



REMARKS

BY

**THE DIRECTOR OF ORGAN ON POLITICS, DEFENCE AND SECURITY
AFFAIRS
MR. JORGE CARDOSO**

AT

**THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH CEREMONY OF THE SADC PREVENTIVE
MISSION IN THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO
MASERU, KINGDOM OF LESOTHO**

02 DECEMBER 2017

Guest of Honour, Honourable Acting Prime Minister, Honourable Monyane Moleleki;

Representative of the Chair of the SADC Organ, Almirante Gaspar dos Santos Rufino, State Secretary of Defense;

Ministers and Members of Parliament;

Leaders of Political Parties;

Chair of the Oversight Committee;

Distinguished Commander of the Angolan Defense Forces and the Deputy Army Commander and Chief of Staff of Zambia Defense Forces, Generals and Senior Officers;

Delegates and Personnel from Troops Contributing Countries;

The Dean and Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

SADC Secretariat Staff;

Partners from the Media;

Bomme and Bon Ntate;

Khotsong! Dumelang!

It gives me great pleasure to address this august gathering, on behalf of the SADC Executive Secretary, on the occasion of the official launch of the SADC Preventive Mission to the Kingdom of Lesotho (SAPMIL).

First and foremost, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude and appreciation to you Honourable Acting Prime Minister for sparing some time from your busy schedule to grace this important occasion.

I wish to commend you Sir and your Government, for your unwavering commitment shown towards the implementation of the SADC decisions that

aim at assisting Lesotho to return to normalcy in its political and security situation. You have been keenly involved since the inauguration of the new Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho in June 2017, and especially after the unfortunate assassination of the Lesotho Defence Force Commander, Lt. Gen. Khoantle Motsomotso, on the 5th September 2017.

Similarly, I also wish to commend the Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho and its apparatus, for working tirelessly to ensure that security is restored and the country remains calm in these trying times despite the complexities.

Distinguished guests,

SADC has an obligation to ensure that the region remains peaceful, secure and stable. This is critical for sustainable socio-economic development not only of Lesotho but the entire SADC region and the world. The mission that is about to commence today is consistent with the SADC Treaty of 1992 as amended; the Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation; the SADC Mutual Defence Pact; and the Memorandum of Understanding on the Establishment of a SADC Standby Brigade. Provisions enshrined in these instruments, espouse oneness of SADC Member States and give SADC the mandate to enter and render assistance to its Member States when need arises.

It is also important to note that, this mission is supported by the Africa Union and the United Nations through the Constitutive Act of the African Union of 2000 and the fundamental principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Kingdom of Lesotho has, over the years, been experiencing political and security instability, and SADC has continued to closely monitor the situation and several decisions and initiatives have been taken to support the Kingdom of Lesotho to attain lasting peace and stability. These initiatives include the appointment of the SADC Facilitator to the Kingdom

of Lesotho in 2014, His Excellency Mr. Cyril Ramaphosa, the Deputy President of South Africa and the deployment of the SADC Observer Mission in Lesotho (SOMILES) which facilitated the holding of credible elections in 2015. In 2015, SADC instituted a Commission of Inquiry (COI) on Lesotho to investigate the assassination of the former Commander of the Lesotho Defence Force and other alleged human rights violations in the country. A number of recommendations and decisions arising from the above interventions were made and the Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho was requested to implement them, of course with the support of SADC.

In August 2016, the SADC Summit further decided to deploy an Oversight Committee to serve as an early warning mechanism and lend assistance to the implementation of the Constitutional, Parliamentary, Judicial, Public Service and Security Sector Reforms. Since its operationalization in October 2016, the Committee has undertaken six (6) deployments to Lesotho and even now as we speak, it is still here. The deployments of the Committee have assisted the Kingdom of Lesotho to achieve a number of outcomes in the context of the implementation of SADC Decisions. This includes, among others, the official launch of the reform process in December 2016; stakeholder consultations on the establishment of the Judicial Reform Committee; and also holding all-inclusive consultations with the Government of Lesotho, opposition political party leaders of Lesotho, civil society organisations, and other key stakeholders in and outside Lesotho.

Distinguished guests,

The presence of the Oversight Committee in Lesotho to a large extent, has assisted the Kingdom of Lesotho in the maintenance of peace, law and order in the country, especially the different organs of the Government machinery.

However, despite the achievements made thus far, concerns have been expressed on the slow progress in the implementation of SADC Decisions and the continued misunderstanding between and among various political and security players in the country. Parallel to this, during the Double Troika Summit held on 18 August 2017, in Pretoria, South Africa, the Summit noted a rapidly changing security and political environment in the Kingdom of Lesotho.

This was mainly exacerbated by the suspension from work and termination of contracts of some members of the Lesotho Defence Force (LDF). Anxiety levels rose and consequently, culminated in the assassination of the LDF Commander in September 2017. His demise posed a grave challenge to the implementation of the SADC recommendations, decisions and reform programme. This, therefore, prompted SADC to reassess the political and security situation in the Kingdom of Lesotho.

In this regard, a number of new initiatives and consultations were undertaken including the deployment of a Ministerial Fact Finding Mission to the Kingdom of Lesotho led by the Chairperson of the Ministerial Committee of the Organ on 7th September 2017 to assess the circumstances surrounding the assassination; the convening of the SADC Double Troika Summit which met in Pretoria, Republic of South Africa on 15 September 2017 which approved the deployment of a Contingent Force to support the Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho; and a number of technical meetings and missions on Lesotho to operationalize the Double Troika Summit decision. These initiatives and consultations have culminated in the deployment of the multidimensional SADC Preventive Mission to the Kingdom of Lesotho (SAPMIL) which is being launched today.

I am therefore pleased to announce that the mission has a total of 269 personnel. It comprises 207 Military personnel; 15 Intelligence officers; 24 Police officers; and 12 Civilian experts in different fields, for a period of Six (06) months.

Distinguished guests,

In line with the mandate given by the Double Troika Summit of September 2017, SAPMIL will support the Kingdom of Lesotho to:

- a) strengthen peace and security, implement Security Sector Reforms, and implement the recommendations of the SADC Commission of Enquiry;

- b) monitor and ensure that the rule of law is complied with in the process of implementing the recommendations of the SADC Commission of Enquiry;
- c) identify immediate areas of priority that are to be implemented urgently, including the specific amendments in the Constitution, and amendments of the LDF and LMPS Acts with a view to ensuring separation of powers between the Army and Police;
- d) undertake re-training of its personnel especially in the area of Civil Military Relations (CIMIC);
- e) monitor and assist where necessary in the investigation of the assassinations of Lt. Gen Motšomotšo and other alleged killings in Lesotho; and
- f) lend assistance in the implementation of Constitutional, Public and Security Sector reforms and monitor the implementation of SADC Decisions;

I wish to underscore that SAPMIL is not here to take over or replace the Lesotho Defence Force or other security institutions of Lesotho. It is here to support and complement the efforts of the Oversight Committee and assist the Government of Lesotho in her quest to attain lasting peace and security in the country.

Our humble plea is as follows: please do not regard us as invaders or intruders. Rather than brothers and sisters from the region willing to share with the Basotho the building of a new dawn of Stability; Peace and Prosperity for All.

Guest of Honour and Distinguished guests,

As I conclude my remarks, I wish to reiterate that, SADC will continue to support the Kingdom of Lesotho and do all that is necessary to ensure that the progress made thus far will not be subverted.

Allow me to say a few words in Portuguese:

Gostaria de agradecer efusivamente aos Países que contribuem com efectivos, nomeadamente, as Repúblicas de Angola, Malawi, Namibia, África do Sul, Republica Unida da Tanzania, Zambia e Zimbabue por responderem prontamente de modo a garantir que a nossa missão no Reino do Lesoto seja bem sucedida. É nossa convicção que os efectivos da Missão SAPMIL irão exhibir uma conduta profissional e respeitar as Regras de Empenahmento e as leis do Reino, em conformidade com o Mandato da Missão.

Desejo igualmente enfatizar que a paz e a segurança representam um dos ingredients críticos para o desenvolvimento sócio-económico da região. E como tal devemos continuar vigilantes quanto aos desenvolvimentos que possam perigar a paz e tranquilidade, e apoiar-nos mutuamente, especialmente em momentos como este.

Director of Ceremonies, with these few remarks, I take this opportunity to wish the mission the best, in the implementation of its mandate.

Pula, Nala, Khotso.

I thank you.