



**INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**  
**BY**  
**SADC EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**  
**H.E. Dr. Stergomena Lawrence Tax**

**During the**  
**Joint Virtual Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Energy**  
**and**  
**Ministers Responsible for Water**

**30 October 2020**

**Honourable Ernesto Max TONELA, Chairperson of the SADC Committee of Ministers responsible for Energy;**

**Honourable Joao Osvaldo Moises MACHATINE, Chairperson of the SADC Committee of Ministers responsible for Water;**

**Honourable Ministers and Deputy Ministers responsible for Energy and for Water;**

**Deputy Executive Secretary responsible for Regional Integration;**

**Senior Officials from SADC Member States;**

**SADC Secretariat Staff and the Regional Organisations in the Energy and Water Sectors;**

**Invited Guests;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen.**

Allow me to begin by expressing our profound gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Mozambique for convening this meeting, and to all SADC Member States for making time to attend, albeit the challenges posed by COVID-19. This reflects your true commitment to advancing the SADC regional integration and cooperation agenda, specifically in energy and water sectors.

Your meeting today, provides yet another opportunity to review progress made towards the implementation of the sectoral programmes in **the** water and energy sectors, and **also in** the implementation of your previous decisions. The developments in the two sectors are critical, as they greatly contribute to regional integration, including in industrialisation, environmental protection, and ultimately to peace and stability, socio-economic development and reduction of poverty in our Region.

**Honourable Ministers,**

It is pleasing to note that your meeting is held at the wake of the approval by the 40<sup>th</sup> Summit of Heads of State and Government **of the theme** on “*SADC 40 Years Building Peace and Security, and Promoting Development and*

*Resilience in the Face of Global Challenges*”; and the approval of the SADC VISION 2050, and Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2020 – 2030, by the same Summit in August, 2020.

In approving the 40<sup>th</sup> Summit Theme, the Summit of Heads of State and Government, in August 2020, underscored, among others, the importance of Accelerating development through industrialization by implementing priority value chains and energy infrastructure projects. These are equally, among the priority areas presented in the SADC Vision 2050 and RISDP 2020 – 2030. This is a clear evidence that, energy and water remain a cornerstone for industrialisation and, thus, for socio-economic development of our region. Energy and water are essential catalysts for economic growth in any economy, and the importance of clean, reliable and affordable energy and water in the development of economies of SADC cannot be overemphasized. Details on activities and outcomes of **the** SADC Vision and RISDP 2020-2030 will be contained in the RISDP Operationalization Action Plan that has been submitted to Members States for consultations. May I encourage SADC Members States, through you Honourable Ministers, to take part in these consultations, and thus, in the finalization of the Plan.

**Honourable Ministers,**

It is encouraging to note that, as a region we continue to jointly deliberate on these issues as a cluster. There is no doubt that energy and water are strongly interconnected, and as such the nexus between the two is very strong. Traditionally, the design of water and energy systems has been done independently or considering simplified interdependencies between the two systems. This approach misses valuable synergies between the two, and does not consider in detail the sharing and distribution of benefits between the sectors, and/or among Member States. It is commendable that as a Region, SADC has embraced the resource nexus approach, and we are rolling out a Water-Energy-Food Security Nexus Programme. We are indeed on the right track, and if we all commit to this course, we will definitely reap greater benefits in the near future.

**Honourable Ministers,**

This meeting is taking place at a time when the World is facing a great challenge imposed by COVID-19, that continues to aggressively affect the socio-economic development of the SADC Region. As a Region, we need

to ensure that our energy and water infrastructure and services are not jeopardized due to this pandemic. In this recognition, and with a view of being prepared, the Secretariat conducted a sectoral assessment of the impacts of COVID-19, including, on the energy and water sectors. Your meeting today, will receive and consider the impact assessment report, which highlights the impacts, and provides proposed mitigation measures that could be applied at regional level.

The Assessment does allude to the fact that, there **is** considerable work ahead of us, and Member States need to increase investments in the Energy and Water sectors, so as to ensure that all SADC Citizens have access to energy and safe drinking water. COVID-19 has affected the consumption patterns in both sectors, therefore posing a great challenge for the citizens of the Region. Challenges, include price increase, which makes accessibility of energy and water not easy, specifically for low-income communities. This aspect has to be viewed from a policy perspective in order to find sustainable options, which will ensure that energy and water tariffs are well adjusted in line with the socio-economic conditions of the SADC Member States. These challenges, notwithstanding, with the zeal and commitment that has so far been demonstrated by SADC Member States, we have all it takes, it is doable, and together we will definitely win.

For the Financial year 2020/2021, our major focus remains on the implementation of the remaining components of the SADC Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan (RIDMP), in order to create a conducive environment for the attainment of Water and Energy security for the SADC Region. This has been well aligned with Vision 2050, and RISDP **2020 - 2030**.

As I conclude, allow me to thank all Member States for your continued commitment, contributions, and support in ensuring the successful implementation of SADC regional integration agenda.

**In the same vein, I wish to** extend our gratitude to Government and the People of the Republic of Mozambique, and in particular the Co-Chairpersons and the staff from the Ministry of Public Works, Housing and Water Resources, and the Ministry of Mineral Resources and Energy for their tireless efforts in preparation for this important meeting.

May I also commend the Committee of Senior Officials, under the leadership of Co-chairpersons: Dr. Pascoal Alberto Bacela (Energy) and Mr. Messias Macie (Water), for the excellent work done in preparing for your meeting, as supported by the SADC Secretariat Team led by Dr Thembinkosi Mhlongo, the Deputy Executive Secretary, Regional Integration.

Thank you for attending and participating in this important meeting, I wish you all very fruitful deliberations.

Thank you very much!

Muito obrigado!

Merci Beaucoup!

Asante sana!