



REMARKS BY

**SADC EXECUTIVE SECRETARY,
HIS EXCELLENCY MR. ELIAS M. MAGOSI**

AT THE SADC SUSTAINABLE ENERGY WEEK CONFERENCE

THEME:

***Accelerating Sustainable Energy Solutions for an Energy Secure
SADC Region***

**GABORONE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE,
GABORONE, BOTSWANA**

24 FEBRUARY 2025

Thank you Directors of ceremony!

Advocate Duma Gideon Boko, President of the Republic of Botswana;

Honourable July Moyo, Minister of Energy and Power of the Republic of Zimbabwe, and Chairperson of the SADC Committee of Ministers of Energy;

Honourable Bogolo Joy Kenewendo, Minister of Minerals and Energy of the Republic of Botswana, and our host;

Honourable Ministers present here;

All other protocols are respectively observed;

Members of the Media;

Invited Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen;

Good morning!

Allow me to extend my sincere appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Botswana for hosting this event through the Ministry of Minerals and Energy, in collaboration with the SADC Secretariat and the SADC Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (SACREEE). I am convinced that, it is through effective collaboration and our collective and strong commitment to engage, not only on the most topical and most appropriate subject, energy access and security, but also a subject that is a critical enabler of regional economic development and integration.

I wish to recognise in a special way the President of the Republic of Botswana, Advocate Duma Gideon Boko, for gracing this event and officiating to kickstart the SADC Sustainable Week, which is themed “**Accelerating Sustainable Energy Solutions for an Energy Secure SADC Region**”. Your presence, Mr President, serves to underscore your commitment, and that of the country, to the energy security agenda of the SADC region.

Let me also recognise the presence of the Ministers responsible for Energy from SADC Member States and thank them for honouring the invitation to participate in this critical dialogue. I would like to also appreciate the smart partnership from all invited guests and our International Cooperating Partners, including the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), the Global Network of Regional Sustainable Energy Centres (GNSEC), Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC), and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), amongst others.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The SADC Sustainable Energy Week was commissioned as an annual event by a meeting of the joint Committee of Ministers responsible for Energy and Water, in May 2024 in the Republic of Angola, and the Republics of Botswana and Zimbabwe committed to hosting the event in 2024 and 2025, respectively. Since the inaugural Week could not take place in 2024, this event therefore marks the beginning of the

SADC Energy Week events. The event will feature high-level presentations, panel discussions, business-to-business meetings and networking sessions, focusing on policy frameworks, investment opportunities, financing, grid integration, and renewable energy technologies for a just energy transition.

Energy security and universal access to energy remain critical catalysts for regional integration and true economic development across all sectors and Member States. The SADC region continues to face power shortages due primarily to inadequate infrastructure development across the board, and in recent times, the debilitating effects of climate change. Currently, in terms of the regional energy mix, coal makes 60% of electricity generation, while hydropower is at 24%, with renewable energy trailing at around 10%. Climate change has laid bare our limitations to ascertain a sustainable energy supply and its security. We do not only have to grapple with our limited and very difficult ability to minimize pollution from fossil fuels, but also, we must contend with increased and harsh droughts that have made us extremely vulnerable to continue our dependence on water resources.

Electricity access varies widely, with some Member States like Mauritius and Seychelles having achieved universal access, while others still have access rates below 30%. To address this, urgent and robust investments are needed in power generation, transmission and diversification into renewable energy sources such as wind and solar energy, in addition to deliberate efforts by all of us to adopt and ensure energy efficiency at all levels. I wish to report that efforts are afoot to interconnect Angola, Malawi and Tanzania to the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP) network, this is to ensure that we exploit excess power in some countries to reduce the deficit in others.

Ladies and gentlemen,

A regional approach is crucial to expanding energy markets, optimizing infrastructure development, and addressing the intermittency of renewable sources.

Firstly, we are promoting development of the generation capacity to ensure **security of energy supply, reliability and availability**, in collaboration with Member States and their agencies, including the Democratic Republic of Congo, to expedite development of Grand Inga Hydropower project; the Republic of Mozambique on development of Mpanda Nkuwa Hydropower; as well as Zambia and Zimbabwe for the joint development of Batoka Hydropower project. The development of generation projects coupled with priority transmission projects such as the Angola-Namibia; Tanzania-Zambia; Malawi-Mozambique interconnectors will enhance intra-regional power trading in the SAPP network, while facilitating evacuation of power from the existing as well as planned power stations such as the Grand Inga in the DRC, and Baynes Hydropower between Namibia and Angola.

Secondly, it has been stated that approximately 600 million people in the Sub-Saharan Africa do not have access to electricity, and out of this figure, almost 172 million or 29%, are SADC citizens, given the region's current access rate of 56%. Therefore, it is my appeal that we intensify the level of access to electricity by creating and embracing innovative financing mechanisms and alternative access solutions. These should include dedicated funds for electrification, institutional arrangements such as

establishment of the rural electrification agencies, as well as diversifying technological approaches, including grid extensions, smart grids technologies, and especially off-grid solutions to target most of our rural and disadvantaged population. These may include renewable energy based micro or mini-grids, and stand-alone solar systems, among others.

Lastly, and equally important, we must address the issue of affordability head on, as well as the creation of an enabling environment for the increased participation of investors and other players including the Independent Power Producers (IPPs) and independent Transmission Systems Operators (TSOs) in the Energy Supply Industry (ESI). We have observed that Member States, through the establishment of Energy Regulators, are slowly migrating towards cost-reflective tariffs with a pro-poor element, to ensure that basic electricity needs are met on monthly basis, while promoting investment in the energy supply industry. It is also encouraging to note that some of our Member States have introduced almost zero electricity connection fees to tackle the issue of affordability and access. The above steps are indeed commendable and, where possible, they should be replicated across the region.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We are fully aware that energy infrastructure projects require substantial financial resources, which governments often do lack. We therefore appeal to Member States and cooperating partners to support priority energy infrastructure projects outlined in the **SADC Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan (RIDMP) Short-Term Action Plan 2023-2027**, which has a financing gap of US \$18 billion for the entire region. We also urge member states to urgently ratify and facilitate operationalisation of the SADC Regional Development Fund (RDF), which is designed to mobilize resources from traditional and non-traditional sources, for regional projects including energy infrastructure projects.

The Secretariat is also coordinating implementation of strategic frameworks to enhance energy access, improve energy security, while promoting sustainable energy solutions. These include the:

Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Strategy and Action Plan (2016) to promote renewable energy and energy efficiency adoption; and the **Regional Energy Access Strategy and Action Plan (2020)** to support off-grid technology development for rural energy access.

The SADC Secretariat will continue to work with SAPP and SACREEE, as a Centre of Excellence, to promote renewable energy and energy efficiency, and exploit the vast potential of renewable energy resources, as we continue to address the low energy access and energy insecurity. It is in this regard that I appeal to Member States to urgently ratify the Inter-Governmental Memorandum of Agreement on the establishment of SACREEE, to enable it to effectively execute its mandate as a Centre of Excellence.

In conclusion, Ladies and gentlemen, let me assure you that this inaugural SADC Sustainable Energy Week provides a unique platform for truly meaningful discussions that will translate into tangible and impactful solutions and related projects. We, at the SADC Secretariat, in collaboration with SACREEE and other partners, remain

committed to implementing the resolutions that will emanate from this event, to drive regional energy development and integration. We, therefore, look forward to collaborating with all of you at the second edition of the SADC Sustainable Energy Week in Zimbabwe, where we will review progress made on resolutions from this week and other related programmes of the region addressing energy access and energy security. It is only when we measure our progress and hold ourselves accountable as a collective, that we can make a positive and lasting impact. This reflection will ensure that the Energy Week events are not just talk shops with very little to show for, but are worth every effort and resources deployed to host them.

I Thank You for your attention! Merci Beaucoup! Muito Obrigado!

Asante Sana! Tantenda! Kealeboga!