



REMARKS

BY

HER EXCELLENCY DR. STERGOMENA L. TAX
SADC EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE
MEETING OF SADC MINISTERS OF EMPLOYMENT
AND LABOUR, AND SOCIAL PARTNERS

JULIUS NYERERE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE
DAR ES SALAAM, UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

5 MARCH 2020

- Your Excellency, *Mama Samia Suluhu Hassan*, Vice President of the United Republic of Tanzania
- Honourable Jenista Mhagama, Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office of the United Republic of Tanzania, responsible for Labour, Youth, Employment and Persons with Disabilities, and Chairperson of the Ministerial Committee;
- Honourable Maudline Cyrus Castico, Minister of Labour, Empowerment, Elders, Women and Children of the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar
- Honourable Ministers responsible for Labour and Employment, and Heads of Delegation;
- Mr. Andrew Massawe, Permanent Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office, and Chairperson of the Committee of Senior Officials;
- Dr. Aggrey Mlimuka, Chairperson of the SADC Private Sector Forum (SPSF);
- Ms. Zingiswa Losi, President of the Southern African Trade Union Coordinating Council (SATUCC);
- Dr. Joni Musabayana, Director of the ILO Decent Work Team for East and Southern Africa;
- Representative of IOM Regional Director for Southern Africa;
- Dr. Thembinkosi Mhlongo, Deputy Executive Secretary for Regional Integration, and SADC Secretariat staff;
- Invited Guests;
- Partners from the media;
- Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is my great honour to deliver these remarks before you today. From the onset, allow me to express our gratitude to the Government and people of the United Republic of Tanzania for the warm hospitality extended to all the delegates attending this meeting, in this beautiful City of Dar es Salaam. We also appreciate the excellent facilities that have been availed to ensure that the meeting is successful.

In a special way, please allow me to express our appreciation to you, Your Excellency, *Mama Samia Suluhu Hassan*, Vice President of the United Republic of Tanzania, for creating time in your busy schedule, to officiate the opening of this meeting. This is a clear testimony of the importance accorded by the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, as the current Chair of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), to the issues of employment and labour in the SADC region.

May I also thank all the Honourable Ministers, Social Partners and distinguished delegates from partner organisations, for attending this meeting today. It is my sincere hope that your meeting will provide the strategic guidance required in taking forward the Employment and Labour Sector.

Your Excellency;

This meeting is taking place under the theme of *“Promoting Labour Market Stability and Harmonious Industrial Relations for Sustainable Development”*. This theme is important because of the inter-connections between industrial relations and increased productivity, which are necessary for socio-economic growth and development. Limitations in collective bargaining and social dialogue processes lead to increased industrial actions and protracted labour disputes, which affect both the public and private sectors.

We all know that industrial strikes and labour disputes are not conducive for sustainable investment and growth of enterprises, and have impacts on investor confidence and, thus, negatively affecting foreign direct investment, and economic activities overall. We also know that in many cases, industrial strikes and labour disputes can be prevented through effective labour administration systems. It is, in this regard, that the SADC Employment and Labour Sector Forum on Dispute Resolution and Prevention, at its meeting in November 2019, recommended the development of SADC guidelines on the resolution and prevention of labour disputes, and this is an ongoing exercise. The SADC Secretariat remains committed to creating harmony in the employment and labour sector in SADC.

Your Excellency;

The 39th SADC Summit theme of *“A Conducive Environment for Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development, Increased Intra-Regional Trade and Job Creation”* is particularly pertinent to the Employment and Labour Sector in the SADC region because any inclusive and sustainable development requires

well trained and skilled human capital. In this regard, the SADC Council of Ministers approved the convening of a Joint Meeting of Ministers of Labour, Finance and Trade, in order to come up with measures to promote employment creation and economic growth in the region, and this was based on recommendations of this sectoral committee. This is in acknowledgement that for the region to pursue the objective of full and productive employment, there is need for greater multi-sectoral engagement and coordination involving all key sectors and actors. I am glad to inform you that the joint meeting has been included on the SADC calendar of activities to be held in the next financial year, which begins on 1st April 2020.

Your Excellency;

Since the adoption and signing of the SADC Protocol on Employment and Labour in 2014, only one Member State has ratified the Protocol, meaning that the instrument is yet to enter into force. This state of affairs certainly impacts on the collective ambition to advance decent work for all in the SADC region. A Protocol once in force would make it easier for the employment and labour sector to promote its interests through deeper cooperation with other stakeholders. Thus, I have every hope that Member States will take the opportunity of this meeting to discuss the way forward on this matter, given that the Protocol is an essential tool to provide strategic direction on the employment and labour agenda in the SADC region.

Your Excellency;

In order to put in place strategies and mechanisms for addressing decent work challenges for the region, in particular, employment creation, the Secretariat is coordinating the development of a comprehensive employment and labour policy framework. This is in addition to the key policy instruments that have been developed, namely, the labour migration action plan and the guidelines on portability of social security benefits, which will be considered in your meeting today. The instruments are crucial in facilitating greater labour migration which, in turn, promotes skills sharing among Member States in support of industrialisation and regional integration.

The development of these policy instruments coincides with the formulation of the Vision 2050 and the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2020-2030. Therefore, this is an opportunity to align the sectoral instruments for the Employment and Labour Sector to the visioning process

for the region. May I call upon Member States and Social Partners to effectively participate in the development of the SADC Vision 2050 and the new RISDP blueprints, so as to ensure prominence of employment and labour issues in the SADC development agenda.

Your Excellency;

Today, we have an opportunity to witness how the United Republic of Tanzania is addressing the youth employment challenges, through the launch of the Tanzania National Youth Internship Programme, whose objective is to impart employable skills, work experience and work ethics to youths, and address both qualitative and quantitative challenges in education and training to reflect the labour market requirements. The internship training programme provides valuable opportunities for youths who are attached at work places to attain work experience. We commend the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania for this initiative, which will open doors for young people in this beautiful country to realise their dreams and contribute to the development of Tanzania, and of the SADC region as a whole.

Naomba kuchukua fursa hii, kuipongeza Serikali ya Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania kwa juhudu inazozifanya katika kutatua changamoto ya ukosefu wa ajira hususan kwa vijana. Katika programu yetu ya leo Mhe. Samia Suluhu Hassan wa Rais wa Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania ata uzindua program ya mafunzo ya uzoefu wa kazi kwa wahitimu wa Elimu ya juu; mafunzo ambayo yatasaidia wahitimu kupata uzoefu wa kazi, kuongeza ujuzi wa vitendo na kuwawezesha kuajirika au kujiajiri. Inatia moyo sana, kuwa mafunzo haya yanagharamiwa na Serikali. Sina budi kuipongeza Serikali ya Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania kwa hatua hii kubwa itakayochangia katika kukuza soko la ajira.

Aidha, niwapongeze pia waajiri wote waliotoa fursa za vijana kujifunza. Vilevile nitoe wito kwa waajiri ambao bado hawajatoa fursa hizo wazitoe kwani, waajiri ndiyo wanufaika wakubwa na wataongeza wigo wa kupata wafanyakazi bora kwa maana ya kuchagua vijana wanaofanya vizuri na kuwapatia ajira. Hii ni hatua muhimu na ya kuigwa katika SADC. Hongera sana mhesimiwa Makamu wa Rais, hongera sana Tanzania!

Your Excellency;

As I conclude, I wish to recognise the continued cooperation between the SADC Member States and Social Partners, represented here by the SADC Private Sector Forum (SPSF) and the Southern Africa Trade Union Coordinating Council (SATUCC). I urge the tripartite partners to continue building systems for sustainable consultation and social dialogue, based on the core International Labour Standards that all our Member States have ratified. May I also pay tribute to the International Cooperating Partners that continue to support the work of the Sector, most notably the International Labour Organisation (ILO), and International Organisation for Migration (IOM), who are represented in this meeting.

May I also thank the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania and, in particular, the Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers of Employment and Labour and Social Partners, Honourable Jenista Mhagama, for the continued excellent leadership of the sectoral affairs. We thank you, Honourable Minister, for your guidance and personal commitment to promote decent work for all, not only in the United Republic of Tanzania, but also in the SADC region, at large. As the Secretariat, we assure you of our full commitment to continue supporting you, Honourable Minister and your dedicated team, in promoting decent work for all.

Allow me to also extend our appreciation to the Senior Officials of your Sectoral Committee for the hard work in preparing for the meeting, under the able leadership of Mr. Andrew Massawe, the Chairperson of the Committee of Senior Officials. May I also thank the SADC Secretariat staff for their usual dedication.

With these remarks, I look forward to the successful launch of the Tanzania National Youth Internship Programme, as well as very fruitful deliberations during your meeting.

I thank you.
Merci beaucoup!
Muito obrigada!
Asante sana!