in Pursuit of a Just World*"**,** highlighting infrastructure, agriculture, and critical minerals as key drivers of industrialisation for a competitive, climate-resilient, inclusive and prosperous SADC region.

3. Instructions

The essay must contain a **maximum of 1000 words and a minimum of 900 words in English**, and a **maximum of 1200 words and a minimum of 1100 words in French and Portuguese**. Essays that do not comply with the permissible number of words will not be considered. A complete word count must be provided at the end of the essay. Learners must provide references for their work where necessary; however, references do not contribute towards the word count of the entry. The preferred format of citation is APA. To facilitate simple sequencing, each answer must be accompanied by the question at the top. Learners are cautioned against using the bullet point format for their work.

The deadline for submission of entries to the Secretariat is 31st May 2027.

It is advised that **ALL** entries should be typed and submit both electronic version in Microsoft Word document format and hard copies. 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 French. All submissions must contain full contact details of the entrant, including, passport sized photograph, physical address, telephone, fax number, e-mail addresses, WhatsApp contacts and banking details. It mandatory to provide the Secretariat with banking details as per the table below:

Name of account holder	
Name of Bank	
Branch Name	
Country	
Swift Code	
Town/City	
State	
Contact number (including country code)	
Email address	
WhatsApp contact	
Postal code	
Account Number	
Gender	
Bank code	

4. **Marking Guidelines:**

The set of questions below are meant to guide entrants when responding to the question above. In answering the question above, secondary school learners should ensure that they address the questions listed below in their essays;

1. What does resilient, sustainable and inclusive industrialisation mean, and how can it contribute to the future development of the SADC region? (20 points)

2. How can improved infrastructure help SADC countries develop industries, create employment and connect communities and markets across the region? (20 points)

3. How can the transformation of agriculture help SADC countries move from producing raw agricultural products to developing stronger industries and value-added products?
(20 points)

4. How can SADC ensure that the extraction and use of critical minerals benefit local communities, protect the environment and contribute to long-term development?
(20 points)

5. How can young people contribute to building a more resilient, sustainable and inclusive SADC region and promoting a just world?
(20 points)

ISSUED BY SADC SECRETARIAT
GABORONE, BOTSWANA
DATED: NOVEMBER 5, 2026