

SPEECH BY DEFENCE FORCE COMMANDER,

GENERAL GRIFFIN SPOON PHIRI, MSM, psc, nwc

DURING

OFFICIAL OPENING OF "EX UMODZI CPX 2018"

HELD AT

MALAWI ARMED FORCES COLLEGE

ON

MONDAY, 8TH OCTOBER, 2018

SALUTATION

- Honourable Everton Chimulirenji –Deputy Minister of Defence
- Mr Rodney Jose – Inspector General of Malawi Police Service
- Ms Wandika Phiri – Chief Commissioner of Prisons
- Mr Chauncy Simwaka – Secretary for Defence
- Lieutenant General Vincent Nundwe – Deputy Defence Force Commander responsible for Operations and Training
- Mrs Eunice Lumbia – Exercise Head of Mission
- Major General Alick Mhone – Exercise Director
- Brigadier General Mokaloba – Exercise Force Commander
- Mr Hellings Mlotha – Exercise Police Commissioner
- Head of Exercise Civilian Component
- Brigadier General Mkokomani – SADC Representative
- MDF's Chiefs of Directorates
- Brigadier General Swithun Mchungula – Commandant MAFCO
- All Delegation Leaders from SADC Member States and your Delegations
- Members of the Media
- Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning!

1. I am very pleased to be with you this morning as we witness the official opening of "Ex-Umodzi". As your host here at Malawi Armed Forces College, I am very delighted to see so many of you from within and beyond our borders. On behalf of the entire Malawi Defence Force family let me extend a warm welcome to you all. I hope you will enjoy your stay with us here at MAFCO.

2. Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, Ex-Umodzi is a SADC Standby Force Command Post Exercise whose theme is "Africa for Peace and Prosperity".

3. As you may be aware, before the founding of the African Union (AU) the Organisation of the African Union (OAU) did not provide appropriate tools and mechanisms for African States to collectively and comprehensively deal with violent crisis, mostly due to the then shared value of non interference into the internal affairs of States. However, during the 1990's, a series of violent conflicts in Africa, notably the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda, forced African States to change their security collaboration and approach. After the establishment of the AU in 2001 the non-interference clause of the OAU was no longer valid. The Constitutive Act of the AU gave it the right to intervene in a Member State in grave circumstances such as War Crimes, Genocide and Crimes against humanity as we saw in Rwanda and Lesotho.

4. The coming into Force of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) which saw the birth of the African Standby Force in July 2002 and entered in Force in December 2003 further gave birth to and recognised the roles of Regional Economic Communities (REC's) such as SADC to establish regional standby forces as one way of promoting peace and security in Africa.

5. Article 13 of the protocol relating to the establishment of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the AU foresaw an ASF to be composed of standby multidisciplinary contingents with Civilian, Police and Military components ready for rapid deployment at short notice.

6. Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, we are meeting today to plan and exercise the command echelon of this multi-disciplinary, rapid deployable force of SADC as we prepare ourselves to take over from ECOWAS beginning from January to June 2019. Our goal is to create a robust and credible SADC Standby Force that can stand the test of time, available and ready to respond to any compelling situation anywhere in Africa.

7. Ladies and Gentlemen, Comrades and Colleagues, we are meeting here today to exercise a force that will help us actualise our dream and inspiration of a Peaceful and Prosperous Africa. Time has come that as individual Member States and as a region we should not allow or seat and watch our continent torn apart and degenerate into anarchy. Let us together say; "No more genocide

and crimes against humanity". Let us join hands and work together for the greater good for Peace and Security in our continent. My appeal to our leaders and all of us gathered here

is that we must invest in peace and where necessary move in to intervene.

8. Let me conclude by wishing you all a good exercise and ensure that the goals and objectives of this exercise are achieved. Thank you all for your attention.

9. With these few remarks, its now my singular honour to invite our Guest of Honour – Honourable CHIMULIRENJI, M.P Deputy Minister of Defence to deliver his opening remarks.

Honourable Minister.