



**REMARKS**

**BY**

**THE SADC EXECUTIVE SECRETARY  
H.E. DR. STERGOMENA LAWRENCE TAX**

**AT**

**THE 19TH MEETING OF THE MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE OF THE  
ORGAN (MCO) ON POLITICS, DEFENCE AND SECURITY  
COOPERATION**

**DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA**

**20 JULY 2017**

Hon. Dr. Augustine Mahiga, Minister of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation of the United Republic of Tanzania and Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation;

Honourable Members of the Organ Troika;

Distinguished Senior Officials and Delegates from SADC Member States;

Director of the Organ and SADC Secretariat Staff;

Partners from the Media;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Good Morning, Bom dia, Bonjour, Habarini za Asubuhi.

I am honoured and privileged to be accorded this opportunity to deliver my introductory remarks at this important meeting of the Ministerial Committee of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation. Allow me to thank the Government and people of the United Republic of Tanzania for the warm welcome and hospitality extended to us since our arrival in this magnificent city of peace, Dar es Salaam, and for the excellent facilities put at our disposal for this meeting.

***Chairperson,***

Since your last meeting in August 2016, a number of developments have taken place and various milestones have been recorded. The Region has largely remained peaceful and stable during the period under review, apart from a few sporadic cases. Peace, security and stability remain essential catalysts for regional economic integration and development, and as such are on top of the SADC Agenda. In this regard, SADC has remained seized with peace and political matters in the Region, and has continued to support its Member States in this regard. A number of technical and Ministerial assessment missions were conducted in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). These missions provided SADC with an opportunity to assess both the security and political situation, engage with stakeholders, and devise ways to ensure continued support to the DRC. The missions also enabled SADC to contribute to the National Political Dialogue, and to provide inputs in the process of

extending the mandate of MONUSCO in the DRC. During the process, SADC underscored the need for the renewal of the mandate for MONUSCO and the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB); emphasising on SADC's concerns regarding the current operational capability of MONUSCO-FIB in the face of the new non-conventional threats posed by the negative forces that require enhanced capability, equipment and flexible rules of engagement. The SADC Chiefs of Defence with their ICGLR counterparts also had a joint engagement with the UN Secretariat (Under-Secretaries-General for the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and for Field Support) in New York on 10 July 2017. The engagement meeting mutually endorsed, among others, the need to allow MONUSCO-FIB to have the capabilities, flexibility, and mobility to effectively deal with the threat posed by negative forces in the DRC.

### ***Chairperson,***

During the year under review, the Republic of Zambia and Seychelles held their Presidential and Parliamentary elections. Allow me on behalf of all Member States to congratulate His Excellency Edgar Lungu, President of the Republic of Zambia and His Excellency Danny Faure, President of Seychelles for the peaceful and credible elections and their ascendance to the Presidency.

SADC has continued to support the Kingdom of Lesotho to monitor the political and security situation, and the implementation of SADC decisions in the Kingdom. A number of SADC Oversight Committee missions were carried out to the Kingdom of Lesotho between November 2016 and June 2017. The Oversight Committee has served as an early warning mechanism to the Kingdom of Lesotho as mandated. SADC also deployed the SADC Electoral Observation Mission (SEOM) to the Kingdom of Lesotho to observe the 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2017 Snap National Assembly Elections. Allow me to also congratulate the Rt. Honourable Thomas Motsoahae Thabane for being elected Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho, the coalition government, and Basotho people for the conduct of peaceful and credible elections; and the Independent Electoral Commission for its professionalism in conducting the elections.

The SADC Electoral Advisory Council (SEAC) was also deployed to the DRC, Lesotho and Angola for Post and Pre-Election Assessment missions to gauge the Member States' preparedness for elections. Let me thank the Chairperson of the Organ on Politics Defence and Security

Cooperation for overseeing and deploying the SEOM to the respective Member States that contributed to consolidation of democratic principles in the region. I would also like to thank Member States who participated in these SEOM missions for their support, dedication and commitment in this endeavour.

### ***Chairperson***

During the year, we developed a number of strategic documents, including the SADC Reference Manual on Election Observation; the SADC Conflict Prevention Strategy for election-related conflicts; and the SADC Mediation, Conflict Prevention and Preventative Diplomacy Structure Inception Guidelines. These instruments are critical for the deepening and consolidation of the democratic principles, which underpin good governance in electoral processes in our region. These documents will be presented in this meeting for your consideration.

I am pleased to report that we have concluded negotiations on programme Support to Peace and Security in the Region with the European Union. The programme is aimed at strengthening regional and national infrastructures for peace, security; and the promotion of regional stability through increased respect for the rule of law and enhanced public security. The Programme will cover the period 2018-2020, at an estimated total cost of 15 million Euros. I would like to thank all Member States for providing the strategic inputs. The inputs have ensured that SADC interests are advanced. I would also like to thank the European Union for their continued support.

### ***Chairperson,***

As part of ensuring SADC's commitment to regional and continental peace and security, there is an urgent need to operationalize the Regional Logistics Depot (RLD). The layout and designs of the RLD, have been finalised, laying ground for the fencing of the depot as part of Phase 1 of the Project. Phase 2 of the project comprises of construction and associated infrastructure development at an estimated cost of USD 45 million. This will require technical and financial resources, and as such innovative ways of funding. Support and commitment by Member States is of crucial importance to the realisation of this noble cause. Peace and Security are central to our region, and resources must be availed, as there is no short cut for sustenance of peace and security in the region. Once finalised the RLD will enhance the region's ability to

manage and deploy Peace Support Operations (PSO's) in line with the African Standby Force roster.

Honourable Ministers, although the region remains stable, we cannot afford to be complacent, as sustainable peace, security and political stability require our continued efforts and vigilance.

***Chairperson,***

As I conclude, let me on behalf of all Member States take this opportunity to express our profound gratitude to the Chairperson of the Organ, and the Chairperson of the Ministerial Committee of the Organ, for your leadership and guidance that led to tremendous achievements during your tenure as Chairperson of the Organ Politics Defence and Security Cooperation.

Let me also thank all SADC Member States for your commitment to the SADC Integration Agenda, and in particular the sustenance of peace, security and political stability. I also thank you Honourable Ministers present for making time to attend this important meeting amid your busy schedules, and the Senior Officials and Secretarial staff for working so hard in preparing for this meeting.

With these introductory remarks, it is now my singular honour to invite the Chairperson of the MCO and our gracious host, Hon. Dr. Augustine Mahiga, to present his opening remarks.

I thank you for your attention  
Merci beau coup  
Muinto Obrigado  
Asante Sana.