

**REMARKS BY SADC EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, DR STERGOMENA
LAWRENCE TAX, ON THE OCCASION OF THE LAUNCH OF THE “SADC
SUCCESS STORIES” PUBLICATION
15 AUGUST 2015**

This year marks 35 years of progress in our sub-region, the Southern African Development Community, that is, from the time the organisation was established by the nine (9) founding Member States in 1980 expanding over the years to the now fifteen (15) Member States in mainland Southern Africa and the islands. At its formation as the Southern Africa Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) in Lusaka, Zambia, in April 1980, the leaders of the region sought to demonstrate their vision of unity through the tangible benefits of working together.

SADC has come a long way!

From this solid foundation, significant progress has been made to strengthen cooperation in various thematic areas, including the development of legal instruments and institutional arrangements to support the regional integration programme. In fact, pursuant to our regional integration agenda, SADC Member States have since 1992 signed 27 protocols and a number of declarations, charters and memoranda of understanding on various key areas, ranging from trade and investment, peace and security, and transboundary natural resources, as well as the empowerment of women and young people. Out of the 27 protocols, 24 have come into force so far after being ratified by two thirds of the signatory Member States and are at various stages of implementation.

Although there is still a long way to go for the region to attain deeper regional integration, we believe that the implementation of these and other initiatives have improved the lives of SADC citizens. It is against this background that the SADC Secretariat and its partners decided to document some of the successes of the regional integration programme.

The SADC Success Stories publication that we are launching today is intended to increase the public visibility of SADC, and to showcase some of the achievements and benefits of regional integration informed by the reality that SADC is not sufficiently well understood in terms of its mandate, programmes, activities and impact.

Regional success stories and positive results are documented in this publication in a well-informed and accessible manner to demonstrate the benefits of regional integration to SADC citizens, contribute to the spirit of a common future, and generate interest in SADC and its potential.

I wish to express my special gratitude to our knowledge partner, the Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC) and the support received from one of our cooperating partners, the Federal Republic of Germany represented here today by H.E. Rolf Ulrich, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany in Botswana.

Ladies and gentlemen, it now gives me great pleasure to launch and present to you Volume 1 of the “**SADC Success Stories**” publication.

I thank you.