

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**STATEMENT BY HONOURABLE NETUMBO
NANDI-NDAITWAH, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
AND MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
AND COOPERATION AT THE OCCASION OF THE
SADC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ON 13 AUGUST
2018, WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA**

Honourable Ministers and Deputy Ministers
SADC Executive Secretary, Dr Stergomena Lawrence Tax
Heads of Senior Official's Delegations
Officials from SADC Member States
Officials from the SADC Secretariat
Members of the Media
Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me great pleasure, on behalf of Government and people of the Republic of Namibia to welcome you all to Namibia and to the Council of Ministers' Meeting of the 38th SADC Ordinary Summit. We are indeed very much honoured and delighted to host the 38th SADC Ordinary Summit here in our capital city, Windhoek.

Allow me also to extend a special welcome to our brother Hon. Mohamed El-Amine Soufe, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Comoros to the SADC family, representing his country as the new member of SADC.

Equally, I welcome Hon. Dr. Unity Dow, Minister of International Affairs and Cooperation, Botswana and Hon. Joseph Malanji Minister of Foreign Affairs, Zambia who have joined us for the first time.

In the same vein, I must express my profound appreciations, on behalf of all Ministers, to the outgoing Chairperson of Council Hon. Lindiwe Sisulu and her predecessor Hon. Maite Nkoana-Mashabane for the commendable work they have done during their tenure. I further wish to commend the Outgoing Chair of Organ, Hon. Manuel Domingos Augusto for the job well done.

Furthermore, we highly recognise the indispensable support we have been and continue to receive from Dr Stergomena Tax, SADC Executive Secretary and the Secretariat.

In Namibia, there is a say that one finger cannot pick up a lice. Against that background as I take over the Chair of our Council I will rely on your support and cooperation to ensure that our organisation meets the expectations of the citizens of the region.

Before we get into the business at hand, let me refer to our SADC Region that continues to uphold political stability and peace. In this context, I therefore, congratulate Zimbabwe on the recently concluded peaceful elections.

Honourable Ministers

As Ministers, our task is to assist our Heads of State and Government to make informed decisions. It is therefore, critical that the Council has to make a deep and through analyses on the operations of the organisation in the implementation of the previous Summit decisions. We have also to unpack the theme of the 38th SADC Summit. At this point, let me thank our Senior Officials under the leadership of Ambassador Selma Ashipala-Musavyi Permanent Secretary Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation, Namibia, for the efficient manner in which they have prepared our Meeting.

The chosen Theme for the 38th Summit “*Promoting Infrastructure Development and Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development*” is talking to the SADC’s main focus, namely, Industrialisation of the region as articulated in the SADC Regional Integrated Strategic Development Plan (RISDP). It is a hard reality that we cannot industrialise the region or Africa unless we invest on infrastructure development. In order to ensure sustainable Industrialisation and development, we need our own knowledge. To that end, we must invest on our youth through education, skill training and motivate them to be innovative and entrepreneurs. In creating our own pool of knowledge, we will also ensure our region’s effective participation in the global industrial value chain.

It is also important to remind ourselves that our youth represents the largest proportion of our nations. As put by H.E Dr Sam Nujoma, Founding President of Namibia, “The youth are the strength of this nation. They are our future leaders. They bring unique perspectives that we need to take into account when we plan our future destiny”. Those words are in line with the SADC Declaration on Youth Development and Empowerment signed in 2014. Although the Declaration commits Member States to economically empower the youth, there are no clearly defined Action Plan/s that accompanies it. Let us at this stage note that, the Commonwealth 2016 Global Youth Development Index ranked SADC Member States as very low. Such an outcome underscores the need for an Action Plan to accompany the 2014 Declaration that could implement and rollout activities aimed at mainstreaming youth empowerment to speed up our Industrialisation process.

Honourable Ministers

Since the decisions by our Heads of State and Government, 2015 in Victoria Falls the SADC Region has been seized with the Regional Industrialisation and Integration, which demands the operationalisation of the implementation of SADC Industrialisation. In carrying out our Regional Developmental Agenda we are also informed by continental and global agendas. I can refer here to the AU Agenda 2063 with particular reference to aspiration 6 which clearly states that we want: *“An Africa, whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children”*. It is also very imperative to take note that, the *United Nations Sustainable Development Goals* that highlight all areas of sustainable development. We need also to follow the development in the implementation of the UN General Assembly resolution that decalred 2016-2025 the third industrial Development Decade for Africa to see how best our region can benefit.

In order to be able to achieve the above mentioned goals, there is need to apply the concept of financial burden sharing for developmental synergy. That shall be best realised through partnership and joining hands between public and private sectors for common developmental goals. Hence we have to appreciate the out come of the SADC Business week.

Before I conclude, it is also important to refresh our minds that, Southern Africa is a beneficiary of international solidarity. When we were fighting for our independence and self-determination we got support from the International Community, be it Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America, Asia and Europe and we cannot forget this so soon. We need therefore, to consistently reaffirm our unwavering support and solidarity with the people of Western Sahara and Palestine and, call for the full implementation of all relevant UN Resolutions relative to the Settlement Plan for Western Sahara and Palestine. In the era of the Third Industrial Development, we have to strengthen South-South cooperation and also to work with our sisters and brothers in the Diaspora including those in the Caribbean and Pacific.

In conclusion, SADC has come this far, but we have more distance to cover, once again I welcome you all to Namibia the Land of the Brave. And I looking forward to a productive meeting.

Thank you.

Merci.

Obrigada.