

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 58TH PLENARY ASSEMBLY SESSION HELD FROM 29TH NOVEMBER TO 6TH DECEMBER 2025 ETHEKWINI METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY (DURBAN) SOUTH AFRICA

SADC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM
58th Plenary Assembly
eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality,
Durban, South Africa
Verbatim Report

Preamble

The SADC Parliamentary Forum holds its Plenary Assemblies bi-annually. The 58th Plenary Assembly, held from 29th November to 6th December 2025 in eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality, Durban, South Africa was the second convening of the highest policy-making body of the Forum in 2025, the first having been held in Victoria Falls City, Zimbabwe, in the month of June. The 58th Plenary Assembly was held under the theme "*The Impact of Climate Change on Women and Youth in the SADC Region and the Role of Parliaments in Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation.*"

Rule 34 of the Forum's Rules of Procedure (EN | FR | PT), mandates the Secretary General to maintain a record of allthis Verbatim Record constitutes the exclusive official record of the proceedings of the 58th Plenary Assembly and is part of the Journals of the Forum.

It is, further, notable that Article 31 of the Constitution of the Forum (EN | FR | PT), read together with Rule 37 of the Rules of Procedure (EN | FR | PT), stipulates that the proceedings Plenary Assembly are to be in the three official languages of the Forum, namely: English, French and Portuguese. In this regard, it is to be noted that this Verbatim Record captures the contribution of each member in the original language in which such contribution was delivered on the floor of the Plenary Assembly, in line with Rule 36(1) of the Rules of Procedure (EN | FR | PT).

As a deliberative and consultative organ for Parliamentarians, the Forum is a platform for engagement by parliamentarians on a diversity of issues of regional concern with a view to contributing towards the development of possible solutions to those challenges. Through the Plenary Assembly debates and engagements, including the Standing Committee Session that procedurally precedes the Plenary Assembly, the Parliamentarians not only interrogated regional policy based on the perceived needs of their constituencies, but also engaged in legislative oversight with a view of monitoring the domestication and implementation of regional policies and model legislation, ensuring the enjoyment of human rights by all, fostering gender equality, entrenchment of good governance, democratic practices as well as the rule of law, to mention but a few.

Against this backdrop, the Forum, cognisant of the sacrosanct right and duty of the parliamentarians to represent their respective constituencies at regional level, has painstakingly and meticulously prepared this Verbatim Record to be an authentic and accurate reflection of the deliberations of the people's representatives at regional level.

In keeping with its nomenclature, this Verbatim Record presents the proceedings of the 58th Plenary Assembly in the exact words uttered by the regional representatives, without any adulteration. It may, therefore, be referred to as the complete, authentic, legal and official record of the said proceedings. It may be consulted and authoritatively cited by all citizens of the region and any other interested members of the wider public.

This Verbatim Record covers the tabling of all Reports of Statutory Organs, Statements and Standing Committee Reports and thus provides a snapshot of the work of being done by the parliamentarians under the auspices of the Forum. In so doing, the Verbatim Record acts as a facilitative tool provided by the Forum for the citizens of SADC and all other interested persons to review and monitor the work of SADC parliamentarians at regional level and hold them to account accordingly.

It must further be noted that, in preparing this Verbatim Record, members have not been availed an opportunity to review and confirm the correctness of their contributions. Allowances must also be made for homophones (that is, words uttered which sound the same but are different in meaning or spelling). Therefore, should any person, including members, identify any clerical errors or homophones in the Verbatim Record, they are encouraged to contact the Secretary General on info@sadcpf.org, attention: cmusonda@sadcpf.org, Clerk-at-the-Table who supervised the production of the Verbatim Record for the 58th Plenary Assembly (EN | FR | PT) Session.

Best regards,

Boemo M. Sekgoma
SECRETARY GENERAL
30.01.26

30 November 2025

Official Opening Session

LANGUAGES: *English, French and Portuguese*

EN.

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONIES [DR. D. MOHONO]: Thank you very much. We may be seated.

His Excellency, Hon. Paul Mashatile, the Acting President of our country; Hon. Thierry, President of the Southern Africa Development Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC PF), and Speaker of the Parliament of Madagascar; Hon. Sylvia Izaks, Vice President of the SADC Parliamentary Forum and Member of Parliament of the Republic of South Africa; Hon. Angela Thokozile Didiza, Member of Parliament and Speaker of the National Assembly of Parliament of the Republic of South Africa and Host Speaker of this 58th Plenary Assembly; Hon. Nontembeko Boyce**,** member of the provincial legislature and Speaker of North - [*Laughter*] - KwaZulu-Natal, I am from the North West. That is why I forgot that I am in KwaZulu-Natal; Councillor Cyril Xaba, Executive Mayor of the eThekwini Municipality; Her Excellency, Ms. Boemo Sekgoma, Secretary-General of the SADC Parliamentary Forum; Senator Dr. Linda Lorraine Nxumalo, the interim Chairperson of the Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus and National Women's Parliamentary Caucus of Eswatini; Hon. Members of Parliament from the SADC National Parliament, I see a lot of Hon. Members from different parliaments today; Ms Princess N. Mojapelo, representative of the Southern African Youth Parliament; members of the diplomatic corps with us this morning; Hon. delegates and observers; ladies and gentlemen; and members of the media, you are welcome this morning. This is a beautiful morning in our province, KwaZulu-Natal. I will be leading the

programme for the day, and my name is Dr. Desbo Mohono, Speaker of the North West Legislature in South Africa. Thank you very much.

I will now, without any waste of time, welcome the delegate and host, and request Councillor Cyril Xaba, Executive Mayor of eThekwini, to come and make us feel seriously at home and welcome.

THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY

[COUNCILLOR. C. XABA]: Programme Director, Hon. Dr. Desbo Mohono; Acting President of the Republic of South Africa, His Excellency, Mr. Paul Mashatile; our guest of honour and host, Hon. Thoko Didiza, Speaker of the National Assembly of South Africa; SADC Parliamentary Forum President and Speaker of Parliament of Madagascar**,** Hon. Siteny Randrianasoloniaiko**;** Hon. Speakers of National Assemblies representing the 13 countries; members of the diplomatic corps; heads of delegations; Secretary-general of the SADC Parliamentary Forum, Her Excellency, Boemo Sekgoma; Hon. Speaker of the KwaZulu-Natal legislature, Hon. Nontembeko Boyce and Speakers representing the provinces of the Republic of South Africa; Hon. Speaker of the Council of the City of eThekwini, Councillor Thabani Nyawose; Chief Whip and Executive Committee Members of the City of eThekwini; representative of the Eswatini National Women's Parliament Caucus, Hon. Senator, Dr. Linda Lorraine Nxumalo**;** Ms. Princess Mojapelo**,** Southern African Youth Parliamentarian for South Africa; members of the media; ladies and gentlemen, good morning.

It is a distinct honour for me, on behalf of the people of the eThekwini Municipality, to welcome you to our beautiful City of Durban for the 58th Plenary Assembly of the SADC Parliamentary Forum. This gathering comes

shortly after South Africa successfully hosted the G20 Summit, an achievement that has significantly strengthened our standing globally. We deeply appreciate the opportunity to host this important gathering, which brings together speakers, parliamentary leadership and support staff from across the SADC region.

Your presence here is a vote of confidence in our city's capabilities, our hospitality sector and our world-class facilities. We do not doubt that this Assembly will yield meaningful economic benefits for Durban, particularly in the tourism and hospitality industry. We trust that when you return home, you will become our ambassadors, encouraging others to visit Durban as both tourists and as investors.

I must admit that when the Speaker of the South African Parliament, Hon. Thoko Didiza, briefed the city leadership about this event in August, we were overjoyed. We fully understood the magnitude of what this means for the people of eThekwini and KwaZulu-Natal. For the next few days, the eyes of the SADC region will be firmly on our city, which will further position Durban as a competitive city.

This Assembly is held under the theme, "*The impact of climate change on women and youth in the SADC region and the role of parliaments in climate change mitigation and adaptation.*" This theme challenges us to strengthen our efforts on mitigation and adaptation. It reminds us that women and youth often bear the greatest burden of climate-induced disasters.

As you may know, eThekwini has been the epicentre of several major disasters in recent years — the COVID-19 pandemic, the July 2021 civil

unrest and the recurrent floods since 2022. I am pleased to report that we have made significant progress in restoring and rebuilding infrastructure that was severely damaged during these events. As part of your five-day programme, you will have an opportunity to visit some of the areas worst affected by floods and see firsthand the work the city has done.

Our approach has been to build back better, creating infrastructure that is more resilient to future catastrophic events. We look forward to sharing the lessons we have learned and to gaining valuable insights from our colleagues across the region on how they are responding to similar challenges as it were.

Hon. Speakers, ladies and gentlemen, this gathering is also important because it seeks to promote deeper regional integration. The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated clearly how interconnected we are as a region, a continent and a world. If we are to respond effectively to the challenge before us, we cannot afford to plan or act in silos. This reminds me of an African proverb, which says, if you want to walk fast, walk alone. If you want to walk far, walk together. Indeed, for quick results, we may act alone as nations, but for lasting, sustainable progress, co-operation is indispensable. Let us continue working together to build a better Africa and a better world.

In closing, let me assure you that with over 300 delegates attending this gathering, we have worked diligently to ensure a successful Assembly. We hope that you leave Durban with a sense of optimism and a desire to return, whether as tourists, partners or investors. With these remarks, I once again welcome you to our city and wish you productive and fruitful deliberations. I thank you. – [*Applause*] -

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY: Thank you very much, Councillor. Now that we are at home and we have been welcomed, I think we are all relaxed. I will request the delegates and everybody to stand up as we will be singing the national anthem of South Africa, the SADC and the AU song. We will be led by our band.

[Singing of Anthems of the Republic of South Africa, SADC and AU.]

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY: Thank you. You may be seated. I will now call our local Speaker, the Speaker of the Legislature of KwaZulu-Natal, Hon. Boyce, to give us welcoming remarks. Hon. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER OF THE KWAZULU-NATAL LEGISLATURE (MS. N.N. BOYCE): Thank you Programme Director, my sister, the Speaker of Bokone Bophirima, Dr. Desbo Mohono, the President of SADC, the host Speaker, the Secretary General, the leaders in the various positions in SADC that are sitting with us in the front, including the representative of women and that of the young people, the Mayor of the City of eThekwini, *Unonkosi owashawada, iTheku, walenza labheka abantu.* I mean the Mayor of the City of eThekwini, who, on this day, chose to be home to all of Southern Africa, as they come and ensure that they take claim of their land, which is South Africa.

The speakers that are attending from the various countries that are here – I have seen two sisters of mine, I have seen the speakers from the provincial legislatures and Deputy Speakers in the Republic of South Africa, the delegates, including those from the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Legislature, the secretaries to Parliament throughout SADC, ladies and gentlemen, *Sanibonani!*

I rise on behalf of the people of KwaZulu-Natal, the people who were elected to represent the 12-plus million people of this province in the 2024 polls. It is a great honour to stand here on their behalf at the gathering of the 58th Plenary Assembly of the South African Democratic Development Community Parliamentary Forum, the (SADC-PF), hosted under the theme, *The Impact of Climate Change on Women and Youth in the SADC Region, and the Role of Parliaments in Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation*.

This theme is not merely a point of discussion, but it is a clarion call on all of us, as member States, to critically review and strengthen our strategies in responding to the escalating climate crisis and the implications it has on the growth prospects of our respective economies and the social well-being throughout the region. I am of the firm belief that when we are working together as nations, there are better opportunities and chances for us to succeed.

So, as we welcome you here today, we want you to remember that this is the province that has, in the Republic of South Africa, alongside the Eastern Cape, the Western Cape, been highly impacted by the negativities that come with climate change. We have experienced this way back, as far as 2012, when they started in the northern side of the province.

Of course, we have seen many lives that have been lost, especially here in the metro, eThekwini and uMgungundlovu District, which are the two biggest districts and regions in our province. These were not alone, but they have been together with the rest of the regions and districts that are along the coast, be it Ugu Municipality, be it King Cetshwayo Municipality, be it

uMkhanyakude Municipality, be it eThekwini Municipality. As I have said, even the local municipalities far beyond here have been hard hit.

As I stand here, it is just a week ago that in one of our local municipalities, within the uMgungundlovu District, called Umshwathi, we had some devastating weather that resulted in loss of life and displacement of communities. Amongst those who were displaced, mostly are children, young people, that is the youth and older persons, indiscriminately of age. Most importantly, the majority are women, regardless of them being children, being young in terms of youth, being senior citizens or persons with disabilities. They have been, in the majority, women.

This has taught us, in the province, many lessons of how indiscriminatory the nature of climate change is, and it has continued to affect us in this province, in its indiscriminacy. We have seen women, men, persons with disabilities, young and old, particularly those who are from our townships and rural communities, suffer the most climate-induced challenges of floods, droughts, heatwaves and wildfires.

These challenges worsen the already existing socioeconomic issues, resulting in food insecurity, displacement, unemployment, higher needs to access to healthcare, violence and gender-based violence specifically, including sexual and reproductive health rights being undermined. Therefore, I believe that the coming of this SADC-PF to this province of KwaZulu-Natal could not have been at a better time.

I know in my heart of hearts, being a representative of the people of this province, that the people of this province are hungry to learn that there is action on the decisions and discussions that are taken here. They need to

see that the same way that those in Malawi, those in Botswana, those in Zambia and the rest of the islands - that make our beautiful SADC what it is and all the Members of this Parliamentary Forum, are as hungry to hear what we have to say.

What we have to say is going to ensure that when we go back, we will be more focused on climate innovation and putting in place a legislative framework that will mitigate the impact of this on our own people. We must not just do this theoretically; we need to commit ourselves to doing oversight.

The progressive laws that we will enact will not live in the books and the echelons of Parliaments, but they will live when Members of Parliament and Legislatures go out to exercise oversight, an oversight that would bring change in the lives of the people. Whether we work together with municipalities to ensure adherence to urban settlements and urban laws or not, we need to go out and work.

We must borrow from the declaration that was taken in Cape Town, in the Western Cape, over a month ago, when we met as the P-20 Speaker Summit, led by Speaker Didiza, where we had to resolve to be more gender-responsive and youth-inclusive in our climate policies, and where we have also resolved that we want to leave no one behind.

Let us all go together so that the benefits of Africa, which were earned a week ago when the world gathered to speak about economic policies, realise the truth that you and I have known always, that Africa is not only the future, but Africa is also the leader. It is just us having to take our place at the table.

The high place at the table will start with us, as parliamentarians, being understanding of our representation, that we do not represent only ourselves, but we represent the people through progressive legislation, and importantly, through overseeing the implementation of legislation because any legislation that you have will never be effective if it is not implemented.

President and Speaker Didiza, we are hoping and relying on you that when we resolve and leave here, we will be following up and KwaZulu-Natal will ensure that we implement what is meant to be implemented by us. However, we will also be hoping for co-operation from everybody else, especially the Executive. *Namukelekile esifundazweni saKwaZulu-Natal!*

You are all welcome to the beautiful province of KwaZulu-Natal, the province that is home to iSimangaliso Wetlands, the province that is also home to the Drakensberg; the province that is also home to the beautiful beaches that run from the north right to the south; and a border with the Eastern Cape. Thank you for choosing KwaZulu-Natal to be your destination. - [*Applause.]*

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY: Thank you very much, Hon. Speaker. I think the founding principle of this Forum will make sure that what you have raised continues. Thank you once more, Hon. Speaker Boyce. I will now call Her Excellency Boemo Sekgoma, the SADC-PF Secretary General, to take us through the credentials of the Forum. Her Excellency!

THE SADC PF SECRETARY GENERAL (MS. B. SEKGOMA): Good morning, Bom Dia! Bonjour! *Sanibonani.*

His Excellency, Your Honour, Mr. Paul Mashatile, Acting President of the Republic of South Africa and our esteemed guest of Honour, Hon.

Randriana Soloniaiko Siteny Thierry, President of the SADC Parliamentary Forum and Speaker of the Parliament of Madagascar, Hon. Sylvia Izaks, the Vice President of the SADC Parliamentary Forum and Member of the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, Hon. Angela Thokozile Didiza, Member of Parliament and Speaker of the National Assembly of the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, and our gracious host of the 58th Plenary Assembly Session, Hon. Rifilwe Mtsweni-Tsipane, Member of Parliament and Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces of the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, and host Speaker of the 58th Plenary Assembly in absentia, Hon. Azarel Jolinda Ernesta, Speaker of the National Assembly of Seychelles and host of the 59th Plenary Assembly, distinguished Hon. Speakers of SADC Parliaments, Leaders of delegations, Hon. Members, Mr. Thulasizwe Ntuli, Premier of KwaZulu-Natal, Members of the National Assembly, Speakers of the South African Legislative Sector, Hon. Nontembeko Boyce, Member of Parliament of the Legislature and Speaker of the KwaZulu-Natal Legislature, allow me, Hon. Speakers, Hon. Members, to stand on the protocol that has been established and simply say you are welcome in your respective hierarchies and your respective portfolios.

It is my profound honour to stand before you on behalf of the SADC Parliamentary Forum to add to the welcome that has been extended for you to be here at the 58th Plenary Assembly Session of our Forum. Pardon me, Hon. Speaker, if I get out of order.

There is something about being here in this majestic City of eThekwini, a place whose very sands and shorelines carry the stories of our region, our

struggles and aspirations that invoke a spirit of radicalism. However, I will stand guided. Allow me also, at the beginning, to pay a profound tribute through His Excellency, Your Honour, the Vice President, to His Excellency, President Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa, for his exceptional leadership and stewardship of the G20. Under his guidance, Africa did not merely participate. Africa led and Africa is rising. – [*Applause*] -Your Excellency, Your Presidency placed the aspirations, the challenges and solutions of the Global South firmly at the centre of the global discourse.

Your Presidency championed multilateralism, inclusion, equitable development, and the reform of global financial institutions with clarity, dignity and stewardship that made the continent proud. You set a new benchmark for visionary African leadership on the world stage and for that, the SADC Parliamentary Forum extends its deepest admiration and congratulations to you and the Republic of South Africa.

Our guest of Honour, Hon. speakers, and distinguished delegates, as the Forum in equal measure, we pay tribute to the Hon. Speaker, Thoko Didiza, whose exemplary leadership during the P20 has been unparalleled, consistent with her coherence and conviction on all parliamentary platforms regarding sustainable development. Under her leadership and stewardship at the helm of the African geopolitical group within the Inter-Parliamentary Union, she has lifted the voice of our continent with dignity, strength and strategic clarity.

In the last session, the voice of Africa was heard. On peace and security, she was heard. You have demonstrated through your actions, intellect and unwavering resolve that women can and women do lead with

distinction on the world stage. *Malibongwe!* - [HON. DELEGATES: *Ihlombe.*] – [*Applause*] -

Hon. Speaker, your work continues to inspire a generation of women and young girls across Africa who see in you, not only a woman leader but a trailblazer who expands the boundaries of possibility. We salute you. *Malibongwe*, Hon. Speaker!

Our guest of Honour and distinguished delegates, it is in this spirit of bold, purposeful leadership that we gather here in eThekwini, a city whose history of resilience, cultural fusion, and resistance mirrors the history of Southern Africa itself. From the legacy of King Shaka, whose strategic genius transformed regional dynamics, to the unyielding pursuit of justice that shaped Southern Africa's liberation and its Constitution. I dare say Durban or eThekwini reminds us that progress is built when people stand together, think together and act together. And with the current geopolitics, we need to be reminded of the unity of purpose.

Getting to the theme of this Plenary Assembly, which has already been eloquently contextualised, one could not reiterate the urgency that this is no longer an approaching threat. It is immediate and it is here with us today. It is a daily reality and in particular, women, young girls and the elderly are on the frontline, enduring gendered climate stress related to medical disruptions, supply chain disruptions, induced gendered violence, forced migration, loss of income, among others and Parliaments are called to scale up and respond with equal urgency, innovation, and courage.

Hon. Members, it is not accidental that we are here, as you have already heard from the Hon. Speaker. This land also carries layers of

history, as I have indicated, taking you back to the 1820s, hunters and settlers who opened new commercial pathways, which are currently sustained. The great port of Durban, which became a lifeline for regional trade and a gateway to the Indian Ocean. A melting pot of African, Asian, and European cultures, whose fusion forged a unique identity. A proud Zulu homeland, where the spirit of Ukhahlamba and the legacies of the Zulu kingdom still echo. Indeed, on reflection, this region is complete with acknowledging the founders of this country.

The State builders, the innovators, and visionaries, whose legacy we must carry towards our unity. Our diverse chiefdoms and a shared national consciousness offer lessons for today's regional integration. Regional integration should not remain a pipe dream but should be seen as something achievable.

Hon. Members, I have spoken a lot about eThekwini. It is here also that the enduring legacy of Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela is written into the architecture of Southern African public life. His conviction that Parliament must be a moral compass and an instrument of justice remains a beacon of our region.

Today, as the world grapples with new forms of conflict, geopolitics and ecopolitics and shrinking civic space, Nelson Mandela's moral instructions are more relevant than ever. Esteemed delegates, our region and the world have witnessed renewed conflict from Gaza to Eastern Europe and pockets of fragility within our own continent. We have also witnessed Members of Parliament rise boldly using their platforms to call for humanitarian corridors to be opened, condemn atrocities and champion peace. This is

parliamentary activism at its best, principled, people-centred with a global conscience. It affirms that Parliament is not just a lawmaking body but a voice of conscience, a mediator, a guardian of constitutionalism, among others.

Therefore, Hon. Members, as we stand on this world today, we remember the extraordinary legacies of the Frontline States: The United Republic of Tanzania's Julius Nyerere, father of Pan-Africanism; Zambia's Kenneth Kaunda, who endured the most economic sabotage in defence of liberation; Mozambique's Samora Machel, who paid for solidarity with his life; Botswana's Seretse Khama, whose diplomacy anchored stability in times of immense threat; Angola's Agostinho Neto, Zimbabwe's Robert Gabriel Mugabe and others who forged pathways for the oppressed to breathe freedom.

Despite the ideological differences, they were united by a simple, powerful truth that the freedom of one African country depends on the freedom of all. Hon. Members, that spirit is the very foundation of the Southern African Development Community, SADC, Parliamentary Forum's Framework and the SADC's regional integration agenda. Hon. Members, from these examples, we affirm that the SADC common agenda of industrialisation, free movement, market integration, peace and shared prosperity remains non-negotiable.

The Plenary Assembly of this gathering must therefore and shall always reinforce the role of Parliament in harmonisation of laws for the African Continental Free Trade Area implementation to ensure the Maputo Development Corridor becomes a functional continental artery, overseeing

the proper use of natural resources including minerals, water systems and biodiversity, guaranteeing transparency in natural resources and also in national budgets, championing youth empowerment, women's full economic participation and the protection of vulnerable groups without exception.

Our guest of honour and distinguished Speakers of Parliament, South Africa, continues to offer vital lessons. It has one of the world's most visionary Constitutions, guaranteeing civil, political and socioeconomic rights. Its courts have shaped global jurisprudence, especially on housing, health and non-discrimination. Its diversity, characterised by 11 languages, multiple faiths, cultures and heritages, is not a liability but a triumph of co-existence. Its global leadership in sport, whether the Springboks, Bafana Bafana or its dynamic athletes, reminds us that resilience can be a national identity.

South Africa's commitment to zero tolerance on gender-based violence, supported by a robust Commission for Gender Equality and strong parliamentary action, aligns seamlessly with our SADC model law on gender-based violence (EN | FR | PT), our SADC model law on eradicating child marriage (EN | FR | PT),s and protecting children in marriage. South Africa is a story of rising from conflict to justice, from division to unity, from rupture to renewal. As

We have natural resources that we are endowed with, which are also trapped amid the promise for employment, the promise for equity, among others. They must be managed with integrity and foresight. It is in this context that the work of this Plenary Assembly becomes decisive, and it is for this reason that the SADC Parliament must come and come in 2026.

Hon. Members, the Plenary is not simply a gathering. It is a call to history. We think beyond borders. We legislate beyond election cycles. We oversee beyond the confines of domestic politics. We dream beyond the limitations of the present. We think SADC. We think Africa. We think about the future. With these reflections, Hon. Members, may our deliberations be bold and visionary and may the spirit of our ancestors and the ancestors of this eThekwini, who believed unshakably that a united region and any adversity can be overcome, remain with us throughout our deliberations.

Hon. Members, I thank you for your kind listening and at this point, in line with the established practice of this august Plenary, allow me to inform my guest of honour and distinguished delegates that this 58th Plenary Assembly has complied with Article 7(2) of the Forum's Constitution on Equitable Representation of Women and Political Diversity. I am pleased to report that overall, 14 out of the 15 Member Parliaments are represented at this Assembly. Only one Parliament has tendered an apology, being the United Republic of Tanzania.

The Assembly is attended by over 300 delegates, as indicated, and by 69 representatives comprising Presiding Officers and Members of Parliament, excluding Members of Parliament who are attending as observers. We have 13 organisations attending as observers, 11 delegations are led by Speakers or Presiding Officers, demonstrating the high level of commitment to the work of the Forum, while three delegations are led by Members of Parliament. Women in these delegations make up 40,6% of delegates, with 28 female and 41 male Members of Parliament attending. While this falls far short of the 50% parity target set by the SADC Protocol

on Gender and Development (EN | FR | PT), it shows steady progress towards gender balance representation in parliamentary diplomacy and decision-making.

The Plenary Assembly also reflects the Forum's foundational commitment to inclusive and multiparty democracy. Of the 69 representatives, almost 60% are drawn from ruling parties or ruling coalitions; 21,7% represent the opposition; 7,2% are independent Members of Parliament; 2,9% are traditional leaders or chiefs; and 8,7% are nonpolitical or nonpartisan Members. The rich composition, Hon. Members, ensures that the Forum deliberations benefit from a diverse range of political perspectives, ruling and opposition, elected or traditional, strengthening the Forum's mandate to promote accountability, inclusivity and participatory democracy in our region.

The rich composition, Hon. Members, ensures that the Forum's deliberation benefits from a diverse range of political perspectives, ruling and opposition, elected and traditional and participatory democracy in our region. Hon. Members, for the benefit of our guest of Honour, may I kindly request that, as I introduce each delegation, you kindly rise as I mention your country. I will start with the nation of Angola, a delegation of six Members, led by Hon. Adão Francisco Correia de Almeida, Speaker of the National Assembly. You are welcome Hon. Speaker.

The Parliament of the Republic of Botswana, with a delegation of three Members, led by Hon. Dithapelo Lefoko Keorapetse, Speaker of the National Assembly. You are welcome, Sir. The Parliament of the Republic of Congo, a delegation of 10 Members of which four are observers, is led by Hon. Jean-

Claude Tshilumbayi Musamu, first Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly. You are welcome, Hon. First Deputy Speaker. The Parliament of the Kingdom of Eswatini, a delegation of five Members, led by Senator Isaac M. Magagula, a Member of Parliament. You are welcome.

The Parliament of the Kingdom of Lesotho, a delegation of six Members, led by Hon. Tlohang Sekhamane, Speaker of the National Assembly. You are welcome, Hon. delegates. The Parliament of the Republic of Madagascar, a Delegation of six Members led by Hon. Randrianasoloniaiko Thierry Siteny, Speaker of the National Assembly and President of the SADC Parliamentary Forum. The Parliament of the Republic of Malawi, a delegation of six Members, led by the Rt. Hon. Sameer Suleman, Speaker of Parliament. You are welcome, Hon. Speaker.

The Parliament of the Republic of Mauritius, a delegation of four Members, led by Hon. Govinden Pynivel Venkatasami, Deputy Chief Government Whip. You are welcome. The Parliament of the Republic of Mozambique, a delegation of six Members, led by Hon. Margarida Adamugi Talapa, Speaker of the National Assembly. You are welcome. The Parliament of the Republic of Namibia, a delegation of four Members, led by Hon. Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila, Speaker of the National Assembly. You are welcome. The National Assembly of the Republic of Seychelles, represented by Hon. Azarel Jolinda Ernesta, Speaker of the National Assembly. You are welcome.

The Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, a delegation of fourteen Members, of which eight are observers, led by our gracious host, Hon. Thoko Didiza, Speaker of the National Assembly. The National Assembly of the

Republic of Zambia, a delegation of six Members, led by the Rt. Hon. Nelly Butete Kashumba Mutti, State Counsel, SC, MP, Federation of African Public Relations Associations (FAPRA), Speaker of the National Assembly. You are welcome. The Parliament of Zimbabwe, a delegation of five Members, led by Hon. Maybe Mbohwa, Member of Parliament. Also, extending apologies, Hon. J. F. N. Mudenda, who could not join us today.

Clerks and secretaries of the Members of Parliament who are here today, you are welcome. The South African Parliament, SADC Parliamentary Forum Secretariat, a delegation of 13, led by me. Finally, all the staff from our Member Parliaments. The Parliament of the Republic of Tanzania has indicated and sent its apologies. Permit me at this stage to further extend heartfelt appreciation to the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa for its meticulous planning, seamless coordination, and exemplary professionalism in hosting, not only this Plenary Assembly but also the just-concluded meeting of the Executive Committee.

Under your capable leadership Hon. Speaker Thoko Didiza and that of the Secretary to Parliament, through the diligence of all parliamentary staff, you have demonstrated once again why South Africa remains an anchor institutionally, politically and symbolically, for our region. Your hospitality has been nothing short of impeccable. I wish you all distinguished delegates fruitful deliberations. I thank you.

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY: You know, your hands are very expensive. Can you clap your hands for her? - [*Applause*] - *Mmarona, re go lebogile, motlotlegi wa rona. O opile kgomo lonaka. Motswana o kile a re, moseka phofu ya gaabo ga nke a šwa lentswe.*

So, this Forum must ensure that what you have agreed upon and the forebearers have agreed upon, we must emphasise it and we should not be apologetic. Gone are the days of Africans being spectators; we must negotiate at the table. Thank you very much once more, my leader. At this moment, I will now call a cultural performance group to come and serenade us with their music and make us remember our roots. Cultural Group, it is festive and we are already in a festive mood. So, you must put us in that mood.

[*CULTURAL PERFORMANCE OR INTERLUDE*]

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY: Wow, the beauty of Africa, and it shows you how strong we are as Africans. We must never even doubt our planet. Thank you very much *Bana Ba Ka*. That was a beautiful performance. Yes, yes!

At this moment, I will call the following two speakers. They will follow each other and I will not stand up again. We will have Ms Princess Mojapelo, SA Youth Parliament, followed by Sen. Dr. Linda Lorraine Nxumalo, National Women's Parliamentary Caucus, Eswatini. They will follow each other. I will not stand in between. You are welcome. The first one is Ms Mojapelo. Yes, yes. – [*Applause*] -

MISS. P. N. MOJAPELO [SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY, SADC, YOUTH PARLIAMENT]: Hon. Guest of Honour, Hon. Speakers and Presiding Officers, Hon. Members of Parliament, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, all protocols observed. My name is Princes Boitumelo Mojapelo. I am here representing the Southern African Development Community, SADC, Youth Parliament. It is an immense

honour to stand before this esteemed Assembly, once again on behalf of the vibrant, resilient and unyielding young people of the SADC region.

I rise here representing the Southern Africa Youth Parliament. A youth-led, youth-driven platform committed to amplifying young voices and shaping the policies that define our future, hosted proudly by the Southern Africa Youth Forum. We remain the regional engine of youth mobilisation, democratic engagement and innovation. I say once again deliberately because since the 56th Plenary Assembly in Livingstone, Zambia, young people have been given the rare, profound privilege of addressing the highest decision-making body of the SADC Parliamentary Forum, twice every year, not as spectators, not as ornaments but as partners, contributors and leaders in our own right. This is not symbolism, this is substance. – [*Applause*] –

The SADC PF stands today as one of the youth-inclusive institutions in our region, where young people are invited not only to speak but to help shape the direction of this Forum through Standing Committee engagements, high-level dialogues and core programmes. We thank the leadership of this Forum for its courage and foresight through initiatives such as the mentorship programme, where young people are being prepared intentionally to step into leadership with clarity, conviction and competence.

Guest of Honour and distinguished delegates, a historic milestone in this journey was the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Southern African Federation of Non-Governmental Organisations (SAFNG)) and SADC PF at the 57th Plenary Assembly, in Victoria Falls,

Zimbabwe. That agreement did not merely formalise a partnership; it cemented a shared vision of youth political and economic empowerment, digital inclusion, climate governance and gender equality. These priorities speak directly to the realities and aspirations of our generation. However, progress must be matched with truth. The truth is this: young people across the SADC region continue to face urgent, deeply interconnected challenges that demand decisive action.

Socioeconomic exclusion and unemployment remain some of the painful hurdles. We are the most educated, most connected generation Africa has ever produced and yet millions of capable, ambitious young people remain locked out of opportunity. With over 60% of our population under 35, this is not just an economic concern; it is a crisis of dignity and a crisis of hope.

When young people cannot turn their skills into livelihoods, frustration rises, trust erodes and the entire generation is put at risk. Addressing youth unemployment requires more than just job creation; it requires restoring confidence, nurturing aspirations and building inclusive economies where young people can thrive.

Peace and security weigh heavily on us as well. From Northern Mozambique to the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, young people are too often the first to feel the shock waves of violence, yet in these very places, youth are stepping forward, taking risks with their lives in community peace building, mediation and grassroots stabilisation.

In Tanzania and Madagascar, youth-led protest reflects growing impatience with exclusion, inequality and governance gaps.

I will tell you this: we are not a silent generation. We are a generation of action. However, to sustain our work, youth peace builders do not only need encouragement. We need recognition, protection and real investment. Human security remains fragile. Poverty, gender-based violence and limited access to healthcare, especially sexual and reproductive health, continue to strip young people of their rights and their potential.

Above all, climate change stands as a defining crisis of our lifetime. Its impact is not theoretical; it is lived daily. More than 240 million young Africans are already enduring multiple climatic shocks. In our region, food insecurity, water shortages and disrupted education are not distant possibilities; they are pressing realities.

Yet even in this crisis, young people are leading from reforesting landscapes to innovating with digital climate tools from Mauritius to Malawi, from Seychelles to Zimbabwe, youth across SADC are demonstrating courage, creativity and resilience.

In 2022, over 400 young people gathered in Johannesburg at the full SADC Youth Forum and the idea of the SADC Youth Climate Change Envoy was conceived. Today, that idea is a living force. The envoy has launched a youth negotiated programme, convened the first conference of youth ahead of the Conference of the Parties (COP) and carried the voices of SADC Youth to the global platform, including the Africa Climate Week in Namibia and Nairobi.

This is why we welcome the thoughtful and urgent theme of this 58th Plenary Assembly because climate change is neither gender neutral nor generation blind. It hits women and young people the hardest but we remain the champions of innovation and adoption.

Guest of Honour and distinguished delegates, the Assembly has already approved the establishment of the SADC PF Youth Caucus. We eagerly anticipate its full implementation because it will strengthen youth co-ordination, expand legislative contributions and establish a permanent home for the Southern Africa Youth Parliament within this Forum.

As I conclude, allow me to reaffirm our central conviction. We look to our Parliament for bold, accountable and transformative leadership. Leadership that prepares our region not for the world we once knew but for the world we are entering. In the powerful words of Oliver Reginald Tambo, I quote:

> *A country, a movement or a person that does not value its youth and children does not deserve its future.*

As the late Nelson Mandela reminds us, it is in our hands to create a better world for all who live in it.

The SDAC PF has shown this commitment. The challenge then before us is to sustain it, deepen it and institutionalise it. As the youth of Southern Africa, we stand before you with one unwavering message: we are not leaders in waiting, we are leaders in motion, ready to contribute, eager to lead, determined to create a future defined by shared purpose, dignity and

opportunity for all. As we rise into that future, we carry a principle that has guided youth movements across generations. There is nothing for us without us. I thank you. – [*Applause*] -

DR L. L. NXUMALO: His Excellency Mr. Paul Mashatile, Acting President of the Republic of South Africa, our esteemed guest of honour; Honourable Thiery, President of the SADC Parliamentary Forum and Speaker of the Parliament of Madagascar, Hon. Sylvia Isaks, Vice President of the SADC Parliamentary Forum and Member of Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, Hon. Angela Thokozile Didiza, Member of Parliament and Speaker of the National Assembly of the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa and host Speaker of this 58th Plenary Assembly, Hon. Refilwe Mthethwa, MP and Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces of the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, and the host Speaker of the 58th Plenary Assembly in absentia, Hon. Ezarel Ernesta, Speaker of the National Assembly of Seychelles and host of the 59th Plenary Assembly, distinguished Speakers of SADC National Parliamentary Forum, heads of delegations, Mr. Thulas Sizwe Ntuli, Speaker of the KwaZulu-Natal, Members of the National Assembly of the National Council of Provinces, Speakers of South Africa Legislative Sector, Hon. Nontembeko Boyce, Speaker of the KwaZulu-National Legislature, Councillor Cyril Xaba, Executive Mayor of the eThekwini Municipality, Her Excellency Miss Boemo Sekgoma, Secretary-General of the SADC Parliamentary Forum, Hon. Members of Parliament from the SADC National Parliaments, Ms Princess Mojapelo, Representative of the Southern Africa Youth Parliament, members

of the diplomatic cops, delegates, observers, ladies and gentlemen, it is with deep sense of humility and honour that I address this esteemed gathering on behalf of the women parliamentarians of the SADC region under the auspices of the journey of the Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus.

We gather here in KwaZulu-Natal Province, at a moment of great significance. We are in the midst of celebrating or commemorating the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence for 2025, being observed under the theme, *unite to end digital violence against all women and girls*. The theme challenges us not to remain silent or passive in the face of harm, but to confront emerging threats, especially those born of the rapidly evolving digital age, with clarity, courage and a united purposeful resolve. KwaZulu-Natal is not only rich in cultural heritage but also a story and history of resistance. It is also a wellspring of women's leadership whose enjoying legacy continues to shape our collective conscience from the resilience of its compatriots to the courage of its freedom fighters and the brilliance of its trailblazing daughters. This province has long been a cradle of strength, wisdom and visionary leadership. It is a land where the spirit of ubuntu thrives, where communities are bound by shared purpose and where the voices of women have time and again reason to guide to heal and to inspire. It is here in the province of KwaZulu-Natal that we encounter the enduring spirit of touring figures such as Queen Nandi, the revered mother of King Shaka Zulu, a formidable leader in her own right. Despite the patriarchal norms of her time, Queen Nandi demonstrated exceptional political acumen, resilience and dignity. She protected and nurtured her son through exile and adversity, instilling in him the values that would later

define one of Africa's most powerful kingdoms. Her unwavering strength and influence over court affairs earned her reverence within the Zulu nation, where she became a symbol of maternal authority, statecraft and enduring leadership. Queen Nandi's legacy attests to the foundational role that women have long played in shaping the destiny of nations.

We honour Charlotte Maxeke, a pioneering figure in academic excellence, spiritual leadership and political activism. She became the first black South African woman to attain a university degree, a Bachelor of Science from Wilberforce University in Ohio, USA, in 1901. A leading figure in the African Methodist Episcopal Church and founder of the Bantu Women's League, and she advocated for education, universal salvation and social justice, providing organised African womanhood with its first national platform and a strong voice on the international stage.

We also remember Dorothy Nyembe, a brave anti-apartheid activist, community organiser and later a Member of Parliament, whose unwavering courage and resistance in the face of oppression made her a prominent figure in South Africa's liberation struggle. Her many years of activism, including periods of imprisonment, continue to inspire generations to stand against injustice and to fight for freedom and equality.

These women were not just symbols in their era. They were architects of change, encouragingly challenging the structures of injustice and reshaping history. Their legacy is not confined to the past. It endured as a powerful beacon guiding our collective pursuit of justice, dignity and equality today. Yet the very injustices these women leaders fought against continue to persist in new and evolving forms. Gender-based violence still

haunts women in their homes, workplaces and increasingly in digital spaces they explore. Technology facilitated violence from online harassment to nonconsensual sharing of images and digital stalking targets women and girls with devastating consequences, undermining safety, restricting expression and reinforcing exclusion. These violations are exacerbated by the digital gender divide, where women and girls remain disproportionately without access to the internet, digital literacy or tools to participate fully in today's economy and democracy.

Meanwhile, climate change worsened women's vulnerability, especially for rural women who face the impact of environmental shocks that disrupt food systems, displaced communities and threaten livelihoods. At the same time, access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, including maternal health services and HIV prevention and treatment, remains unequal and underfunded, putting millions of women and girls at risk of avoidable harm and premature death. In the face of these escalating challenges, we must be unequivocal and we cannot carry on making laws in silence while women continue to be silenced by violence.

The Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus (RWPC), therefore, calls for the accelerated domestication and implementation of the SADC-PF Model Law on Gender-Based Violence (EN | FR | PT), which provides a harmonised survivors centred framework for legal protection and institutional response. Equally, we urge the adoption of the model law on eradicating child marriage and protecting children already in marriage (EN | FR | PT), which addresses one of the most deeply rooted violations of girlhood, whilst unlocking pathways of dignity, opportunity and empowerment. These model

laws must not remain aspirational documents. They must become actionable blueprints. We bring them to life in our national context through robust domestication, adequate resource allocation and vigilant parliamentary oversight.

Furthermore, we must prioritise climate-smart legislation that protects women's livelihoods and positions them as agents of environmental resilience, strengthening the legal and policy frameworks necessary to combat digital violence and cybercrime, ensuring that women and girls are safe guarded online as much as offline and close to the digital gender gap through fair access to education, connectivity and digital skills training. We must also broaden access to comprehensive Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) services, including HIV prevention and treatment and affirm these rights as essential to human dignity, public health and sustainable development.

Above all, we must persistently work to ensure that full and equal representation of women in all decision-making spaces, not as a token or gesture but as a constitutional and democratic necessity.

On behalf of the women, the Parliamentary Caucus of the SADC region and delegates of the 58th Plenary Assembly, I extend my sincere appreciation to the government of the Republic of South Africa, through the President of the Republic, His Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa, for his steadfast leadership in advancing gender justice. In April 2020, the President led South Africa in making a significant advance by signing the National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide – a historic pledge in the fight against gender-based violence and femicide. More recently, at the

G20 Social Summit in Boksburg, the President reaffirmed the government's commitment to declaring GBV and femicide a national crisis, officially recognising it as a crisis that must be urgently addressed.

The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based-Violence must galvanise both our reflection and collective action. They must ignite our resolve to take decisive legislative intervention to close the digital divide and end digital and domestic violence and empower women not just to survive but to lead. Let this Plenary Assembly be remembered not only for the speeches delivered within these walls, but for the lives transformed beyond the words because we could have chosen not only to speak but to act with courage, urgency and conviction. In the spirit of Queen Nandi, let us lead with vision, undoubted, unyielding and guided by a profound sense of purpose. In the cherished memory of Dorothy Nyembe and Charlotte Maxeke, let us stand firm against all forms of injustice, drawing strength from the courage of those who walked before us. In the name of every girl who dares to dream of a future free from fear, every girl who looks to us for protection, inspiration and possibility, let us act with urgency, conviction and unwavering resolve. The future of our region depends on nothing less. I thank you. [*Applause.]*

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY: Thank you very much to our young mind. I usually say when you empower young girls, do not leave the boys behind because they grow up with anger, hence we are stuck with gender violence. So, you must bring them together. They must know they are equals. – [*Applause*] -

Hon. Members, the founder of this Forum wanted exactly to address gender parity and as the region and as the continent, let us fight and not

reverse our gains. In many countries, we are seeing the reversal of the gains, especially in gender. That must be corrected, Hon. Leaders. It is very, very important.

Thank you very much for the powerful input that you made today. Unfortunately, I am part of the gender activists. I will not keep quiet and, on climate change, I am also an activist. I am fighting. I want those who have contributed to pay. We want justice for the climate on our continent.

Without any waste of time, I will now call the President, Hon. Thierry, Speaker of the Parliament of Madagascar. Your Excellency. – [*Applause*] –

THE PRESIDENT OF THE SADC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM [HON. S. T. RANDRIANASOLONIAIKO]: His Excellency Mr. Paul Mashatile, Acting President of the Republic of South Africa, our esteemed Guest of Honour,

- Hon. Sylvia Izaks, Vice President of the SADC Parliamentary Forum and Member of the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa,
- Hon. Angela Thokozile Didiza, MP, Speaker of the National Assembly of the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa and Host Speaker of this 58th Plenary Assembly,
- Hon. Refilwe Mtsweni-Tsipane, MP, Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces of the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa and Host Speaker of this 58th Plenary Assembly *in absentia*,
- Hon. Azarel Jolinda Ernesta, Speaker of the National Assembly of the Seychelles and Host of the 59th Plenary Assembly,
- Distinguished Speakers of SADC National Parliaments and Heads of Delegations,

- Her Excellency Ms Boemo Sekgoma, Secretary General of the SADC Parliamentary Forum,
- All Protocol Observed.

It is a great pleasure and privilege for me to address you on this grand occasion marking the official opening of the 58th Plenary Assembly Session of the SADC Parliamentary Forum.

It is indeed an honour to be meeting here in this beautiful coastal City of eThekwini, a city known for a rich natural heritage, unity and shared aspirations of our SADC region.

I am sure I speak for all when I express our profound gratitude to the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, through our gracious host, Hon. Speaker Thoko Didiza, the Government and the people of South Africa, for hosting this Plenary Assembly. Your warmth, courtesy and exceptional hospitality extended to us and our delegations since our arrival are sincerely appreciated. – [*Applause*] –

The Plenary Assembly stands as one of our most crucial institutional platforms. It is here that we deliberate, create partnerships, reflect and renew our shared resolve to deepen democracy, strengthen governance, and advance the well-being of our people. It is here that we exchange ideas, share experiences, and refine our parliamentary practices in pursuit of excellence. The Session allows us to assess our progress transparently, to learn from our past with humility, and to share our regional integration agenda with determination.

We must commend the Republic of South Africa for its principled and visionary leadership in championing the establishment of the SADC

Parliament. We especially remember with pride the events of the 38th Ordinary SADC Summit in Windhoek, Namibia, in August 2018, where H.E. Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa eloquently and unequivocally expressed the imperative of establishing a SADC Parliament that can amplify the people's voice, enhance democratic oversight and shape the future of our integration.

The SADC-PF has consistently demonstrated its value as a strategic platform for fostering interparliamentary cooperation and laying a robust foundation for enhanced citizen engagement in the regional integration agenda. It has played a pivotal role in the domestication of SADC Protocols, among others, notably through the development and adoption of model laws.

From an administrative standpoint, I am proud to affirm that the institution has embraced a modern management system underpinned by strong corporate governance principles, positioning the Forum as a credible and professional body, well-placed to evolve into a fully-fledged SADC Parliament.

We continue to count on South Africa's unwavering support to secure the approval and ratification of the Protocol on the SADC Parliament (EN | FR | PT), fully confident that the SADC Parliament will build on the solid capacity and institutional infrastructure we have deliberately developed under the auspices of the Forum. In this regard, we humbly appeal to Your Excellency to serve as our ambassador among your esteemed colleagues, championing the approval of the SADC Parliament by August 2026.

In conclusion, I wish to thank you, Your Excellency, for taking time out of your busy schedule to grace our official opening ceremony. Your steadfast

commitment to parliamentary democracy and regional integration inspires our collective efforts.

May this Plenary Assembly strengthen our unity, sharpen our vision, and renew our resolve to build a more peaceful, prosperous and integrated SADC region. I thank you for your attention. – [*Applause*] -

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONIY: Even for the President, you are still stingy. – [*Applause*] –

Thank you very much, Hon. President, for the warm words you have shared with us this afternoon — this morning. We are still in the morning, by the way. Ladies and gentlemen, you are not lively. I want you to be lively. Yes!

The following items, I want to run the following items this way before I call the band. After the band, I will call the Hon. Thoko Didiza, the Speaker of the National Assembly of the Parliament of South Africa. She will introduce our guest Speaker, Acting President, the Hon. Mashatile. I will also not come in between. So, Hon. Speaker, once the band finishes, it will be your platform as you will be introducing the Deputy President. To the band, make us a little bit shaky.

[PERFORMANCE BY BAND OR INTERLUDE]

THE SPEAKER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF SOUTH AFRICA [MS. A. T. DIDIZA): Thank you very much, our programme director. Thanks to the band for that lovely rendition. Our programme director felt the audience was a bit quiet and we were a bit stiff and not moving, even our hands were very lazy to clap and decided that she must actually ask the

band to make us move a little bit. Thank you very much, Hon. Despo, for that, Speaker of our province of Bokone-Bophirima, the North West.

The Deputy President of South Africa, His Excellency Paul Mashatile, who is the Acting President and is with us, has been with us from the beginning of this programme in hybrid because he would not have been able to be here because of other government business. We also want to thank the President for having ensured that we have a representation at the highest level to come and welcome us, even though he himself is not around but in Mozambique and we would like to thank him for that. Our Southern African Development Community President, Hon. Thierry, who is here among us, and thank you for the message that you have given on behalf of SADC. We also want to thank our Executive Mayor of the City of eThekwini, Councillor Cyril Xaba, the Speaker of KwaZulu-Natal Legislature, Hon. Boyce and all provincial speakers present here, and Deputy Speakers.

Hon. Speakers from our region, the SADC Parliament, who are all here, and the leaders of the various delegations, Members of Parliament who are here, the members of the Provincial Legislatures who are here, the members of eThekwini Metro, who are also here, who are our hosts, our representative of Southern Africa Youth Parliament, Princess Mojapelo, thank you very much for the message that you have given us, and I am sure that the Speakers and Members of Parliament present here did indeed take to heart what you have said to us.

Representative of the Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus, Dr. Hon. Linda Nxumalo, I would like to also thank you for the message you have given but also reflecting on the theme of the 16 Days of Activism

Against Violence on Women and Girls. Secretary-General of the SADC Parliamentary Forum, Ms. Boemo, thank you very much for your message too, when you reflected in particular, about the role and place of eThekwini and KwaZulu-Natal province, also reflecting on how it connects all of us as the SADC region. Our esteemed secretaries of parliaments who are here from our respective parliaments in the region and their staff who are here with us, esteemed guests, ladies and gentlemen, it is indeed an honour and privilege to stand before you as this esteemed Assembly, a collective voice representing the will, hopes and aspirations of people in Southern Africa. As we gather in this august Assembly, our hearts and prayers are with the people of New Hanover, whose houses and infrastructure were washed away by floods just five days ago in the uMgungundlovu District.

Earlier this year, close to 21145 individuals in KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Northern Cape were impacted by floods, severe heat waves and other climate-related shocks, illustrating the lived stress and impact of climate change. As you will notice on the planned excursions that we will have tomorrow after our symposium, around the town of eThekwini, which is still recovering from the devastating floods of April 2022, which killed hundreds of people in this region and displaced more families. In most cases, women and youth are proportionally more affected by climate shocks.

It is women who must carry the burden of care after any devastation, where they have to pick up the pieces of their families and of their children. It is the women who, when streams have been affected, must walk long distances to fetch water. It is the women who, where such shifts have happened, have to wonder where they get their energy sources for cooking

for their families. It is for this reason that today and tomorrow in particular, we will reflect on the impact of climate change on women and youth. Bring a human face to how citizens are severely impacted by climate shocks. In the Southern African region, the increasing frequency and intensity of El Niño-induced drought conditions are pushing more people into hunger and desperation.

It has also moved more people into the chain of immigration and humanitarian deterioration. These examples point to the urgent need for collective action to avert further effects of climate change. It is against this background that we are hosting this 58th Plenary Assembly under the theme: "*The Impact of Climate Change on Women and Youth in the SADC Region and the Role of Parliaments in Climate Change Mitigation and Adoption.*"

The climate change crisis is fundamentally a crisis of inequality. While its effects spare no one, its burdens are not shared equally. Women and youth bear the heaviest brunt. Prolonged droughts mean longer, riskier journeys for water. Flash floods destroy fragile livelihoods. An increased resource scarcity fuels tension and the inability of many. Change exacerbates existing gender inequalities, limiting access to education, increasing poverty and threatening the safety of women and children. Similarly, our youth who represent the future of the region and continent are inheriting a dangerously compromised world and decaying infrastructure damaged by weather and climate shocks. Climate change affects youth through loss of agricultural productivity, displacement and limited economic opportunities.

However, they are also the generation of change, armed with innovation, digital literacy and an unwavering commitment to a sustainable future. We heard from our young representative, who was representing the youth of the region, saying they took a resolution on how, even in the present, they will advance innovative ideas and act to prevent and mitigate climate change. I think we have a responsibility as various parliaments to work with these young pioneers on how the solutions they carved can be multiplied across the region. Hon. Members, the COP30, which has just ended, was held in Brazil and it was framed as the Implementation COP, implying it was meant to focus less on what the world must do, rather on how to make it all happen to curb the rise in global greenhouse gas emissions. While there was neither a consensus on the roadmap to transition away from fossil fuels nor an agreement on climate finance for developing countries, the COP30 did produce outcomes that have revived the call to work together to find global solutions on climate change.

The milestone reached was the adoption of the Global Mutirão Decision. A Mutirão is a Brazilian concept with indigenous origins, which means collective work. Translated to one of the Southern African languages in IsiZulu, it would be "*Masisebenzisane*". Another consequential outcome of COP30 was the creation of a just transition mechanism. South Africa has long advocated for a just transition approach to ensure that no one is left behind, regardless of developmental phase, resources and technological advancement.

Hon. Members, we must appreciate that transitioning from fossil fuel to other alternative energies does impact the livelihoods of people and

particularly workers who have been working in the mine, in particular and communities surrounding those mines and the dependencies thereof. It is important that, as we indeed look at how we transition in a just manner, we do not discount the impact on those who have been directly employed in the fossil fuel industries.

Our responsibilities would be to ensure that new alternative energies are also able to absorb others or even be diversified and create new forms of work. Distinguished Members, the legislative branch is not an observer in the crisis. We are a decisive actor. Our role must be to extend beyond approving budget lines. It requires active, intentional, and transformative intervention across two pillars. On mitigation, parliaments must ensure that national legislation aligns with international and regional commitments such as the COP's outcome, Paris Agreement (EN | FR | PT), and the SADC Climate Change Strategy.

This means enacting laws that incentivise cleaner and renewable energy, mandating sustainable land use and water management practices. Crucially, we must introduce and monitor climate change acts that establish clear national targets, institutional responsibilities, and accountable mechanisms. Chairperson, as we do this, it is also important to look at how we adapt in the present and ensure that the mechanisms we develop manage to assist us in moving beyond the present in a better way.

I hope that this symposium and the subsequent discussion of the Assembly will enable us as members of the region to find better ways that we can put into action and mitigate the impact of climate change. I thank you. – [*Applause*] -

Allow me to introduce our guest of Honour, Deputy President Paul Mashatile, who is the Deputy President of our country, a seasoned politician and activist in his own right from an early age but also who has been in the trenches even in post-apartheid South Africa. Deputy President Mashatile has served in the provincial executive as a member of the Executive Council in Housing. He also became the Premier of the province of Gauteng. Deputy President Mashatile became the Minister in government where he served as a Minister of Arts and Culture and is now the Deputy President of our country, championing, among others, issues of SA National AIDS Council (SANAC), which relates to issues of HIV and AIDS but also who leads the Interministerial Committee on Land and Agriculture, the Interministerial Committee that looks at issues of water, but also he is the Leader of Government Business whom, as Parliament, we work together to ensure that there is coordination between the work of the Executive and that of Parliament. Deputy President Mashatile – [*Applause*] -

The Vice President addressed the delegates on a virtual Platform as follows:

THE ACTING PRESIDENT OF THE RSA (THE DEPUTY PRESIDENT, MR. P. MASHATILE): Director of Ceremony, our hosts, the Mayor of eThekwini, Councillor Xaba, Speaker of the KwaZulu-Natal Legislature, Hon. Boyce, Speaker of the National Assembly in South Africa, Hon. Thoko Didiza, SADC Parliamentary Forum President, Randrianasoloniaiko Siteny, Speaker of Madagascar, Speakers and Members of Parliament from SADC Member States, representatives from the SADC Secretariat, Pan-African Parliament, African Union Commission, climate change experts and development partners from the UNFP, UNDP, AU, IPU, private sector and

civil society here present, ladies and gentlemen, I would have liked to be with you in Durban this morning but owing to some other pressing governments commitments, I was unable to be there.

It is my honour to welcome you all to the 58th Plenary Assembly of the SADC Parliamentary Forum. We are convened with the crucial focus on "*The impact of climate change on women and youth in the SADC Region and the role of Parliaments in climate change mitigation and adaptation*". This theme emphasises the necessity of collective action by parliaments to address and develop sustainable solutions for this pressing challenge.

South Africa G20 Declaration: Before delving into the subject, let me pause and acknowledge that this Plenary takes place following the successful hosting of the G20 Summit, the first ever hosted on African soil. What is more important is that the summit resulted in several key outcomes focused on placing the priorities of the continent and the Global South at the forefront of the global agenda.

A significant achievement was the adoption of the G20 Declaration, centred on the themes of solidarity, equality and sustainability as key pillars of inclusive growth. The declaration emphasises the African philosophy of Ubuntu , 'I am because we are', which stresses global interconnectedness and a commitment to ensuring no one is left behind.

The key areas of commitment and action included leaders condemning all attacks against civilians and reaffirming their commitment to work for a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace in conflict areas.

Recognising that high debt levels hinder inclusive growth, especially in low-income countries in Africa, the G20 committed to strengthening the

implementation of the common framework for debt treatments in a timely and coordinated manner. They also called for enhanced debt transparency from all stakeholders.

The G20 supports finalising the quota increase under the sixth general review of quotas to ensure a strong and adequately resourced International Monetary Fund (IMF). Notably, they welcomed the creation of a 25th chair at the IMF Executive Board to enhance the voice and representation of Sub-Saharan Africa.

On energy transitions, the G20 Leaders' Summit recognised that over 600 million Africans lack access to electricity. Therefore, they supported global efforts to triple renewable energy capacity and double the global average annual rate of energy efficiency improvements by 2030. They welcomed the Mission 300 platform to connect 300 million people to electricity in Africa by 2030 and the new Action Plan to accelerate the deployment of clean cooking solutions.

The G20 supported the G20 Critical Minerals Framework, which is a guide to ensure that the supply of important minerals is sustainable and stable, while also encouraging local processing and value addition in the countries where these minerals are produced.

The leaders welcomed the High-Level Principles on Sustainable Industrial Policy for Inclusive Economic Growth, Industrialisation, Jobs and Equality. They also established the Nelson Mandela Bay Target, aiming to further reduce the rate of young people Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET), by 5% by 2030 and committed to advancing universal social protection systems.

They reiterated their commitment to resilient food systems and welcomed the Ubuntu approaches on food security and nutrition, which aim to address the negative impacts of excessive food price volatility.

Equally, the leaders recognised the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and welcomed the launch of the AI for Africa Initiative, a voluntary platform for multilateral cooperation to promote access to computing power, talent and infrastructure in African countries.

The subject was also extensively discussed at the 57th Plenary Assembly held in Victoria Falls City, Republic of Zimbabwe, under the theme "*Harnessing Artificial Intelligence for Effective and Efficient Parliamentary Processes in the SADC Region: Experiences, Challenges and Opportunities*".

The key outcomes in this regard included a call to share experiences and best practices, the recognition of challenges like data security and over-reliance on foreign AI and the identification of opportunities to improve efficiency and transparency through AI tools. Moreover, the G20 commended the South African Presidency for launching the second phase of the G20 Compact with Africa 2025-2030.

The leaders welcomed the African Union as a full member of the G20 and called for a transformative reform of the UN Security Council to make it more representative and inclusive, specifically improving the representation of Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

Ladies and gentlemen, climate change was also a central topic of the G20 Summit. The topic was integrated into several working groups and culminated in specific commitments in the Leaders' Declaration. The leaders acknowledged the increasing frequency and intensity of disasters and

welcomed the G20 Voluntary High-Level Principles for Investing in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). They also reiterated the urgent need for universal coverage of early warning systems, particularly in Africa, by 2027.

They reaffirmed their commitment to the Paris Agreement (EN | FR | PT) goal of limiting global average temperature increase to 1,5 degrees Celsius and stressed the importance of national just transition pathways to achieve climate action alongside poverty eradication.

It is commendable that SADC is addressing climate change through policy development, capacity-building, and specific initiatives, like the development of a Regional Climate Resilient Water Investment Programme. Key actions include creating a climate change strategy and action plan, mainstreaming climate change into other policies, enhancing climate information services and focusing on water resources management and building regional resilience.

However, significant challenges remain and the region is still highly vulnerable to climate impacts. Climate change disproportionately affects women and young people, increasing their work burdens, escalating health risks and heightening the risks of gender-based violence and exploitation. It poses a significant threat multiplier, exacerbating existing socioeconomic vulnerabilities. In parallel, climate change impacts such as persistent droughts, extreme weather events, including floods and cyclones, land degradation and shifting rainfall patterns and profoundly undermine sustainable development in SADC, particularly affecting women and youth. It is imperative to acknowledge that women are disproportionately affected due to their central roles in household welfare and their dependence on

climate-sensitive natural resources. As primary providers of food, water and fuel, climate-induced scarcity compels women to undertake extended journeys, thereby increasing their workload, exposure to risks and adverse health consequences. Women are highly reliant on rain-fed agriculture. Fluctuating crop yields result in the loss of livelihood, exacerbate food insecurity and poverty within female-headed households. Furthermore, women often lack economic, political and legal power, including land rights, which restrict their resilience and capacity for adaptation. During periods of crisis, they have limited access to relief and decision-making processes.

Additionally, youth and adolescent girls, along with young people in general, are frequently associated with disrupted education and heightened vulnerability. Consequently, climate-related hazards, such as floods and droughts, can cause damage to schools' infrastructure or compel households to withdraw children, particularly girls, from schools to support subsistence and income-generating activities. This situation exacerbates the vulnerability of girls, leading to a significant rise in school dropouts amongst adolescent girls. This phenomenon often contributes to unequal gender roles, increasing their risk of early child and forced marriages, as a coping mechanism for impoverished families. Furthermore, it exposes them to physical and sexual abuse. Therefore, the combination of limited opportunities and climate shocks can restrict livelihood prospects for young people, particularly in rural areas. Consequently, they may resort to increased internal or regional migration to urban slums in pursuit of survival.

In response to climate change mitigation and adaptation, the SADC Parliaments hold a vital mandate and play a multifaceted role in promoting effective and equitable climate action. This is accomplished through their functions related to legislation, oversight, and representation. Immediately, we must enact and strengthen our policies to align with regional agreements, such as the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development (EN | FR | PT), SADC Climate Change Strategy and international climate agreements, such as the Peru Agreements and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. We must also promote gender-sensitive policies by introducing legislation that ensures a just and equitable approach and mandates the mainstreaming of gender consideration in all climate policies. We must facilitate the transition to clean energy by enacting laws and creating enabling policy environments that incentivise renewable energy investments, improve access to clean energy and leverage critical minerals for sustainable supply chains. As we implement these transformative reforms, we must strengthen oversight and accountability. This work will entail parliaments holding governments accountable for their performance in implementing domestic climate laws, regional commitments and international obligations.

To effectively address climate change, we must allocate sufficient resources to climate change mitigation and adaptation programmes, particularly those that focus on vulnerable groups. The success of this initiative hinges on investments in robust monitoring and evaluation capacities, particularly in monitoring the impacts of climate-related programmes. It is crucial to ensure these programmes are inclusive, effective

and aligned with their intended objectives, particularly in reducing vulnerabilities and promoting gender equity. This multifaceted approach requires not only comprehensive whole-of-government strategies but also the active engagement of civil society and the private sector as partners with government. By bridging this gap, we can ensure that parliaments serve as crucial intermediaries between constituents and the government, facilitating the inclusion of the voices, concerns and local knowledge of affected communities, particularly women and youth, in national policy debates and decision-making processes. It is essential to invest in public dialogues and awareness initiatives by providing platforms for public hearings and discussions on climate change-related issues. This will raise national awareness and enable the solicitation of public perspectives to ensure that policies are people-centric and inclusive.

In the subsequent iteration of the SADC Regional and International Engagement, it is crucial to revive detailed reports on the progress made in member countries, particularly in the realm of parliamentary activities. Additionally, it is imperative to assess the level of accountability and delivery of this programme.

Ladies and gentlemen, let me conclude by reiterating that parliaments play a crucial role in shaping policies and implementing measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change. We have the power to enact legislation that promotes sustainable practices, invest in renewable energy sources and support communities most affected by environmental changes.

In South Africa, President Cyril Ramaphosa signed the Climate Change Bill into law in 2024, which outlines a national climate change response

including mitigation and adaptation measures, as well as South Africa's fair contribution to the global climate change response. The law also sets out to enhance South Africa's ability and capacity over time to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build climate resilience while reducing the risk of job losses and promoting opportunities emerging in the green economy. South Africa's Parliament has also made a clear commitment to clean governance and fighting corruption as core principles. We must work together to ensure that our laws and policies reflect the urgent need to address our challenges, including climate change and its disproportionate impact on women and youth. As leaders in our communities, let us commit ourselves to meaningful and impactful action to address the impact of climate change on women and youth in the SADC region. Together, we can make a difference and ensure that our region thrives in the face of environmental challenges. Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you. – [*Applause*] –

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY: This side, I do not get it. - [*Applause*] - I do not get it. - [*Applause*] - No, thank you very much. You know, this group - this side is very progressive. - [*Laughter*] - This side. - [*Laugher*] - Even the dance I saw this side, it was - no, thank you very much, Your Excellency, the President - the Acting President, Deputy President of South Africa, for the warm word and sharing with us the resolution of the G20 and also our House Speaker, Hon. Thoko Didiza, we are very blessed to have you leading us in our country.

Indeed, the Deputy President is correct, only Parliament and legislatures can shape how our community should live. Do not ever

undermine your role as a Member of Parliament or as a Member of the Legislature; you are playing a very, very prominent role in your community.

Once more, let me call the Speaker of the 59th Plenary Assembly Session, they did not give me a name. Maybe they wanted it to be a surprise, to do a vote of thanks to all of us.

Oh, I am told it's the Speaker of Seychelles. I was disadvantaged earlier. Thank you very much, Speaker. Thank you. - [*Applause*]

THE HOST SPEAKER OF THE 59TH PLENARY (SPEAKER OF THE SEYCHELES)(HON. AZAREL ERNESTA): His Excellency, Mr. Paul Mashatile, Acting President of the Republic of South Africa, our esteemed guest of Honour, Hon. Thierry Randrianasoloniaiko, President of the Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum and Speaker of the Parliament of Madagascar, Hon. Sylvia Lucas, Vice President of the SADC Parliamentary Forum and Member of the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, Hon. Angela Thokozile Didiza, MP, Speaker of the National Assembly of the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa and host Speaker of this 58th Plenary Assembly, Hon. Refilwe Mtsweni-Tsipane, Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces of the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa and host Speaker of this 58th Plenary Assembly in absentia, distinguished Speakers of SADC National Parliaments and heads of delegations, Mr. Thulasiswe Ntuli, Premier of KwaZulu-Natal, members of the National Assembly and Members of the National Council of Provinces, Speakers of the South African Legislative Sector, Hon. Nontembeko Boyce, Speaker of the KwaZulu-Natal Legislature, Cllr Cyril Xaba, Executive Mayor of the eThekwini Municipality, her Excellency Ms Boemo Sekgoma,

Secretary-General of the SADC Parliamentary Forum, Senator Dr. Linda Lorraine Nxumalo, Interim Chairperson of the Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus and the National Women's Parliamentary Caucus of Eswatini, Hon. Members of Parliament from SADC National Parliaments, Ms Princess Majapello, representative of the Southern Africa Youth Parliament, members of the diplomatic corps, delegates and observers, ladies and gentlemen.

It is my profound honour to stand before you as the Speaker of the National Assembly of Seychelles and incoming host of the 59th SADC Parliamentary Forum Plenary Assembly to deliver the vote of thanks on this auspicious occasion.

Today's gathering has been nothing short of inspiring. We have come together as a family of nations united by purpose and friendship to mark the official opening of the 58th Plenary Assembly of SADC Parliamentary Forum convened under the theme: *The Impact of Climate Change on Women and Youth in the SADC Region and the Role of Parliaments in Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation*. This theme is not just a slogan; it is a clarion call to action and the resonance of that call has been felt powerfully here this morning.

On behalf of every delegate present, I extend our deepest gratitude to Your Excellency, Acting President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr. Paul Mashatile. Thank you Sir, for gracing us and for your insightful official opening address. In your dual capacity as President of our host nation and as the Interim Chairperson of SADC, your presence signifies the highest level of political support for our Forum's mission. We are profoundly grateful

that, despite your many responsibilities, you chose to stand in solidarity with the SADC-PF today. Your Excellency, your words have energised us. You have reaffirmed our conviction that strong leadership, coupled with parliamentary action, is essential to confront the challenges of climate change. We are inspired by your commitment to sustainable development and regional unity and we thank you for the encouragement and wisdom you have shared.

Allow me to also sincerely thank the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa through Hon. Didiza, our wonderful host. Under your exemplary leadership, with the support of the Secretary to Parliament and working together with the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Legislature and the eThekwini Municipality, you have ensured that we feel truly welcomed.

The excellent arrangements and warm hospitality here in eThekwini have provided the perfect atmosphere for us to engage as one SADC family. From the moment we arrived in this beautiful city, we have been received with open arms.

The gracious welcome by the Hon. Premier of Kwazulu-Natal and the Mayor of eThekwini, and the hospitality of the people of this province have made us feel at home. Thank you, colleagues, for hosting the 58th Plenary Assembly with such care and splendour. - [*Applause*] -

I wish to acknowledge and thank all the distinguished dignitaries and Speakers who have enriched this opening ceremony with their presence and remarks. Our gratitude goes to the Hon. SADC-PF President, Hon. Thierry, Speaker of the Parliament of Madagascar, for his leadership and guidance to our Forum. - [*Applause*] -

We also thank Her Excellency Boemo Sekgoma, the SADC-PF Secretary General and her entire secretariat team for the tireless efforts behind the scenes in coordinating this Plenary Assembly session.

Special appreciation goes to the representatives who spoke on behalf of our youth and women in the region, the Southern Africa Youth Parliament representative and the Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus representative for their insightful reflections. Their voices full of passion and hope reminded us why the theme of this Plenary remains so vital. Indeed, when the youth and women of our region speak, they speak to the very core of our agenda, urging us to create a better future.

To all Speakers, Members, Clerks or Secretaries-General and staff of national parliaments from the SADC member States, thank you for your active participation and the unity you have displayed by being here. Your presence sends a powerful message that we stand together as a region.

We also appreciate the presence of our partners, including regional parliamentary assemblies, United Nations agencies, representatives of civil society, academia, the private sector and youth organisations. Your engagement in our work demonstrates an inclusive commitment to the issues under the spotlight.

We thank all stakeholders and friends of SADC-PF for joining hands with us in pursuit of our common goals.

Ladies and gentlemen, before I conclude, I want to thank all those whose hard work made this event possible. From the organisers, protocol teams and support staff, to the interpreters, security personnel and the

media, your behind-the-scenes dedication ensures the success of this Plenary Assembly's opening.

A special thanks to the cultural performers who graced us with the music and dance of South Africa. Through your art, you have added joy and reminded us of the rich cultural tapestry of our SADC region. We are grateful to each one of you for your contribution.

In conclusion, on behalf of the SADC-PF and all present, I, once again, extend a heartfelt thank you to His Excellency Acting President Mashatile for honouring us as the guest of honour and to all dignitaries and delegates for your invaluable presence and support.

The commitment and camaraderie witnessed here today gives us renewed confidence that the deliberations of this Plenary will translate into meaningful actions. As we depart from this opening ceremony and prepare to engage in the work ahead, let us carry with us the inspiration of this moment. Let the determination in this room be as steadfast as the enduring African sun, in our collective will, as unyielding as the ancient rocks of our continent.

In the poetic words of Percy B. Shelley, if winter comes, can spring be far behind?

Though the challenges of climate change may sometimes cast a long winter shadow over our region, I truly believe that united in purpose, we will usher in a spring of renewal and resilience.

Finally, I invite all of you to join me in a round of applause to thank our guest of honour and every contributor to this memorable opening ceremony. Thank you, merci, obrigado, Siyabonga, asante sana. - [*Applause*]

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY: Obrigado. - [*Laughter*] – I have learnt a word today. No, thank you very much Speaker, for thanking all of us. We appreciate all the things. We are heading toward the end of our programme. We are doing very well regarding time, we are flexing nicely.

Before I make an announcement, I want to thank also myself for being a good programmer propeller. - [*Applause.*] - [*Laughter.*] - I want to thank you for being a good audience, Hon. Members. You allow me to propel you. - [*Applause*] - Thank you so much for that.

I will humbly request all of you to rise *akere ko kerekeng re simolola ka Thapelo, re tswalla ka thapelo.*

So, in SADC we start with our songs and close with our songs. So, before I make announcements, I request all of you to rise as, again, we sing our African Union, SADC and the National Anthem of the Republic of South Africa to mark the end of the official opening of this programme.

Our South African Army Band, you can lead us on those three songs. Thank you.

[*Singing of the AU, SADC and the South African Anthems.*]

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY: Thank you very much. You may be seated. Now we go to announcements. I am requested to inform you that dinner will be at 6 pm, the same venue, same transport arrangement that you took coming here.

And from here, group photo, two pictures will be taken. The first one, Speaker of Parliament and heads of delegation of SADC Parliament, that is the first picture. The second picture, Speakers of Parliaments and heads of

delegation joined by Speakers of South African provincial legislatures, *bo rona*, plus SADC Secretary-General and Secretaries to Parliament.

The rest of the delegates may proceed to lunch immediately after that and the Speaker of the National Assembly of South African Parliament will continue with the media houses.

Ladies and gentlemen, this marks the end of the official programme of the opening of the seminar. I thank you. - [*Applause*] -

We will allow our front table - officials, can you assist us to direct where the picture will be taken so that - oh, it will be taken here? Alright. The rest, *a re yeng go ja dijo tsa motshegare*, let us go for lunch.

Official Opening Ceremony Ended At 2:40:30

MONDAY, 1 DECEMBER 2025

WELCOME AND GREETINGS BY THE SECRETARY TO PARLIAMENT

EN.

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY [MR. X. GEORGE]: Thank you very much. To the Acting President of SADC, Hon. Sylvia Izaks; to the host Speaker of Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, Hon. Thoko Didiza; Your Excellencies; Speakers of the various SADC parliaments who are present with us here today; to the Hon. Minister of Human Settlements of the Republic of South Africa, Hon. Thembi Simelani; to the Hon. Members of our host Parliament of the Republic of South Africa; to the Hon. Members and distinguished guests from Southern Africa Regional Parliaments; the Speaker of the KwaZulu-Natal Legislature who has graciously hosted us as a

province of KwaZulu-Natal; to the Hon. Mayor of the City of eThekwini who graciously hosted us as well in his City of eThekwini; to the leaders and officials representing various sectors who are partners with us in this seminar, ranging from civil society, business, community and farmers who will share with us a number of reflections pertaining to this topic that we will be prosecuting today; to partner organisations; officials supporting Members of Parliaments in our region; distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen. Today marks an important day in the reflection on the theme that brought us here in South Africa as a chosen theme of reflection by the SADC Parliament. As we know, the theme for our conversation today will be a reflection on: The Impact of Climate Change on Women and Youth in the SADC Region and the Role of Parliaments in Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation.

As the Southern Africa Development Community, we are recognised as one of the most vulnerable to the adverse impact of climate change globally. This is due to the dependence of the region on rain-fed agriculture and challenges with water scarcity and poverty. The SADC region faces intensifying cycles of drought, floods, and extreme weather events.

The Southern African Development Community convenes here today in this Assembly under this important theme because, as a region, we are disproportionately affected as the most vulnerable, especially women and young people. So, this symposium is therefore serving as an important platform for parliamentarians and Members of society, as partners amongst us, to reflect on how legislation, oversight, and policy innovation can safeguard the future of the people of our region. Climate change is not an

abstract concept; it is felt daily in the lives of people, amongst women and young people, because women constitute many small farm holders and are primarily responsible for food production, household water and energy collection. We have seen, during periods of drought, that women to travel longer distances to secure water and firewood, exposing them to heightened risks.

Gender inequality, coupled with the climate crisis, is one of the greatest challenges of our time. It poses threats to our way of life, livelihoods, health, safety and security for women and girls around the world. When disasters strike, women and girls are less able to access relief and assistance, further threatening their livelihoods, well-being, and recovery, and thus creating a vicious cycle of vulnerability for future disasters.

The impact is likewise on young people. The youth demographic in our region is substantial, and the future of young people is profoundly threatened by climate change, as it has the most direct impact on their livelihoods. Many young people in the region aspire for livelihoods in agriculture, yet climate vulnerability makes this sector increasingly unreliable, leading to underemployment and disillusionment.

Children and young people are more susceptible to climate change, such as malnutrition and waterborne diseases. The impact is also disproportionate on education, in terms of children being unable to attend classes. Therefore, the question of vulnerability is very important, as we cannot exclude young people in the decision-making process of climate change. Hence, SADC has a particular focus on young people.

On the regional framework for climate change, indeed, SADC has established several interventions to coordinate how we respond in a manner that is well-coordinated as a region. As SADC, there's a policy paper on climate change that provides a regional foundation for climate action, recognising the impacts of human-caused climate change. It summarises significant climate change risks, which today's coordination and reflection would serve as a deepening platform for that. We also have SADC gender policy that further underscores the need for specific interventions to address gender-based vulnerabilities.

I would like to conclude, Hon. Members; distinguished guests; and esteemed Speakers of our region; Hon. Minister; Secretary General of SADC; by indicating that today's symposium challenges all of us to look at ways of strengthening legislative and budgetary oversight, and how, as lawmakers in our region, we would assist in monitoring whether national policies do align with regional strategies such as SADC Climate Change Strategy Action Plan, as well as other global agreements.

Several countries, encouragingly in our region, have already adopted measures that demonstrate the importance of parliamentary oversight. For example, Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, amongst others, have introduced mandatory parliamentary reporting following the impacts of Cyclone Idai, enabling legislators to assess the effectiveness of the disaster financing and response system. Namibia and South Africa, for example, have also strengthened collaboration between their environment and finance committees to improve oversight on climate finance flows, to make sure that

effective instruments are supporting domestic mitigation and adaptation priorities.

This is a profound environmental challenge that we all face, and this symposium brings all of us together to make sure that the call for greater regional co-operation through SADC-PF indeed serves as a platform to harmonise our efforts to enact gender-sensitive and youth-inclusive legislation in SADC.

So that is the context, Hon. Delegates, esteemed Speakers and distinguished guests, that our reflection today will be guided along those contextual policy frameworks. Without further ado, I would like to call on the Acting President of the SADC Region, Hon. Izaks, to take over the programme and do the opening remarks. - [*Applause*.]

THE ACTING PRESIDENT OF SADC FORUM [MRS. S. E. IZAKS]: Hon. Members, I do not think you will blame me if I sit where I am and make the opening remarks from here. Someone has decided to put a very high step here, and I do not know how I will get down there. But before we start with the salutations, today we are commemorating, I think, a day of remembrance that is very close to our hearts because there is not one of us who is not affected by the issue of HIV and AIDS. So, we are commemorating World AIDS Day. And I thought, what can we do to also show that we are participating with the rest of the world in the commemoration of this specific, very important occasion? So, I think, we can then stand and observe a moment of silence in remembrance of those who went before us. May they find eternal peace.

Delegates observed a moment of silence

MRS. S. E. IZAKS: Thank you. May we be seated. Thank you very much.

If we were not here today, we would be part of some commemoration somewhere commemorating those who went before us and those who are infected and affected by HIV and AIDS.

Programme Director, once again, thank you very much. I just want to give due recognition and do the necessary protocol: Hon. Tokozile Didiza, MP Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of South Africa and the host Speaker of the 58th Plenary Assembly; distinguished Speakers of the SADC National Parliaments and heads of delegations; Ms. Thembi Simelane, the MP, Minister of Human Settlements of the Republic of South Africa; Hon. members of Parliaments from SADC member States; Her Excellency, Ms. Sekgoma, Secretary-General of the SADC Parliamentary Forum; Mr. Clinton Heimann, the Acting DG of Land Reform and Rural Development; Mr. Maesela Kekana, the Deputy Director-General of Climate Change and Air Quality Management, Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment; Mr. S. Moodley from Toyota SA; Dr. Kunene from Human Settlements Directorate; Mr. Zikode, the President of Abahlali baseMjondolo - we know, we had a lot of Abahlali baseMjondolo; Ms. Dladla, Agroecology Directorate; as well as our esteemed delegates and observers; ladies and gentlemen, it is indeed an honour for me to address this distinguished gathering at this very important symposium - an engagement that reflects the Forum's continued and steadfast commitment to tackling a challenge that has consistently been on the agenda of successive Plenary Assemblies.

Since the 45th Plenary Assembly Session held in Maputo, Mozambique, in 2019, the SADC-PF has continually elevated and interrogated the far-reaching impacts of climate change. That landmark, the 45th Plenary Assembly, laid the foundation with its team then: "Climate change meets the role of Parliament towards implementing the Paris Declaration (EN | FR | PT) and the Katowice Roadmap".

The conversation deepened at the 51st Plenary in Lilongwe, Malawi, in 2022, which advanced the discourse by focusing on energy efficiency, sustainability and self-sufficiency. This momentum continued during the 52nd Plenary, hosted virtually by the Parliament of the DRC in 2022, which emphasised strengthening resilience in nutrition and food security. And then, the 53rd Plenary in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, 2023, highlighted the modernisation of agriculture to confront food insecurity and youth unemployment in a climate-impacted region. The 54th Plenary Assembly in Port Louis, Mauritius, in 2023 reinforced the imperative of coordinated disaster risk reduction and recovery planning, while the 55th Plenary Assembly in Luanda, Angola, in 2024 examined the centrality of renewable energy policies and the creation of a unified regional energy market amid mounting climate pressures.

This sustained and deliberate reflection on climate-related challenges across countries, sectors and themes has demonstrated the Forum's deepening commitment to climate governance. It culminated in the Land Magazine Assembly in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, to develop the SADC Model Law on Climate Change - an instrument conceived to harmonise national legal frameworks, strengthen adaptive capacity, promote climate-responsive

budgeting, embed early warning and mitigation mechanisms, and advance climate-resilient development across all member Parliaments.

Thus, the theme of this 58th Plenary Assembly builds directly upon this legacy, reaffirming the centrality of parliamentary leadership in advancing climate adaptation, resilience and long-term climate justice across the SADC region through informed, co-ordinated and robust parliamentary action. At a time when our region is navigating unprecedented change and escalating demands, this symposium gives us the space to pause, reflect and most importantly, chart a purposeful, actionable path forward.

I sincerely appreciate your presence and your unwavering commitment to this endeavour framed under the timely and compelling theme: The impact of climate change on women and youth in the SADC Region and the role of parliamentarians in climate change mitigation and adaptation. From the outset, I must acknowledge that we gather today in a city etched by climate change. The memories of the Durban Easter floods that caused devastation across KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape are not isolated events. They are chapters in a rapidly escalating regional emergency. Each disaster is a reminder that the climate crisis is neither abstract nor distant. It is unfolding in real time, reshaping lives, livelihoods and landscapes across our region.

You may also wish to know that in 2024, the global average temperature rose to 1,55 °C above pre-industrial levels – a stark reminder that the climate emergency is no longer a distant threat but a lived reality. Current projections indicate that this will be our new normal by 2029. And

even more concerning, science tells us that, even if every nation were to meet its existing climate pledges fully, the world would still be on course for a catastrophic warming of 2,5 to 3,1 °C.

But for us in Southern Africa, this crisis is not merely a statistic on a graph. It is a funeral in a village struck by a flash flood. It is a failed harvest on land that once sustained generations. It is a clinic without medicine after a cyclone has swept away roads and bridges. It is human. It is immediate and unbearably costly.

And amid this unfolding crisis, a brutal injustice, climate change is one of the most significant causes of inequality today. It inflicts its worst damage on those who bear the least responsibility. That is women, youth, and rural communities. They are the ones who suffer first, who suffer most, and take the longest to recover.

Furthermore, it is a common cause that, when drought strikes, it is the women who must walk even further in search of water, and the girls who is pulled out of school to help the family cope. When Cyclone Idai and Cyclone Freddy tore through our crops**,** it was the sexual and reproductive health of women that suffered most gravely-a reality our Forum has rightly and consistently addressed in our deliberations across successive plenary assembly sessions. And when crops fail, it is a young person whose dream of a future in agriculture withers to dust.

I must also emphasise that our region is by no means deficient in systems and frameworks designed to guard against the ravages of climate change. We have the frameworks, we have the nationally determined

contributions, we have the national adaptation plans in the ultimate test – the test of implementation.

The bridge between our global and regional commitments and the lived protection of our people is crumbling, weakened by a massive adaptation finance gap, fragile legislative frameworks, and inadequate integration of climate priorities into our national budgets.

This is a chasm we are mandated to fill. This is both our constitutional duty and our moral imperative. Therefore, as we deliberate, let us remain mindful that we are not here as spectators. We are the lawmakers, the custodians of public finance and the overseers of Executive action. Critically, we are the central link that can turn aspiration into law and policy into tangible resilience.

I therefore submit that the question this symposium must respond to is not if we should act, but whether we have the courage to wield our unique parliamentary powers with the urgency this crisis demands. We must decide, will we be remembered for empty resolutions or as a Parliament that truly inspired a binding regional charter on climate for genuine climate action? Will we keep approving budgets blind to climate risk, or will we champion climate-smart ones that build resilience? Will we watch government or will we press for strong committees that promote accountability? And will we remain passive in the face of suffering or will we marshal our diplomacy to unlock the climate finances our survival requires?

In the end, the question that transcends all policy is a question of legacy. When the history of this climate crisis is written, what will it say about us? Will it record silence and inaction? Or will it tell the story of

leaders in Southern Africa who saw the rising tide and dared to build the wall? I submit my answer for posterity.

Our role is to build a new architecture of resilience, anchored on robust laws, smart finances and unflinching regional solidarity. To translate this vision from aspiration to reality, we must master the art of implementation. That means enshrining a just transition for the vulnerable in our legislation. It means guaranteeing that every dollar of climate finance reaches the front lines with absolute transparency. Maybe I should have said every rupee or something else.

It means harmonising our national frameworks with the EU climate strategy, so that our regional commitments carry true binding force. This is the brim and action. This is the measure of our leadership. And this is the moment when history will decide whether we were passive witnesses or the generation that rose, united and unafraid, to meet the greatest challenge of our time.

As I conclude, I draw on the wisdom of the late great son of this country, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who reminded us, and I quote, “Twenty-five years ago, people could be excused for not knowing much or doing much about climate change. Today, we have no excuse.” His words challenge every one of us - government, Parliament, private sector, development partners and communities alike - to rise above complacency and match our knowledge with bold, decisive action.

Therefore, let us recommit ourselves to purposeful climate financing, strengthened accountability and people-centred adaptation and mitigation strategies. Let us choose partnership over isolation. Let us choose foresight

over reaction. Let us choose courage over hesitation. And if we act together and act decisively, we will not only protect our environment; we will unlock the promise of a greater, greener, more prosperous SADC region.

With these remarks, it is my honour to declare this symposium open, and I wish all of us fruitful deliberations.

Ke a leboga, Thank you, Obrigado, Merci, Baie dankie.

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY: Thank you very much, Madam Acting President of the SADC Forum. We are now starting reflections by partner organisations. Distinguished speakers, you would notice that on the flow of the programme, the first three components would reflect the perspective of South African government at the level of the Ministry for Human Settlements, followed by the Department for Land Reform and Rural Development and thirdly, the Department for Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment. So, we would like to take those three inputs and after that, have a reflection so that we can consolidate much more reflection on one segment in our three spheres set up of our government.

At the level of the eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality, I would like to make one slight amendment to the speaker that is highlighted there. Members will see that the presenter was Mr. V. Ngubane from the Disaster Unit. Kindly note that Dr. Rob Moodley would take that input on behalf of the city. Without further ado. The three inputs shall be made. They will be made in that order from the Minister of Land Reform and Rural Development, as well as the Disaster Unit. After that, the Acting President of SADC will then preside over the interactions or the input of the three panellists. We will then open a Question and Answer session as guided by

the panel co-ordinator, the Acting President of SADC. So, without further ado, I would like to invite the Hon. Minister to make her reflections on the topic. Either here, Minister or that side.

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS SA [MS. T. P. SIMELANE]: Thank you very much, Programme Director. I was taking a cue from the Acting President, Hon. Sylvia Izaks, that I will take my input and comment and SG decisively gave direction. Let me also appreciate the Hon. Speaker of our National Assembly in the Republic of South Africa, Hon. Thoko Didiza, our distinguished speakers from the SADC Parliaments and the heads of delegations. Appreciate our speaker, of KwaZulu-Natal Legislature, Miss Nontembeko Nothemba Boyce, who is our host for the good symposium that we are holding. Hon. Members of Parliament from SADC States, Her Excellency SG from the SADC Parliamentary Forum, representative from our government departments, in particular, the change in air quality management from the Department of Forest, Fisheries and Environment, Mr. Moodley from Toyota Corporation, South Africa, Mr. Zikode, President of Abahlali baseMjondolo, our Agro-Ecology Department and directorate, Mr. Dladla and all the esteemed delegates and guests, ladies and gentlemen, good morning. It is my great honour to address this symposium of the 58th session of SADC Parliamentary Forum, gathered under the theme that could not be more urgent, more relevant, timely, or more defining for our collective future.

We meet at a time when our region is experiencing climate impacts of unprecedented scale. Climate change is no longer a distant environmental concern. It is a developmental crisis, a human settlements crisis, and an

infrastructure crisis. It is also a socioeconomic and governance crisis and this is across the SADC. It is increasingly becoming a human security crisis. Over the recent years, we have seen the storms that are becoming more violent, droughts that are more severe, floods that are more destructive, and heatwaves that are more deadly. We are gathered here in eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality today, as you know, which has seen communities repeatedly displaced, homes swept away and public infrastructure damaged because of the devastating effects of climate change.

Hon. Speaker, not far from where we are gathered, in the past few days, people in Umshwathi Local Municipality were inordinately impacted and displaced by floods. We bear witness to how climate change threatens development gains, deepens historical inequalities, and undermines the right to adequate housing, a constitutional guarantee in South Africa and an aspiration shared by all countries.

As we have seen the climate change events, they do not follow national borders. We have experienced here in eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality what has affected multiple countries in the SADC region in the same way that we have been affected. Therefore, no single country can address this challenge alone or singularly alone. This gathering, therefore, comes at a critical moment and is necessary in offering us an opportunity to establish connected regional, national, and local solutions to one of the biggest threats to our development.

Within South Africa, we have adopted a climate change Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (RVA), which confirms that the most affected groups by climate disasters are rural communities who are already facing

poverty and limited access to services. Peri-urban areas and these result in informal settlement dwellings, steep slopes prone to fires in other high-risk zones. Women, youth, and children, as the Acting President has shown, that they bear the brunt of inadequate livelihoods and further socioeconomic stress.

Climate change is not gender neutral. It magnifies structural inequalities that women and girls already face. Women are disproportionately exposed, disproportionately impacted and disproportionately responsible for absorbing the climate shocks. In our communities, women carry the further burden of concern and caring for the sick when disaster strikes. It is women who also rebuild households with fewer resources and less formal support. Yet, women, despite being at the frontline of the climate impacts, remain at the margins of the climate decision-making. I think we must all agree that this status quo must change.

Equally, the Programme Director did indicate the negative impact that the young people experience. Growing up in a world shaped by the climate uncertainty phase. They inherit the consequences of decisions they did not make. But we also know that in our youth, we have the greatest asset and Africa's greatest demographic asset. They are the most powerful drivers of innovation, resilience, and adaptation. Their creativity, energy and digital influence make them essential partners in climate-resilient communities.

Hon. Members, what does this mean for the critical role parliaments must play in shaping a climate-resilient and just transition for Southern Africa? It means that people most impacted by climate change must be able

to be at the centre and be allowed to be at the centre of decision-making that we as lawmakers drive.

As we confront the escalating climate crisis, we are also called upon to realise the vision articulated in the African Union Agenda of 2063. The Africa we want, which was further defined. It must be prosperous, peaceful, united, a resilient continent built on inclusive growth, sustainable development and the empowerment of women and youth.

The interlinked climate risks affecting our Human Settlement and our infrastructure broadly follow a chain of events. When the infrastructure fails, ecosystems collapse. When livelihoods decline, informal settlements expand. When governance is weak, communities are unable to adapt and when the finance does not reach those who need it most, poverty and climate impacts reinforce one another. That is why climate change is not simply an environmental challenge.

It is a systemic challenge, one that requires systemic solutions. In response to this, our climate change response strategy and implementation plan for human settlement guides us on how we need to build resilience between now and 2030. And I often say to my colleagues, we must no longer say 2030, we must just say in four years.

Allow me to share the three pillars which we have adopted for a relevant and entire SADC region, pillars for Human Settlement, which have passed the limit in Kenya under UN-Habitat, to develop our human settlement strategy. Pillar 1: Settle people in places and preserve the ecosystems that protect them. This will avoid communities being placed in flood-prone land, unstable slope wetlands and coastal zones that are prone

to storm surges and heat-stressed areas. This is the first and the fundamental line of defence against climate hazards. It forces us to do our spatial planning correctly with the poor and the vulnerable in mind.

Pillar 2: Addresses the vulnerable settlements that are already in unsafe places. The reality is that we are not coming from a zero-base line. People are already living in hazardous locations. For these communities, we must, firstly, upgrade the informal settlement in situ where it is safe and improve essential services such as water, sanitation and electricity.

We must also invest in the nature-based solutions on wetlands, urban greening and vegetated buffers to protect the people who are already residing in these areas. As South Africans, we affirm that no community should remain invisible to policy simply because they are poor.

And the last pillar, which is to establish a climate-resilient infrastructure, norms, standards and settlement typologies. Our infrastructure must withstand climate realities, and these shifts will reduce future losses, enhance liveability and create safer communities. We must all invest in innovative building technologies as human settlement infrastructure for the future. It must be reliable and resilient.

This is a community-driven process. It must not exclude others. We must build a region where communities not only receive climate information but are allowed to shape it, where they not only participate in planning, but they lead.

And they not only face climate risk but also define and find solutions together. So, disasters move across borders, so information must do that too. A regional integration report, rather approach, allows real-time data

sharing, predictive modelling across the entire climate zones. This saves lives and can reduce damage. We need to play a central role in building the climate-resilient SADC.

In conclusion, Programme Director, we need to ensure that as we respond to the question of how we build a region that waits for disaster to strike, or a region that acts before disaster becomes inevitable.

The future we want within our region is a future where cities and towns are resilient, safe and inclusive, where ecosystems are protected and provide life-saving solutions and where women and youth lead resilient initiatives. Infrastructure is strong, smart and climate-ready. How do we ensure we do that? Firstly, we can ensure that the land planning use legislation integrates climate risks.

Secondly, we set the norms and standards for resilient infrastructure. Thirdly, we align human settlements and any other infrastructure laws with climate Change Bill on our regional frameworks to allow us to exercise oversight. And the fourth point will be to ensure that expenditure on housing infrastructure and disaster risk management aligns with climate change and lastly, we require early warning systems and municipal preparedness.

At the outcome of this symposium, let us all embrace this moment not as a threat but as an opportunity to reshape our communities. To reshape our communities, which will allow them to live in dignity and not in danger.

Parliament can be a champion for a just transition for all. Let me wish you well in the further of this symposium and wish you well in your endeavours in building communities that are climate resilient and secure a

future that our people deserve in their communities. Thank you very much.- [*Applause.*]

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY: Thank you very much, Hon. Minister. Another round of applause.- [*Applause.*] We also have panellists sitting at the table who would also complement that reflection by painting out the picture of what happens and what we can do better to build resilience to our climate challenges. So, the topic on the use of drone data and geospatial systems in building a more resilient community will be delivered by Mr. Heimann. Mr. Heimann is the Acting Director-General for the Department of Land Reform and Rural Development. He will be making a presentation, and after him, it will be Mr. Kekana from the Department of Forestry, also making a presentation. Please proceed, you will be making a presentation from the floor. Thank you, Mr. Heimann.

MR. C. HEIMANN [ACTING DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF LAND REFORM]: Thank you for giving me the floor. Hon. Programme Director, salutations. The Acting President of the SADC Parliamentary Forum and Member of Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, all protocol observed. I hope that is fine, you will listen to the mic, is it not? Alright, to start with, I think we need to look at building climate resilience in the SADC region. Some of the climate change impacts in SADC that we have been observing over the past few years have increased significantly and if you just look at this message on the screen, you will see that this is actually the projection, an overlay of a map of the SADC region, where the red areas are areas that are prone to severe climate risks in the future.

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY: The IT people who are controlling the presentation, the presenter is running the slides. Please do not simultaneously run as well. It is just a request, please, the presenter will run the slides. Thanks. Can we make sure that the screens are simultaneously changing? So, just check alignment on the main screen and the small screens in front. So, the small ones are running, the big ones are not moving, just align. Okay, will it be fine, whilst we are adjusting the presentation on the environment, then proceed to Mr. Kekana, who will take us through that small glitch? Our apologies. Once it is sorted, we will go back to Mr. Heimann. Over to you, Mr. Kekana.

MR. M. KEKANA [DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT, DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT]: Thank you, Programme Director. Let me stand on protocol and do the salutations, Hon. Sylvia Izaks, Acting President for SADC Parliamentary Forum, Hon. Angela Thoko Didiza, Member of Parliament and Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of South Africa, and host Speaker for the 58th Plenary Assembly, distinguished Speakers of SADC National Parliaments and heads of delegations, Hon. Thembi Simelane, Member of Parliament and Minister of South Africa, Hon. Members of Parliament from SADC member States, the Excellency Ms. Boemo Sekgoma, Secretary-General of SADC Parliamentary Forum, Mr. Moodley, Senior Vice President, Corporate Services, Toyota SA, Dr. Okuna, Human Settlements Directorate, Mr. Zikode, President of Abahlali base Mjondolo (AbM), Mr. L. Dladla, Agroecology Directorate,

yourself, Mr. George, esteemed delegates and observers, ladies and gentlemen, all protocol observed.

It is my singular Honour and profound gratitude to deliver this presentation on behalf of Minister Wellie Aucump, Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment of the Republic of South Africa. You will also pardon me for my voice, I am carrying a cold from the Amazon, Brazil, where we were engaged with similar matters. I will now move into the presentation, the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment presentation that was on the screen. I will move it with this watch. Apologies, the technology glitches happen all the time. Okay, if you can move it for me, to the front, yeah, okay. So, this is the outline for the presentation, a short context, and we will speak a little bit about the impacts of climate change in the SADC region, the parliamentary obligations and short recommendations from Minister Wellie Aucump.

So, this is what Minister Simelane was talking about. If you look at the two lines on the graph there, you can clearly see that by the year 2023, we started to bridge the safer temperature goal of maintaining global average temperature increases to below 1,5 degrees. In fact, these global goals on temperature come from what we call the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, IPCC, which compared the two temperature goals, the one with two degrees and the one with 1,5 degrees, with 1,5 being the safer global average temperature goal. You can also see on the slide there that starting from 2023, we started to bridge that temperature goal with 2024 being the full calendar year where we completely went over 1,5 degrees, meaning, we are more at risk now than before. However, this is the point about SADC. The

SADC region is warming at twice the global average. So, if it says we have bridged the temperatures to below 1,5, it means in some regions within SADC, we are already at three degrees, and this has its own consequences. So, as SADC, we need to be concerned, and this is recognised globally, that the region is warming at twice the global average warming rates.

Just this slide shows that in 2023-24, the World Food Programme indicated that 27 million people need food aid within the Southern African Development Community, SADC and appealed for donations of $5,5 billion to assist with life-saving programmes within SADC. This emanates from a whole lot of droughts that ravaged the region and we also saw in the same year that Lake Kariba dipped below 5%, and the Vaal Dam, for the first time, went below 40% in that particular year.

As Acting President Izaks said, we have also seen the increased frequency and severity of some of these weather events. She spoke about the cyclone that we saw in our region, the floods in this province, and so forth. However, what is more disturbing is that scientists are predicting that we are going to have a first Category 5 tropical cyclone. This will most likely land in Madagascar, Mozambique and Malawi. This is going to, if you just compare with what we already had, if we are to have this Category 5 cyclone, we are going to have more disasters in the making.

We have also seen how the rapid change between El Niño and La Niña has affected SADC, including agriculture. That also comes with the intense heat waves that are also a particular problem. There is a threat to food and water security, particularly in agriculture, which is mainly rainfed. But as I

indicated, the whole issue of energy security, particularly where you are having hydro power, is also under threat. We have seen this in the Zambezi and Limpopo, affecting hydro power production.

Minister Simelane also spoke about climate-induced human settlements due to floods and drought. But SADC itself has projected economic losses of between the total gross domestic product (GDP) losses due to climate disaster. This is one of the pictorials from the visit of President Ramaphosa to this province where 544 human lives were lost, 7 000 houses destroyed and 40 000 people displaced and the damages, which accounted to about $3,6 billion. At that point, Mr. President also indicated that this is due to climate change. The impacts were exacerbated by climate change.

In fact, three years later, Wits University did a formal attribution study and confirmed what the President had said at that time, that in fact, the disaster that we saw here was magnified by climate change. Now, just coming to some of the roles that Parliament plays. Of course, my slides indicated the scientific challenge or scientific part but also climate change is a governance and policy issue. Hence, we are all gathered here. Climate change development challenge, as the slide showed, is starting to reverse even the little gains that we have made in our region. It intersects with poverty reduction, economic transformation, governance and regional integration.

However, Parliament holds special powers which are central to climate action. These include legislation, budget oversight and approvals,

representation and constituency engagement, also parliamentary diplomacy and regional leadership. Now let us go into these four areas a little bit more. What Minister Aucamp was projecting here is that Parliament should enact or update national climate change laws that align with international commitments, such as the Paris Agreement (EN | FR | PT), the one that gave us these projections of 1,5 degrees and other international climate change frameworks.

I think Minister Simelane spoke about the disaster risk management in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and also looked into these issues of mitigating climate change and adapting to it. Climate-related laws supporting things that would help us in the long run, such as renewable energies and climate-smart agriculture and other areas of climate action.

Parliament must use its oversight role to ensure that legislation and strategies are being timelessly implemented and enforced. Just to give an example of how Parliament is acting on this in South Africa: If we look at the issue of mitigating against climate change, as the department, we have what we call the mitigation system with various components. On the left, you see this is the goal that we present before Parliament, which is a greenhouse gas emission trajectory range in a particular plan.

We also have a monitoring and evaluation system below that. But to implement this mitigation goal, we have what we call sectoral targets that we allocate to various sectors of the economy. But also, to the industry we allocate certain allowances, what we call carbon budget. Now, the industry

must respond, if you go to the right, through mitigation plans that demonstrate how a company brings its plan that it would have submitted. The sectors formulate several policies and measures, such as the Renewable Independent Power Purchase Programme and many other energy programmes such as the integrated resource plans and so forth.

This would be a mitigation system in South Africa and Parliament, through its committees, has an oversight role on this in terms of implementation. That is in terms of reducing greenhouse gas emission. But as other speakers have said, we also need to adapt to the impacts because climate change is here now. We really need to adapt to this. We would have something called an adaptation planning system in South Africa with a National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, which of course was adopted way back as long back as 2020.

All our provinces also have their own adaptation strategies, and all the 44 district municipalities have developed their strategies and so forth. The oversight happens through what we call a cluster system because it cuts across the central government. So, Parliament would oversee the implementation of these adaptation measures. But also, the second point that I spoke about is budget approval.

The recommendation here is that we should ensure that national budgets reflect climate priorities, especially on adaptation financing for vulnerable communities that are highly impacted by climate change. Also monitor the use of climate finances, including from international and domestic mechanisms and so forth. Parliamentarians can also demand

transparency and accountability from climate-related Ministries and agencies and you need credible information for this.

There should also be a link on international financing request to ambitious national climate targets through every country that is part and parcel of the Paris Accord, produce what you call nationally determined contribution, which comprises the mitigation targets and adaptation targets. The financing should be aligned to this for the implementation that is necessary.

The third area that we indicated on the next slide is representation and constitutional engagement. And this is where you talk about Parliament being the voice of vulnerable and marginalised communities, including women, youth, small-holder farmers, and pastoralists. It should ensure vulnerable groups are part and parcel of climate decision-making, especially when enacting the laws by taking these laws to the people for their inputs. This is where Parliament plays a big role. Also, something that is lacking is awareness on adaptation practices and disaster preparedness and just transition opportunities. So, awareness is an ongoing effort where Parliament can also play a role.

Just to talk a little bit about the issue of protecting and being the voice of the vulnerable and the marginalised, communities. This is the point that Minister Simelane made, that climate change disproportionately affects women because climate impacts are driven by high dependency on climate-sensitive livelihoods and low adaptive capacity, including poverty and existing inequalities in the SADC. And we will come to that point.

What are these existing gender inequalities and social norms that are specific to women and girls in particular? This must do more with the lack of adaptive capacity in these groupings. Hence, Parliament can play a big role in being a voice there.

Another point is about food insecurity and agriculture, where we spoke about pastoralists and smallholder farmers. This is also important and this is where women make up a large portion of agriculture workforce within SADC. So with erratic rainfalls, obviously, that grouping is affected by reduced crop yields, directly threatening their livelihoods and household food security.

The last point that we made of the four is about parliamentary diplomacy and regional leadership. There is an opportunity here to use regional blogs and networks, such as the SADC Parliamentary Forum, the Africa Parliamentary Network on Climate Change, the Pan-African Parliament and the Inter-Parliamentary Union to amplify the African voices in global climate issues. The IPU, Inter-Parliamentary Union, is a very important Forum where we have seen an increasing number of members from developing countries projecting really the voices from the global south and demanding climate justice from the global north.

We could also champion equity, climate finance, delivery and technology transfer for the region because without this, we will not be able to deliver the climate smart agricultures that we are talking about; build energy security that we have mentioned previously. And the last point that the Minister wanted to highlight here is that it could be important to promote and harmonise climate policies across the SADC region, especially

for shared and transboundary resources. And I made an example of the types of policies for collaboration within the region itself.

The final recommendation from Minister Aucamp is around the issue of the SADC Parliamentary Caucus to coordinate this regional climate oversight and to institutionalise regular climate capacity building, which is quite important for Members of Parliament through partnerships. There are various organisations in Africa that assist with capacity building for parliamentarians, such as the African Union Commission itself, and somebody spoke about the strategy on climate change but also the African Group of Negotiators Expert Support. And you have seen, African Group of Negotiators Expert Support. You have seen this in many of your countries, providing support to parliamentarians.

But there is another structure that we do have from the United Nations, UN, in Africa, in Uganda. It is called the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Regional Collaboration Centre. It also works with the above organisations that I pointed out to do capacity building for parliamentarians. But there is nothing that beats peer-to-peer learning, and this is something that is important, that you can all collaborate on. I think that is all from Minister Aucamp. In short, Programme Director, I will stop here and not add or subtract anything. Thank you. - [*Applause*.]

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY: I hope our IT is cooperative now for Mr. Heimann to ascend to the stage.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY

TEA BREAK

THE SECRETARY TO PARLIAMENT: May I also make an announcement, distinguished delegates, that should you need to get a cup of coffee or tea outside, please do so quietly by exiting and going to your right to get a cup of tea quietly and come back.

So, in the interest of time, we are compacting that time without allowing a break. But it is available should you wish to get some but please do so quietly. Without any further ado, Mr. Heimann, please take the stage.

MR C. HEIMANN [ACTING DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF LAND REFORM]: Hon. Members, we started with the climate change impact in Southern African Development Countries. The first thing that we see here is climate shocks intensifying across SADC. Rising temperatures and extreme weather events affect the continent but SADC to a large degree.

We have got a whole lot of things that happen when climate change happens. We get damage to our infrastructure, our services. We get a lot of uneven spatial exposure to climate risk. And this means that we have got high risk zones where the informal settlements, communal lands and river basins often lack infrastructure to protect them.

I would suppose that the right thing to do would be to design and I think the Hon. Minister of Human Settlements indicated correctly that you need to be able to provide services and improve the way that things work.

There is also this disproportionate burden on women and youth, especially in these informal economies that face higher adaptation costs due to livelihood and the various care burdens that they carry, as well as insecure land rights. Insecure land rights are something that we really must

look at. If we can secure the land rights, we can also start securing a whole lot of the other burdens that the women and youth must carry.

When we look at these various events that have happened in Malawi, we had Cyclone Freddie in 2023. In Mozambique, we had various cyclones, as well as in Zimbabwe. We had a lot of submerged agricultural belts in Mozambique that were affected.

There was a lot of degradation and youth migration in Zimbabwe because of the multi-seasonal drought that took place from 2022 to 2024. It declined in terms of the Normalised Different Vegetation Index (NDVI) by nearly 30 to 60%, which decimated the communal grazing zones and pushed youth crop losses, food insecurity, especially affecting the women farmers.

In Zambia and Namibia, we had water heating changes. These climate stresses are increasing the time and labour burden on women while undermining the opportunities that they have. There was flooding in Zambia. We had water scarcity and labour burden was also a major contributor. There were youth migration and displacement and then extreme heat in the north of Namibia.

In South Africa, the KwaZulu-Natal floods are very prolific but we have also had tornadoes in the same area in the past. One of the things that we start seeing is that infrastructure failures worsen the impacts. There is a greater need for a gender responsive land use regulation in terms of the adaptation of planning and it must include stronger zoning, disaster risk assessments and protection for tenure-insecure households. The major effect is also the cost of repairing these settlements.

Policymakers often ask officials to identify where the highest-risk geographic hotspots are, specifically areas where women and youth are most exposed to climate-related hazards such as drought, floods, extreme heat, and crop losses. They also want to understand how these risks vary between rural, urban, and informal settlements, so they can tailor policies and interventions effectively.

These are questions that technocrats are not necessarily asking, but you are asking those in your Parliament, you are saying, where are these people? And you can get this information from satellites. Yes, you can. The one thing that you need to do better is you need to know where the people are.

You need to be able to geolocate these populations because in some areas in SADC, they also migrate because climate change is one thing but in some areas, even war shifts people. They follow natural resources like wood and timber. They follow these resources because they rely on them for their livelihoods. So, that is a typical question.

I am going to go to question number four. How is climate-induced migration reshaping population movement within and between SADC countries, and which corridors show the highest concentration of displaced women and young people?

These are the kind of questions that you would ask as you build a better Africa, looking at 2063. It is about taking a lot of data sets and putting them together. We cannot work in isolation. We have to share the data we have at a national level and at a SADC level and at a continental level for us to make better analysis and predictions of the future.

Decision support systems help us build back better climate resilience. In a geospatial value chain, everybody is going to say geospatial, so that is the other hat that I wear. I am also the co-Chair, or South Africa is the co-Chair, with the United States of America and Saudi Arabia, for the United Nations expert group on geospatial information management, and South Africa has just stepped down and handed over the chairpersonship of the Africa region to Morocco. Mozambique is the first vice chair of that grouping as well.

We are well represented on the continent from a SADC perspective and geospatial becomes important where we start talking about how to acquire data, how to process data, how to integrate the analytics of the data, and how we support these questions that parliamentarians have.

What we have done in South Africa is that we have put a lot of time and effort into building a drone programme. The drone programme then looks at collecting close to real-time information, but at a very fine scale. So, satellite imagery gives you one-and-a-half-meter accuracy. You can, for instance, take your Google Maps on your phone now and look at this building and you can zoom in, but there is a point where it becomes unclear. You cannot see what is really happening.

If you look at the drone imagery, if we do it right and we set up all the correct Global Positioning System, GPS stations, we can get up to three centimetres clarity. That means we can see the washing hanging on the line. We can see the bolts that have rusted on a bridge. That is the kind of imagery. So, we built this national drone programme for the country. It

currently lies within the Department of Land Reform and Rural Development.

We have a national footprint and we cover all the provinces. We have 50 pilots currently. The purple are the women in our team. We are still not there, but we are pushing to up the numbers of the female pilots. Then, obviously, the others just show the types of drones.

What is important is that we fly on request of our own work in Land Reform and Rural Development, but we also do work for the Department of Human Settlements and the Housing Development Agency. We also have flown for KwaZulu-Natal. We do work for GCIS, *et cetera*. So, it is an all-of-government programme that allows us to collect very high-resolution imagery.

There is a team of pilots at the bottom, and just some of the work that we do and the two types of drones we currently have. We have a fixed-wing drone that we can clip in different cameras with, and then we have the smaller *DJI Mavic 3* drones that we can put into an informal settlement. I will show some of the pictures as we move along.

Just the processing of geospatial data, specifically when we are looking at a flight, there is the proprietary use of drones that you will see on your left-hand side; and to your right-hand side, you will see the geospatial tools that you need. We have bought into the *Esri's* suite of tools, primarily known as *ArcGIS*, and I think most people do, just because of its replicability within the industry; but you can also run that imagery in open-source tools like, well, there are several of them. So, let us not go there.

First part, you must fly. The next part, you must make sure your flight is very accurate on the ground - that the flight data returns to a point on the ground. So, if you see a flower in the landscape, you must try and tie that flower back to 100% accurate. With these drones, we can get to 3% accurate. A surveying diagram, usually, in South Africa, is anything under five centimetres accurate. So, you can, and I will go on and show you that.

The next thing is - and this is where it becomes tricky - you now move away from a pilot, which is the easy part, and then you go into this data processing site: manipulating the data in terms of getting the GPS coordinates correctly; overlaying it over your existing maps; and then processing that data with various products so that you can do *GeoAI*, and I will show you how it works now.

This is a dashboard we created. It was called the Presidential Employment Stimulus Initiative (PESI). What this probe shows or this dashboard is, this is how we can represent your information. So, each one of those dots on the map – there is 108 000 of them - is a person and a household.

If you click on the slide, you are on a dot anywhere of those 108 000. You get all the information of the person who visited them on a specific number - what they are farming with, woman-headed households, their social security numbers, *et cetera*. All that information is available. Then we use or put that information by capturing it with a data collection product, called Survey 123 or Field Maps. Once you have captured it on the site and you have taken the photos that you want, it creates a PDF document with signatures and everything in. So, you now have a record of that person.

The previous map has 108 000 subsistence producers in the country that we gave vouchers to. The interesting part, at the time, is that we only focused on women and youth under 35 years old. We excluded men, and I think that I was not very popular for excluding men, but we survived. Just after COVID-19, we were able to give out a significant number of vouchers to all these people and visit them.

This is Ladysmith in KwaZulu-Natal, with the recent flooding that took place there. What can we do with this information now? I have a data set for a subsistence producer. If you look at this map, the little dots that you see on it - the red with the yellow and the surrounding - those are all the PESI-farmers. So, I have now taken that data set that I collected and I have put it over last month's KwaZulu-Natal flood data. Now I can flood this image.

So, there we go. You can let it play. I think you stopped, it was moving. It was a video. Just play the video. No, go back. Just go back. Click again. Okay, it is not running. All right, so what happens is the simulation we do There we go. So, we can simulate: If the dam wall broke, what would happen to the town? Of which it did not break, but we are able to simulate. Then we can actually see where the affected communities are.

So, you will see in the centre of the image, there is a red dot with a yellow circle. That was a PESI-farmer. Now we know, we can go and click on that dot, and we can find out who that farmer is. This is what is nice now: when we build back resilience. We are able to plan and predict: What happens if the dam wall breaks? What happens if we were to get 200 millimetres of rain on this area? Who will be affected?

There we have all the subsistence farmers: The ones with the red dot and the yellow circle on the outside are those affected; then slightly affected are the other ones with the green dot inside; and the ones that are green are unaffected by that simulated flood. I do not want to create any impression that this actually happened.

We can then take the information that we had from the farmer data that you saw up front, of that dashboard, and we can actually go and see who exactly those farmers were, what they were farming with and at what scale. That is a way that we can start building back resilience and helping them specifically, because we have a record of those subsistence producers.

Here are the ones that were just directly impacted by the flood, and you can see the spread of ages. The next one. Then there are commodities that were impacted. So, we can see that the flood impacted the following commodities. These are just illustrative of the indirectly impacted and the low-impact people.

So, we can see by age, and we can see by commodity, what happened because of that flood that we simulated and who was affected. So, you can start building mechanisms to help those people when such events occur. So, what we do here is that we can simulate off an image that we have flown with a drone. We can give you the various DSM, the DTM and the RGB. The RGB is an image of the area. We put over the contours that you can see there, the various heights. This happens in a 30-minute flight, and we put the contours on. It probably takes us two days to do that with all this information.

Then we can show you what happens if certain amounts of rain fall in this village at this time, and where it flood, and where the water pools together. This is the capability. So, there you will see the actual imagery. This one will now play, and we have now run an example. I specifically left the frame in, and the frame is important because you see, we can set how porous the ground is: Is it a sandy ground, or is it tar, or is it cement?

So, then we can put an example: Here, we say it is 200 millimetres of rain over a certain amount of time; and then you will see where the water starts to pool. This is where the modelling becomes really important. So, we know - as an urban planner by profession - that you do not want to go and build houses where that water is. That is where you should clear it out.

Clearing out where people stay is another problem, or you must build in mitigation measures upstream to divert that water away from those areas. Here is just some *Joe AI*. I think that is the next big thing. It is getting better and better. This is Zwelethemba Township. We flew the imagery on the left-hand side. Then we put AI – you have got various packages, and you put it in - and you say, please count all the structures. It will count everyone, and it is very accurate at the moment. We are like maybe 1 000 out or so at a time, but it is getting better and better.

If I had to count on the left-hand side, it would probably take me a day to go and accurately count. And this other side is running in 5 minutes. And that is the kind of reaction time that we are getting now. Also, just something on resolution, everybody says the better your resolution, the better decisions you are going to make. Not true. If you look at this diagram, you will see that at 50 centimetres resolution, we want to look at structures.

You will see that we only picked up one or two structures on the 50 centimetres; there is a little red line around that - this thing is not working. So, I cannot show - Okay. On the top left, then you go to 25 centimetres, and you see that a lot of the structures are nicely identified. If you now go back to 15 centimetres, it is probably your ideal image quality because the AI starts picking up the right number of structures. However, if you go to the 15 centimetres resolution, it is even starting to pick up the graves. So, now you are getting the miss - it is somebody's house that has passed - but you are now missing the point of the exercise.

So, we have learned a lot of lessons, and at about 15 centimetres, we are getting the best results using our AI. The other thing that we found is shadows. A long shadow, if you do not fly at the right time of the day, you see the toilet over there in the bottom picture, and the shadow of the house is counted as a structure. Just because it is not at the right time of the day. So, you want to fly mainly when the sun is up high so that you get no shadows. So, shadows are counted sometimes. But it is getting better. You will notice this imagery. You can see the tires on the roof.

We are talking about the drone imagery, which we add to the other imagery sets that we have, satellite, *et cetera*. This is just to show you how clear the imagery is in Grabouw. What we have been doing there and the work that we have been doing. What is nice is that we can work in various areas of the country simultaneously because we have pilots covering the entire country. So, you can use it for safety, security, and disaster. You can look at counting human settlements, *et cetera*. You can play this video. This is the HDA. I think it is one of the Gqeberha projects that we had.

We looked at Motherwell here specifically, but in this case, we flew in one day. We did 22 settlements, and we did it for Human Settlements because we were not sure of the number of houses that were affected by the floods. So, we zoomed in, and there you will see there is Motherwell, that little area next to the graveyard. And then we did a certain analysis on Motherwell. So, that is the Nomakanjani informal settlement. And we can then say, looks like this. We flew over and were able to get visual imagery.

In the settlement, for instance, they said there were 500 houses that were affected by water damage. We flew over and we picked up 30. So, immediately, you can see the difference. It saves the State money. However, it also gives the right kind of disaster response. So, we will zoom in, and you will see where the water is lying here. We cannot always get in with the drones. We have bought better ones now that can fly in stronger weather conditions. You can see where the dark patches of water are lying. Now we have put over the Digital Surface Model (DSM and the Digital Terrain Model (DTM) over this, and then you start seeing the real value of the data. So, we can look at the various places in this village specifically. We can see where the next level of disaster is going to happen.

So, here you have building footprints and where the structures are located. The estimated number of households here are 3 986 and the number of households provided by the municipality were 3 500. So, you can see we counted about 400 more. Based on time, these are the areas that we can now identify that will be first affected by a flood, because they are the lowest lying in that settlement. So, you can see that there are households that would be affected at time one, at the first instance, which is 858. Not

affected would be 3 128. If the flood gets worse, then you see that we now have 1 469 that are affected. And this is all based on elevation, the way the water is flowing. And at the third instance, we will then get 2 950 affected.

The importance of this data is that we can now plan to say, how can we keep the water from flooding these areas within that settlement in a way that could be by putting in stormwater drainage, after, *et cetera*. So, what you have here is you have your building footprint in blue, and it is called Secure Watch. Secure Watch is something that you purchase a package of and it watches this informal settlement. And then this is what we can see from the drone imagery with Secure Watch over it. And you can see where all the houses are now gone after the flood. The blocks are where the houses that have now been destroyed by the floodwater. So, it is very good at measuring the difference. That one is from satellite, and the other one is from drone imagery, but they work together in tandem to be able to give you a very good understanding of your area. This is just Victoria West.

You can play the video. It is a whole town. It is in the centre of South Africa. What makes it useful is that we can now, for the first time, build a digital twin of the town. We fly the town one day, 42 000 photos with two drones and two pilots, and we can generate this information. And we can overload your spatial framework, your land use scheme over it. We can lay all your deeds information over. And it is because it is so accurate. It all falls within the cadastral data of the town. What we can do is, in the town, you have your land use scheme, but this is the imagery that we can generate from one flight. That flight over that church, we probably went over it in 20

seconds. And this is the kind of imagery that we can rebuild. So, this is not an image cloud, and it really is of the highest quality data that you can find.

We have now gone further with this work, and we have done the internal building. We have taken handheld scanners, and you walk inside the building. So, you can also go into the building. So, we are busy with that, as well as street views like the Google cars that drive around. So, we can then get very good information from this. I think the point is made. This is Jaggersfontein. It is again in the news for poor management in terms of that disaster site. What you are seeing on the left is in September 2022, that whole dam, the Tailings Dam broke. And I think in many SADC countries, there are big mines that pump out all this material and store it. The Tailings Dam broke. What happened is that if you look at the spatial plan from a town planning point of view, you will see this is what it looks like. The tailings dam is that little orange block in the middle. But the arrow where the red is, that is a proposed new township layout that they have put in there. And you will see what happens. This is the flood risk area that they predicted would look like if the Tailings Dam broke. It is all my land use stuff.

So, in 2009, that is what the settlement looked like. That was the Tailings Dam, how big it got. And then in 2022, it broke. And look at all the sludge that came out of that. But critically look at the settlement at the bottom of the picture. That is where they proposed a new settlement to be put. So, we have now been able to tell the municipality that you cannot build there, find somewhere else for new houses. You cannot expand into the root of that Tailings Dam.

What is interesting about this disaster is significant. It moved 25 kilometres downstream. Okay, that is just another point. And next, where it broke. And this is what happened. What we did was model it now to see exactly how that sludge affected the dam.

And what is useful about this is that we can start doing this for all tailings dams in the country. We fly them. They have got sensors on now, but we can predict where you should not be putting houses in the route in case this thing does break. I am nearly done. So those were just the ones affected.

I think this is a video of a helicopter, of what the effect of the Tailings Dam sludge disaster was, so you can see it was very deep. Those are vehicles trying to get out, and they affected houses. That is fine, and I think we get the picture.

So, within 24 hours, that sludge had moved into the river system and moved downstream, and polluting everything on its way. This is why we need to, well, try and prevent these things. The important part of the drones is that if we work in partnership with the mines, we can monitor movement. It is a type of shale that they use that disintegrates over time. This is just images that we have now done, post of what it looks like, that hole where the sludge came out.

The important part of this is that everything you see here is done in-house by the government. Nothing is done by anybody else. Everything, the pilots, the drones, everything, the processing is done in-house. And that is the end of the presentation. Even I am surprised it went long. If anybody wants more information, if you scan that QR code, it will take you to the

Land Reform and Rural Development Drone Programme site, and there you can get a whole lot of information, including on how you can get hold of us. If you are the government, if you are another government, we happily share information. We happily share data sets. We share expertise. We have had several of our colleagues here from Namibia.

We have had groups from Swaziland visiting us, not specifically for drones, but for spatial planning purposes. And the ultimate intent, I suppose, would be that we build a facility for the State where we can do things more quickly. And when we look at the country, we have recently been between ourselves and the Department of Planning and Monitoring and Evaluation, we are setting up the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) for spatial governance.

And this IMC will be a first, I think, of its kind in that for the first time, we would have ministries and ministers that can sit and say, Minister of Human Settlements, this is my data. National Treasury, this is my data. And all the data comes together into a National Spatial Data Observatory.

It is a five-year programme, and we will build this observatory for all of government, where we can then run the various analytics, be it security, be it food security, be it human settlements. And it is all our government programme, but it is, I think that is the only way that you break down the silos in your data to a point where the data becomes freely available so that we can all use it openly. I think there is one more slide.

I would not be doing my work properly if I did not speak about land policy as one of the most important climate instruments in our hands. Where and how we allocate land, whose rights we secure, and which

communities gain predictable tenure will decide how our societies cope with droughts, floods, and food system disruptions.

We need to start to place women and young people at the centre of this policy because, without secure land rights, they cannot invest in soil health, water harvesting, or diversified livelihoods. Across the Southern African Development Community, we need to recognise that climate change, land governance, and social justice have become a single agenda.

The decisions made here will determine whether women and youth in our villages, our townships, our borderlands have the security and the support they need to adapt or whether they remain exposed to repeated climate shocks without stable foundations. So that would be my call, to ask that we start looking at these land rights.

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY: Please, Dr. Rob Bob, come forward. Is there a presentation to show?

DR. R. BOB [PROJECT EXECUTIVE - DEPARTMENTS OF COMMUNITY SERVICES AND PUBLIC SAFETY – ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY]: Yes.

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY: Please, flight the presentation.

DR. R. BOB: My humble greetings to each one of you today, this morning, and I declare that all protocols are observed. My name is Roshni Bob, and I am the project Executive for the Community Services and Public Safety Departments within eThekwini Municipality, and the Disaster Management Directorate reports through to us.

I think the first thing we need to present is the presentation and thereafter the video, please. Apologies from Mr. Vincent Ngubane, who is the

Director of Disaster Management. He is taken ill, and we wish him a speedy recovery. From a disaster management perspective, we would like to say at a local government context, we equally have legal prescripts that govern us from the South African Climate Change Act right down to various acts, including our intergovernmental relations framework.

We have just had our previous presenter, present on an all-of-government approach and some methodologies. From a local government context, we appreciate that.

eThekwini Municipality is not shy from major disasters linked to climate change. We have been seeing it and we have been experiencing it for years. But major ones lately and more frequently since 2017 to date.

Apart from the floods of 2022, we equally had an unprecedented tornado that hit us in this year that impacted quite a bit of residential suburbs in the northern part of eThekwini Municipality. So severe floods are compounding and it is impacting us daily. In that regard, we try to prepare in the space and we are grateful to our partners such as the Corporate Social Programme from National Treasury, the World Bank, other United Nations, UN, agencies where we have lessons learned.

For the 2017 and 2019 flood, we commenced with lessons learned. It was dropped a little due to COVID, and then we had the 2022 floods and that took us further into the space.

So, in that space, we have had various lessons learned. We have had other partners. We have had even people from other parts of the world come into the space to talk about experiences and to test the elements of resilience within the eThekwini Municipality. The result of that, is that from

that space, we had four emerging thematic areas, which is information, management and early warning systems, the importance of technology. Also included in that is the incident command systems to enhance the provision of emergency shelters and temporary accommodation. The more events you have for temporary accommodation, the more you then to ensure that you have sufficient funding and support, including types of relief programmes in that space.

Our Disaster Management Level 2 plan culminated into the output from your lessons learned and we are happy to say that it is adopted by Council and now the implementation process starts. In the Level 2 Plan, they are concentrated areas, such as doing disaster risk assessments, concentrating on disaster reduction strategies to make sure that we have efficient and effective responses, and to also look at coordination and collaboration in an effective way. Because it is an all-of-government approach, it is multidisciplinary, but it also introduces community and civil society in the space.

It must be done in an organised way. And then thereafter, monitoring evaluation of what we do and the respective implementations of that. I have just given you part of that, but it has got 16 areas, level 2 plan has 16 areas of concentration.

Also included in the city is the Municipal Forum for Climate Change. And in that space, we have an enabling environment. We have four thematic areas in that space, the enabling environment for policy, legislative and planning change, governance, research, communications and capacity building, and most importantly, climate change finance.

Then we also look at cross-cutting methodologies. We are not alone. Okay, disaster management does not operate in an island. We must make sure we have a helicopter and holistic view of what is transpiring out there. To look at the economic development, to look at risk management and other forms. Then also to look at your energy transport and waste crisis.

When a disaster occurs, sometimes roads are blocked. People cannot get to work. There are many, many things. Also, what we have to be mindful of is the increase of social ills in spaces when disasters occur. Thereafter, we check for adaptation. We have to look at biodiversity, human food security, the health, look at also the sea level rising and the coastal impact. The coastal impact because eThekwini Municipality is a coastal city and also the implications of our water and sanitation space.

So, when it comes to deep disaster, overall, we have what we call a joint operating centre. Once information is obtained, we must activate the disaster management centre and initially conduct need assessments on what the impact is on the ground. And then we start looking at where do we get our relief? Where do we sit displaced people? Majority of the times we are looking at our community halls and our sports grounds. And that is not conducive. We require to start evolving and looking at better placed temporary shelters considering the frequency of our events in that space.

We also have relief interventions from both government and other civil society organisations that come into play, including spiritual and religious organisations. The relief interventions, majority of the time, is coordinated by the elected component, which is the ward councillor in that space. Thereafter, communication and alerts around methodologies occur with

regard to where, what, when, and how things are going to be happening in the future.

We have a Disaster Management Advisory Forum and in the Advisory Forum, it is multidisciplinary. We have our business partners, our academia, our officials, and everybody else in that space. So, I just want to advise you that everything that we do, we try to bring the community together. So, we actually make sure that we do ward-based community assessments so that we can explore and look at our early warning systems and whether it is effective. I will discuss early warning systems very quickly on the slides.

We are also looking at our major hazard industries. As you know, we have got oil, we have got petrol, we have got other industries in our space that are hugely dependent and not to mention the next speaker from Toyota, South Africa, assembly plants as well, in our space. Linked to that we embrace the types of social relief that comes both from government as well as civil society. We are introducing a municipal adaptation planning process. And we are also looking at post rehabilitation and reconstruction in that.

So very quickly, the South African Weather Services will give you a warning and we will decide how based on what category, whether it is an orange, level 6 or however the intensity of the warning is, and that would determine how we will start planning ourselves from the joint operations centre to rope in all the departments that require to be roped in managing disaster relief.

We thereafter start activating and actioning our early warning systems through various methodologies. We utilise technology such as our WhatsApp groups, our city Facebook page. We also use radio communication, loud hailing, short message service, SMS, to all the councillors, and then also encourage people to utilise, if they are experiencing any adversity, to utilise our emergency services number, which is: 031-361-0000.

We are now in the process of trying to get a three-digit emergency services number. We are getting people to engage in that space, to look at how we get a crisper 911 equivalent in our space, but again, looking at how we embrace it in an all-of-government approach.

Linked to that, it has its own forecast early warning system, which we call FEWS. So, when the South African weather services give out an alert, but this early warning system is operational 24-7 every single day, it does not prop up. What it does is it matches and overlays what the South African Weather Services is saying. Thereafter, it makes it easier for us to target our communication in the space where we look at constantly through the global forecast system, through the South African Weather Services System, and also through our respective real-time radar systems. We can identify where cells are moving and utilise that data to get more crisp information in the space.

Thereafter, it can make your early warning systems to neighbourhoods more focused. eThekwini municipality is quite vast, so we can get loud hailing to the impacted and most vulnerable very, very quickly. To that extent, the data also creates historical information, so we are doing our flood

modelling system so that it warns us in advance and pro-winning and disaster risk management in communities around certain places.

The other matter is about the community early warning systems. I just want to share a quick story with you around the 2022 floods. This is the Palmiet River in Quarry Road West Informal Settlement. In that space, we have over a thousand households and it was impacted. It was washed away but the amazing thing is that through the early warning systems and the training provided by the university and the Forecast Early Warning Systems (FEWS), colleagues in eThekwini Municipality we had zero loss of life.

We have site plans for our major hazard industries so that when things happen, we know the targeted approach and to prevent the vulnerability that those industries pose to our citizens. With our early warning systems, we have identified our high-risk areas, and we continue training and educating people within the area and linked to how to embrace the early warning systems, to continue having public awareness and to improve the relief programmes in our space, particularly from a city perspective, to find a space for relief storage.

Our achievements, we are one of the cities that is part of the Making Cities Resilient by 2030 initial scorecard. We have had our first assessment, and we are happy to say we scored 92 out of 141. It may seem insignificant, but really this is the only city in Africa that has scored that high. It is the highest scored city in the continent linked to this process. - [*Applause*.]

Equally, on C40 reporting, we also want to say that we have improved our score from D through to B, and from an adaptation section, we have scored an A. So that is quite good for a coastal city and considering the

amount of climate change impact that we have had from 2017 through to date. I would like to ask if we can play the video now. Thank you.

(Delegates watch a *video about the new Hunslet Road Bridge in Durban, South Africa.*)

Colleagues, I just want to say that eThekwini Municipality has embraced the concept of building back better. Through the videos and your site visits today, the building back better, be it our community residential areas or our social infrastructure or the important road networks where the bridges and everything are, you will clearly see the improvements that have come through and the elements of technology and knowledge that has been shared by partners from all over the world for us to improve. I want to thank you for the opportunity to allow me to share my story. Thank you very much. – [*Applause*] -

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY: Thank you very much Dr. Bob, for visualising the impact of the disasters in our city. Distinguished delegates, Your Excellencies, you have absorbed four presentations. So, we do appreciate that a body break may be important and necessary. So, we would respectfully request that for about five minutes we take that body break and immediately return to the Plenary for the interactions on those four presentations – questions and answers. There is a request from the Minister as one of the panellists that she may have to leave for other commitments. So, we would like to compact even that part. We do observe, however, that you have been sitting for very long – four presentations.

The time now is 11:47 and we wanted to check if you would like us to take the question and answer so that when we break, we break properly, or

we take the five minutes break. What would be the suggestions? So, we engage? Thank you very much. I would like to handover to the Acting President of SADC, Hon. Izaks to preside over the question and answer sedsdion for the four presenters. I would like you to come forward so that you could form the full panel for the engagement – clarities, questions or any comments. We have put a segment of about 20-25minutes for that engagement that our panellist will respond.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Members, just indicate with your country flag. This is Malawi, Namibia and Eswatini. Who else? – [*Interjections*.] – Mozambique. It is fine, we will come back. Let me just finish this side.

So, it is Mozambique, Malawi, Namibia and Eswatini. Who else? - [*Interjections*] - South Africa. Can you just - Angola and Zambia. Who else? Does it make the total? – [*Interjections*] – Let us start with Mozambique.

PT.

HON. MARGARIDA ADAMUGI TALAPA (MOÇAMBIQUE): obrigada, Excelências. Excelências senhores Presidentes dos Parlamentos da SADC,
Distintos convidados,
Minhas senhoras e meus senhores.
É para nós uma elevada honra participar neste debate, um tema ou um assunto preeminente para os nossos países. O impacto das mudanças climáticas é um assunto que preocupa os nossos países.
Queremos saudar a Presidência do Fórum Parlamentar pela escolha deste importante tema, cujo debate naturalmente vai, sem dúvidas, contribuir para reforçar a resposta colectiva dos nossos Parlamentos da SADC aos efeitos das mudanças climáticas.
Queremos endereçar uma saudação especial ao povo e ao Parlamento da África do Sul pela calorosa hospitalidade que sempre nos habituou, sempre

que visitámos este país, irmão. Queremos agradecer aos "painelistas" pelas suas valiosas e importantes contribuições para este debate que vão nos ajudar naturalmente nos debates que vamos ter nos nossos parlamentos e na solução desta grande preocupação de todos nós.

A nossa região da SADC é uma das mais afectadas pelos efeitos das mudanças climáticas, com particular enfâse as secas, as depressões tropicais, ciclones e inundações. São fenómenos de natureza ambiental que rapidamente transformam-se em desafios económicos, sociais e humanitários, afectando de uma forma severa os grupos mais vulneráveis, dentre eles mulheres, jovens e crianças, como foi bem dito aqui durante as várias apresentações.

E no caso das mulheres, estes eventos climáticos extremos agravam as desigualdades pré-existentes, dificultando ainda mais o acesso aos recursos e aumentando a sua exposição a riscos como violência baseada no género e no tráfico. Não são poucos os exemplos nos nossos países de mulheres que foram violentadas (…) a poucas distâncias à procura de água ou de crianças que foram raptadas durante deslocamentos forçados.

Para a juventude, que também constitui a maioria da população dos nossos países, estas mudanças climáticas agravam o desemprego, limitando a sua capacidade de auto-sustento. É também preocupante o impacto dos elementos climáticos extremos na proliferação de conflitos nos nossos países. A competição pelo acesso e controle dos recursos cada vez mais escassos aumenta o risco de inclusão e prolongamento de conflitos que desestabilizam os nossos países e comprometem naturalmente o futuro da nossa juventude.

Excelências

A nossa experiência de gestão dos efeitos de mudanças climáticas em Moçambique ensina-nos que os parlamentos desempenham um papel importante neste processo. É nosso dever legislar com justiça, fiscalizar com rigor e assegurar que os orçamentos nacionais reflictam prioridades climáticas com enfoque na igualdade do género e inclusão social.

Com vista ao reforço da actuação colectiva, propomos:

1. A harmonização da legislação climática no seio da SADC para a gestão transfronteiriça de riscos climáticos;
2. A integracção de abordagens de género e juventude nos planos de adopção e nas contribuições nacionalmente determinadas;
3. A criação de mecanismos de facilitação de acesso ao financiamento para acções de adaptação, medicação e empreendedorismo;
4. E o reforço da cooperação regional no seio da SADC, especialmente na partilha de informação e intervenção pós-desastres tirando maior proveito no Centro Operativo Regional de Emergência da SADC.

Excelências

As mudanças climáticas não são apenas um fenómeno ambiental, são uma questão de desenvolvimento, de justiça social e dignidade humana. Proteger as mulheres, jovens e crianças é, acima de tudo, proteger o futuro da nossa região.

A Assembleia da República de Moçambique reafirma o seu compromisso em continuar a cooperar com todos os parlamentos da SADC na promoção de políticas climáticas, mas para uma resposta regional cada vez mais coordenada e robusta.

Termino, felicitando mais uma vez, os apresentadores dos temas que vão ao encontro daquilo que são as preocupações dos nossos parlamentos e povos.

Obrigada.

EN.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Members, I just want to remind you that we do not have 10 minutes for each, not today. The most that we will allow is five minutes. But it is the Three-Minute Rule because its questions of clarity and engagement. Malawi, you will be the second.

AN HON. MEMBER [MALAWI]: Good morning, Hon. Speaker and everybody. Thank you so much for giving me a chance to ask a question. I think my question goes to the Hon. Minister of Human Settlements and

perhaps she might also be assisted by Mr. Kekana, if possible. It is to do with policy and practice disconnect. I want to draw you to experience in Malawi where we would come up with a policy of settlement which encourages to move people from flood-prone areas to safe areas.

Then you have the individuals saying, no, we cannot move from this place to a safer place because this is the home of our ancestors. Our mothers, fathers died here and we have a grave here. We cannot be moved out. You have the human rights organisations coming in trying to protect them as well.

I just wanted to learn from South Africa whether you experience the same. But otherwise, Hon. Speaker, very grateful. I think the presentations were very related and very informative. Thank you so much.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Namibia is next.

AN HON. MEMBER [NAMIBIA]: Thank you so much for the opportunity. Salutation from Namibia to Hon. Members.

I would like to perhaps pose a question to Mr. Heimann on particularly drone operations there. Perhaps if you can be a bit more technical on that.

Data collection is indeed a key element to future prevention of such incidences especially in particular relation to climate change.

I would like to know what your challenges are to your drone programmes regarding flying in restricted and prohibited areas and the dangerous areas and of course what challenges do you face with regard to registries of your drones and also the pilots particularly the training that they go through?

It is important that we need to learn from you regarding the privacy of the individuals as per regulation of your SA Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) and the safety also in the air space with regard to these drones.

Secondly, also shortly, I would also want to know the interference of your drones when flying close to the water bodies. How do you cab that or does that happen with your new drones or is the technology that you are using that is now updated compared to the old ones that we might have experienced?

Perhaps South Africa is one of the countries that is now at the leading end to drone data base. I believe that it is something we can all learn from as Southern African Development Community Member States and of course just for data collection's sake. Just to perhaps one or two things to advise us on how to go about that. Thank you so much.

AN HON. MEMBER [ESWATINI]: Madam Director, my first question will be directed to the Hon. T S Simelane. Maybe let me start by mentioning that climate crisis also drives a loss of biodiversity and disruption of the ecosystem. Perhaps animals move out of their natural habitats as well.

Maybe adding to that climate crisis presents added injustice. Those who contribute least to the crisis face the worst consequences with limited resources needed to be climate adaptive.

Then my question would be firstly: What mitigating measures are we taking to make sure that those that are liable for these causes are paying for that as I have mentioned?

The very next if I would be direct, I would say: If you go and sleep and wake up in the morning and find yourself dead: How would you feel? – [*Laughter*] -

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: You do not have feelings. – [*Laughter*] -

AN HON. MEMBER [ESWATINI]: Yes. Maybe you will not feel anything. The reason I am asking this question is because the climate or the effects of climate change are so sudden. You go to sleep, tomorrow you find everything gone. So that is why I am asking what mitigating measures can be taken to make sure that you are liable or paying for this? Thank you.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Thank you. We go to South Africa.

HON. B. S. MADIKZELA [SOUTH AFRICA]: Hon. Vice President, good morning colleagues. My two quick questions. The first one would be to the Minister, and the second one would be to any of the panellists.

Minister, the South African phenomenon of land invasion for example particularly in flood prone areas where we know that those people would be wiped out; do you not perhaps think it is time really that we look at the prevention of Illegal Eviction Act so that we can really start protecting people from themselves if I can put it that way.

The reality is that legalising invasion in a dangerous area has severe consequences for the very same people that have invaded the land. So, that is the first question. I mean do you not think it is high time that we look at the Prevention of Illegal Eviction from and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act and make changes that will protect people from such devastation?

The last question as I said it can be responded to by anyone. In South Africa, there is a pattern of disasters we have seen over a couple of years. I

think we have a pretty good idea whether it is fire disaster, natural disaster due to lack of proper and maintenance of that infrastructure. Now surely as one of the countries on the list of high disaster areas. Is there data telling us where these situations are in those areas and really what do we need to prevent what is inevitable should the disaster strike? For we know what is going to happen to those areas as we saw in eThekwini. So, have we started really to collect data and say how do we proactively deal with that situation so that we do not react to crises all the time? Thank you.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Let us hear from Zambia.

HON. MEMBER (ZAMBIA): Madam Vice President, my question is very simple for Mr. Kekana. I wish to thank you Mr. Kekana for the detailed insights you have shared with us this morning.

May I just ask how South Africa identifies and maps areas most at risk from climate change related disasters and whether this information is shared regionally to improve planning across SADC? Thank you.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Thank you, Zambia. So, you are sure you do not want to contribute now. Thank you.

So, with that said and done, we will now request the Minister first or should we request others first? Let the Minister first respond and others will follow.

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS SA [MS. T. P. SIMELANE]: Thank you very much, Acting President. Well, the policy and practice disconnect, the question from my colleague from Malawi. It is the same, we experience the same.

Not very far from where we are, one of the last toll plazas when coming to eThekwini on the N3 is the Mariannhill Toll Plaza. To those who are familiar, if you look on your right-hand side, there are houses on the slope. I do not come from here, you know, but how do I know? It is because they have been reported. It is because we have taken strides to engage people who are on the slope saying, one day, you are going to wake up dead. The critical question that I should ask them is, how are you going to feel? But we get all these responses and they make relocation and resettlement very, very difficult such that even if you intend to prevent particularly fatalities and loss of life, your measures are found wanting sometimes.

In some instances, you relocate people, knowing very well that this is a flood line. As you relocate these people, others are going to come and settle at that very same space tomorrow. I also think, from our policy perspective, about how reactive our municipalities can be and to learn to manage those spaces to prevent people from settling. An element which also comes into play is that our people have no patience because of a shrinking fiscus and the slowness in the allocation and formalisation of settlements. So, they know because these ones are compelled by law and regulation on disaster. Let us go and put ourselves in an area where they know we may die. Then they will be swift in responding to us.

This is why when you relocate people, I will use another example here, the floods that happened in Lamontville going down Umlazi River; we took the families that were affected into Ward 5 of the City of eThekwini. I was present myself. The people of Ward 5 said, no, no, no, please do not. We do not want them. These houses are for us first. So, the land is good and it is

secured. Put them in a shack first. Let them be where we are, because we have also been waiting for houses. So, there is quite a lot of difficulties that you find when you are trying to relocate people.

You also have a segment of the rich, who do not want the poor next to government land. You might have heard that there was gunfire between our land in the municipality and the residents of Ballito and we were relocating flood victims; some who have waited since 2020. The people of Ballito were saying, hey, go take your type of people not very close to me. It is a very good and well-apportioned land here. Find them somewhere else, Minister. We have tried to find a solution. I think we are starting to build and relocate them to that space.

I am just saying, my colleague, it is beyond even them accepting the challenges and the steps that we find. Of course, the other element which our policy cannot align is if I have a six-bedroom house which is washed away and my policy provides a 40 square metre, two bedrooms which are very small, one bathroom, a kitchen and a small sitting room and the person you are supposed to relocate in Khutsong which used to be a mining area and the land is dolomitic, and in Centurion, where the land is caving in and government has done the assessment and says, hey, here you are. He says, you see my house, Minister, move me to the same thing, like the one that I have, or leave me alone. Now the problem is I cannot move them out of that area. It will actually not be affordable even for the country to work on such. So, we navigate, we win some, we lose some, the pace is slower in other areas, but the policy is adhered to.

I do not want to talk about human rights organisations, they do not like me and I know – [*Laughter*] – I know why. The less I say, the better, even for myself.

I am going to pair the second question with the question from South Africa on illegal eviction, the Prevention of Illegal Eviction pie. You may be aware that we are almost going towards public participation. We are aligned with Cabinet on the prevention of illegal eviction, and it is taking twofold. It carries the element which we are talking about, dealing with fair, logical, relocation of people for safety, but it also prevents unscrupulous landowners who just, without following processes and procedures, evict people on the basis of either unaffordability which has not been tested, or a wide range of areas where people will just find themselves landless and homeless. Even a transfer of land from owner A to owner B, without really taking care of what was the state of owner A and what are we jointly going to do as land is transferring. Fairly so, I am buying, but you need to, you as a resident in that particular farm or in that particular area, you need, by law, to define a process on how you are going to be dealing with people who are inhabitants of that area and for how long they have been staying there. It is quite a very detailed Act which tries to look, avoid and minimise the scale in which our people - I mean, if you look into what is happening in Kriel, Mpumalanga, it is very sad. Over 200 families are displaced just by the movement of land between A and B as the owners of the mine that is in that space. So, all that I know also is that you cannot regulate people by a piece of paper. On top of the Act, there has to be massive education for people to understand the importance of that.

The President signed the Housing Consumer Bill, for example, into an Act, I think, in February or so this year. That is supposed to protect you against a developer or any other person you have hired, and it goes into a fine of about R2 million. But how many people, even if our inspectors drive past the street and they realise you are building for yourself in Soweto, for example. By the look of the eye, they realise that, no, this thing is not conforming to building standards. They disembark, they talk to your owner, but your builder, Minister Simelane, is not following this and that. Have you registered him? No. Why do you not register? The owner says, no, I am not interested in registering him. I know him. He is going to build my house, and fairly so. Three years down the line, that house has collapsed. Who must come in into intervention?

The amendment now allows us to fine, directly, Minister Simelane who is building, with or without the authority of the person he is building for. Because self-love also sometimes really goes with understanding. When you are cornered and convinced that this person has built for so and so, and so and so, you may actually assume that, no, this government just does not want to help me. This is my money; I will use it as I see fit. But when the building collapses and it kills people, whether it is a wall or a house or whatever, it is a fatality that we all do not want to deal with. It is better if we avoid it.

My brother from Eswatini, I wish I could have an answer for you. But for me, I also think early warning systems, if they are really, really adhered to, they can go a long way. Yes, a disaster like fire, it could be a Primus stove or a paraffin stove that bursts now and there's no warning, right?

Other than that, quite a lot of the work that they do, weather services, and I am talking only in the South African context, and I know each country will have such, you do get an early warning.

The early warning will tell you to relocate them, as my colleague from Malawi had said, and you will have challenges. The early warning will go to an extent of predicting that we are expecting heavy rains next week at that area. In some instances, they are even able to exact the number of millilitres that will be pouring at that level.

I go to uMkhomazi myself and I tell them that there are floods coming in nine days' time. They say that this river has never been filled since 1982. Where are they today? They are flooded and wiped off. The MEC in Mpumalanga and I are helping because you now cannot ask them, but what did I say last week? You now must come as a government, exercise the spirit of Ubuntu and assist people who are in need.

They are the first ones in front of the cameras to say, hey, this government does not love us, we are so unfortunate in this country. When you respond and say, but here is a notice delivered in your house, their response is, no, they just left it here. They did not explain. You are never right but nobody wants to listen to the early response.

In other instances, I think, as government, we must also take responsibility. For me, Umtata will be the great example, sad as it is. Early warning given, early warning, right, as it was predicted, but we lost 10 children amongst the more than 100 people who died. I think that was as a neglect of us, government. It rains in the early hours of the morning, but

there's still a school bus which got swept away around 8 in the morning, while driving children to school.

They did not come across any municipal police or police to say that the road was closed. So, what is the early warning for? It is not about sitting at home. It is about them sitting at home while we go out to make sure that the streets are cleared and there is no one who is moving around there. I think we failed those children. So, it depends on the circumstances, but if we are alert, I think we can really minimise disaster. Thank you very much.

MR C. HEIMANN [ACTING DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF LAND REFORM]: Acting President, I will take the drone one. Thank you for the question. I am going to quickly talk to the drone matters.

Firstly, you are correct, we follow the national legislation and regulations on flying. So, every pilot is certified, every aircraft and every flight is certified by the SA Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA). We do log our flight plans, even in these prohibited areas. You can get flexible use of airspace; you just need to get the right approvals and be timeous in those approvals.

I think one of the key things in starting up a drone business, in South Africa at least, is that you must take your time. It is not something you can decide today. I saw drones, I am going to go and buy 10 of them, and I am going to have people fly them. Many of those drones end up in boardrooms, safes or cupboards.

What you need to do is that you need to plan that process very well. The first set of drones that you buy when you start your operating certificate with the SACAA is also to go at the same time and get a service provider

under which you can fly. That person will teach you all about airspace and logging flight plans, *et cetera,* while your pilots get trained. So, there is a two-pronged approach to this. If you do the one or the other, you are likely doomed in terms of that, with the way things work.

On privacy, each of our flights, we comply with civil aviation regulations. So, in terms of that, we go to the landowners, we get landowner permission. We go to communities; we explain that the drones are flying over. After disasters, it is not that big a problem because people expect support. I think that the one thing that one must also remember is a lot of the images that I showed you, the software automatically takes the people and the cars out, so you cannot really see it. That is one of the only ways that you can see it is a digital twin is when there are no people on the streets. The software removes all of that automatically.

The interference near water bodies, the newer platforms do not have that problem. It is a magnetic problem that they had on the earlier drones, so the new ones are fine. In fact, our drones; we are looking at doing coastal high-water level marks at the moment. And because they can do about 170 kilometres one way, it is about trying to move with the drone as the drone is moving along the road. We call it Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS). While you drive, you have the drone in sight, and the drone does its work.

The other thing that we do is everybody goes through training, also security training. We have some of our secretaries in the offices, they control the safes and the keys to those safes, so that we ensure that we just comply. For us, it took us three years to get an operating certificate from the SACAA,

which we got on 1 September. But before these providers and only a few pilots, we had 20 slots under that. That is basically a quick summary, but you are always welcome to take my number, we can discuss how we can support you. Thanks.

MR. M. KEKANA [DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT, DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT]: Thank you. Just to answer two questions. I think the first one was around the database. In South Africa, the Disaster Management Act mandates what we call the National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC), to act as a data repository. So, the NDMC keeps an online portal where you can easily access the data which the speaker was asking about.

In terms of the other question from Eswatini about climate justice, as of the 23rd of July of this year, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), actually issued an advisory opinion which says exactly what you were asking, whereby you can sue under this advisory opinion. However, it is yet to be tested. The best course is international co-operation because it might be difficult to institute legal action from one State party to another. However, there is that ICJ advisory opinion, and it is just that, an opinion. However, these things around issues of climate justice do carry weight. So, its something to be mindful of. Let me just stop at those two questions.

DR. R. BOB [PROJECT EXECUTIVE - DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES AND PUBLIC SAFETY – ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY]: Thank you. I will look at biodiversity, as well as the patterns of disaster from a local context as a local government practitioner. I

just want to say that because of population growth, we are getting increasingly vulnerable, where we are building and utilising our natural resources to build in. In other words, eThekwini Municipality was known to be the sugarcane city, and we have now decided to build in those spaces, but not appreciating that as disasters occur more frequently, we are experiencing sinkhole syndromes, where sinkholes are falling in the centre of people's homes. That is purely because we do not test our soil and we are not compacting agricultural soil sufficiently to build human settlements on.

Regarding patterns of disaster and data knowledge, knowledge management is extremely important. How we utilise it going forward shows the elements whether we are resilient in this space. However, we must appreciate climate change and mother nature because increasingly, we are getting incidents coming through that surprise us. We have never experienced it in the coastal areas and we have never experienced it in this country. Hello! It is occurring.

So, how do we prepare appropriately and look at our peers and actually start planning accordingly? Never say that this is not going to happen to me because what is happening in Florida is not going to touch us. No, as coastal cities, globally, we need to start learning from one another, look at data and actualise scenario planning in our spaces so that we can be ready and be disaster resilient should an impact occur in our space. Thank you very much.

THE SPEAKER OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA [MS. A. T. DIDIZA]: Thank you very much Vice-President and Acting President of SADC and thank you to the panel for the presentation.

Just one, maybe two brief questions. What importance does history play in our planning, particularly in the context of climate change? I am raising this because if you look here in eThekwini, the uMlazi River used to go through a particular route and was diverted at some stage when work was done and when the flood came, the river remembered where it used to go.

Secondly, if you go back to the eThekwini situation, historical information indicates that a 100-year flood line used to go in this area, where later there was building. So, I am raising this issue because what we have experienced with eThekwini and maybe other areas, must tell us that before we make allocations and plan new townships and areas, we need to factor in what might have been 30 years, 100 years' data on this land, so that we plan correctly.

Also, in terms of the issue Ms Moodley raised with regard to land use and what you are saying about land in Tongaat, where they started from sugar to human settlements, are there areas of communication across local spheres and sectoral departments to understand the change in land use, so that when we sign the redesignation of land from agriculture to other spaces we are conscious of looking at what the likely pitfalls are if, for instance you are going to build a particular infrastructure?

Maybe, for the Minister of Housing, in terms of building plans, is this new challenge enabling us to relook at our building plans but also the types of infrastructure, so that it takes into consideration the realities of climate change?

I also say one thing that is funny, unless it is a flood, but when there are certain collapsed structures in the USA where they build with timber, there are very few fatalities because part of the bulk is where they build underground, which is more your solid structures and the bulk in terms of cement and brick you use to contend with the environment. You know, there is a particular regulation but then come up with structures you then build with materials that, when disaster strikes, you would have minimal fatalities. So, is that something we are looking at in our building regulations, so that indeed we start to ensure that in the manner in which we build going forward, we take into consideration the type of structure we use? Like in Japan, there are buildings that sway because they have tectonic plates that move every day. It is not like a once-off incident. So, you would sometimes hear when you are building, it is like you are tilting. But, that is how they have built it. You are not going to fall. You will just sway a little bit but the structures are not going to collapse. I am just saying that as we think about the future where climate change is our reality, what is this saying in terms of our building regulations? Thank you very much.

THE CHIEF WHIP OF THE NCOP SA [MR. K.M. MMOIEMANG]: Vice President Izaks, just one question from my side to Deputy Director-General Kekana. The issue is where we are as a country in terms of the SADC Protocol on Environmental Management for Sustainable Development.

I was trying to find out from the Chair as to whether; I do not remember either this Seventh Administration or the Sixth Administration, as Parliament, dealing with this Protocol. It is quite important to know whether it is one of the areas that we need to prioritise because it speaks to the

climate change strategy and action plan. So, as we appreciate the various inputs that were made from the top table, I think it becomes important just to get a sense as to whether, as a department, the department will be the sponsor to Parliament — there is a sense of where we are in terms of this Protocol. Thank you.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. I think we will give to the Minister again, and then those that think they will be able to contribute can follow.

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS SA [MS. T. P. SIMELANE]: Thank you once more. I think let me start with the historical data in relation to climate change. The great partnership that was presented is between our agency**,** the Housing Development Agency, for planning purposes, including the mapping and the assessment of our informal settlements. You may be scared to know that we now have 4 075 informal settlements, with Gauteng leading at around 800 and something. Of course, as we are sitting here, someone is building a shack somewhere. It is a moving target.

The fact that we know there are 4 075 is a result of the change in the historical pattern but also looking at where informal settlements have been and what we do with the data to plan. That will also help us in determining how we assist municipalities whose land is likely to be targeted for informal settlements so that they can make sure they protect what is within their pocket. If you want a good response on changes in terms of the flood lines, I think Toyota would be the best to respond, using the eThekwini example and the challenges they faced subsequently that affected their fleet.

The fact of the matter is that as we accelerated and improved in terms of the placement of people, there were areas, particularly relating to climate and pockets of land that we thought, because it had not been raining since 1982 and this pattern is now off, we could put infrastructure in those places.

Secondly, I am not sure whether tests were done at the time when we thought we could maximise on the flooring and the compacting of the buildings themselves because of the lack of space here in eThekwini, Pietermaritzburg, and Johannesburg. You find that one slight challenge you have creates massive problems. So, you need to incorporate that into your planning.

We all are at an interministerial committee level now, having teams at the municipal level assisting in terms of infrastructure direction and planning back, ultimately, to the Department of Human Settlements. I think it will assist and save costs. You cannot have Welisizwe from the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure building where Human Settlements cannot utilise that. So, the integration to incorporate the assistance for municipalities moves holistically from a national level, and I believe it will help ultimately.

The innovative building technologies, IBTs — I indicated them in my speech. In fact, we are putting up a summit on 3 to 4 February next year on innovative building technologies to deal with, firstly, the upgrade of regulations but also to ensure that it is not only brick and mortar that matters and that works. We are learning from other countries how they utilise building technologies — wood and any other material, that assist not

only with climate change but even in terms of cost as well and resilience. We have been utilising one system which gets heavily affected. So, we have the Eric Molobi climate change and innovation plan in Soshanguve. We have put houses in two typologies — the same house, but one will be allocated to a family, and the other will be monitored to observe how it responds to different weather patterns when it is cold, when it is hot, *et cetera*. We believe, led by the University of Johannesburg, that next year we are ready to implement. Here, there is a hospital they are building on an IBT. It is not necessarily a hospital; you could call it a clinic. It is a 24-hour service in terms of the size. We hope that it will improve our outlook as government and jointly as business.

The last leg that we will have to work on is educating our citizens that IBTs are equal to any other material utilised. In Tembisa, Ekurhuleni, we built flats, apartments as we know them, using IBTs. It took a bit of time for us to convince people that this is just a normal way to go about. They just had no preference for something they had never seen or heard of before. It was only when we took them to a hotel in Sandton that used the same material and is located in one of the most expensive square metres areas in South Africa that they began to say that it is normal to have.

However, you cannot blame them. It means that when we shift gears to another level, we need to carry our people and plan with them but also incorporate them into making the very same panels that you will need for innovation so that they will own and believe that this is the quality you have produced. It comes from our hand. We do believe it can house us.

I think it is coming. Other countries are using mostly, and here in SADC, our IBT materials, more than we are doing ourselves, even for schools, not only for human settlements. It is a joint initiative of the Interministerial Committee in February, and we are hopeful that it will give us the result we would want to have. Colleagues can add. Thank you.

FR.

HON. C. L. EKOTO (DRC): Merci pour la parole.

Je viens d'un pays qui joue un très grand rôle dans l'équilibre climatique au monde.

Comme vous le savez certains d'entre vous peut-être, la RDC mon pays, après le Brésil a la plus grande étendue des forêts au monde. Certaines populations vivent de cette forêt, dont la plus grande partie de la population de mon pays vit de cette forêt. Nous sommes en train de nous débrouiller pour que cette forêt ne soit pas détruite. Et ça nous demande beaucoup de moyens que peut-être nous nous n'avons pas parce que nous avons à résoudre beaucoup de problèmes. Nous comptons sur l'apport de nos partenaires.

Mais malheureusement, il y a certains membres du Gouvernement de mon pays qui ont participé à une conférence en Europe précisément, et qui ont fait le plaidoyer pour qu'ils aient beaucoup plus de moyens, pour que ça nous aide à protéger notre forêt pour le bien du monde.

J'ai fait cette observation parce que je me pose la question par rapport à la sincérité de la lutte que nous menons contre le changement climatique. Quand nous avons fait le plaidoyer pour qu'on puisse trouver beaucoup plus de moyens, pour garder notre forêt et suppléer parce qu'il y a des gens qui

font le champ et leur donner d'autres moyens pour vivre, nous avons reçu des réponses qui étaient décourageantes.

Nous avons proposé qu'on puisse nous aider à construire un barrage qui va produire de l'électricité chez nous dans certains villages. Malheureusement, certains intervenants étaient contre cette proposition tout simplement parce qu'ils pensaient que ces villages seront développés avec l'électricité, et quand un peuple est développé, il va utiliser beaucoup plus la forêt, et alors nous n'avons pas compris ce genre de réaction.

C'est pourquoi je me pose la question par rapport à la sincérité de nos partenaires. Ils veulent une chose et son contraire.
Nous, en tant que parlementaires, nous devons continuer à fournir un effort. Nous savons qu'en Afrique, nous sommes en train de fournir un effort pour que nous soyons développés, mais nous ne sommes pas encore développés. C'est parce que nous manquons des moyens et nous nous comptons beaucoup plus sur nos partenaires. Et si les partenaires ne sont pas sincères envers nous, nous devons continuer à faire ce plaidoyer là pour qu'ils comprennent que nous devons tous jouir de l'équilibre climatique et nos pays ont un grand rôle à jouer. Donc, il faudrait que nous soyons tous sincères dans ce combat. Merci beaucoup.

MR. C. HEIMANN [ACTING DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF LAND REFORM]: Regarding historical data, what is important is that it helps identify long-term patterns that existed before there was vegetation. Historical imagery in South Africa is available and I know we can find imagery dating back to the 1930s. Especially when examining traditional areas in South Africa, you can trace changes from times when there were

perhaps one or two communal settings to today, where 15,000 people live on the same amount of land.

What changes are the compaction of the soil, erosion, and the expansion of built-up areas. All these factors affect the amount of water that collects and can seep into the ground. The moment we experience what is almost a perfect storm, as has happened recently, I wanted to comment on the one-in-50 and one-in-100-year flood lines considering the extreme weather events occurring worldwide. Whether in Spain or New York City, the volume of precipitation falling within a very short period is now the deciding factor and the main problem. This is why modelling is so important and countries should begin considering all kinds of scenarios. What would happen if we had more rain in a very short period? One-in-100-year flood lines are simply no longer sufficient. I think one notable development in informal settlements is that we now have the ability, quite excitingly, to survey these settlements every six hours to manage changes in the number of residents.

Building types in that area, and the same with cities. So, we can very quickly use satellite data also monitor the condition of on the land to see how much more runoff we get. Runoff is the problem and the change of soil types. So, if you move from grass to synthetic grass, you have got a problem.

If you move from a gravel road to a tar road, you have a problem. It is a combination and you must always be anticipating. I think it may be a lost science, as people have forgotten that you must do this. The slope analysis, the one area that always concerns me is in Port St. Johns, where we have very poor, steep, sandy mounds and an influx of people moving into the

area. They remove all the vegetation, sometimes to build something but also to use for firewood. So there is a steep slope with sandy soils, and heavy structures are built on top of them. Ultimately, this can result in a landslip into a community below.

The response should be either to prevent people from building there or to install probes in the soil to detect when the land starts to slip, so that you can implement countermeasures to warn people to stay out of that area.

MR. M. KEKANA [DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT, DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT]: Let me start with the question from the DRC. I think DRC is quite right, the issues of forests have not really been attracting the necessary attention that they deserve. And, of course, this is not due to lack of effort from ourselves. DRC, as we know, Gabon and many others, constitute what we call the lungs of the world because they absorb quite a lot of carbon emissions.

So, two things happened this year around these issues because of their importance. Under the SA G20 Presidency, we profiled the SADC Great Green Wall. That was number one and there is quite a lot of partners that are coming onboard on that one. Secondly, which is the latest is that in Brazil at the conference on climate change, they also launched a multi-billion-dollar funding mechanism, what they call Tropical Forest Forever Facility. So, two major things happened around the forest this year and it was the first time that the forest were in the forefront. So, 2025 was a great year in that regard. But prior to that, DRC is quite right there has not been real commitment to dealing with these issues.

On the issue or the question from the Chief Whip, although the protocol and environment management fosters sustainable development is quite old, of course, our Cabinet ratified that, I think it was 2017 and Parliament itself eventually ratified in 2018. However, the majority of key principles and actionable issues from the protocol have since been mainstreamed into two important SADC documents.

The first one is SADC Vision 2050, but even the most critical one being the Regional Statistical Training Project (RSTP), 2020 to 2030. That is the regional indicative strategic development plan, which is a broader plan. Nevertheless, it incorporated quite a lot of elements from the protocol itself for the purpose of implementation. So, it is on track and it is now up to SADC to really fast track the implementation through those two documents. Thank you.

DR. R. BOB [PROJECT EXECUTIVE - DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES AND PUBLIC SAFETY – ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY]: I think for me, we should be exploring a resource around knowledge management and the importance of history, in another space and that is in our academia space. I say these two things because one is generational and the other is to actually embrace and encourage people for a paradigm shift. We need to start challenging our professors. All countries we need to start challenging our professors and students in universities about thinking alternatively and progressively in the space of disaster resilience and climate change. Us having a governance model, research committees from a local government perspective to make sure that professors are encouraging students to talk about relevant topics to research alternative

pathways from brick and mortar and what would be most suitable in this space.

Look at the historical data from 1930 and what has transpired and watch through simulations, could possibly be the spaces and come up with journal studies and everything. The next generation is what will be sitting here. Again, and if we give them the encouragement to go on and study about the futuristic aspects of climate change, that will only change their mindsets and make governance and government better in the space. Thank you.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Thank you very much to the panellists and also to the participants. We want to end this first session as follows: We will invite two of the SA parliamentarians, that is Hon. Madikizela and Hon. Dina Pule to the front to come and show appreciation to our panellists. We really want to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to all of you.

I think that was a very deep discussion. I would recommend to Parliament that we will have a newsletter after this to make sure that we capture the discussions that were here that can be distributed to all the SADC National Parliaments and, as well as our provincial legislatures. So, those that are responsible for the tokens of appreciation, can you, please, come this side and I will also request that, okay, can we do it on this side, so that we can express our appreciation. Once again, thank you very much. [*Applause.*] - So, maybe we can call the Minister first.

Handover of Tokens of Appreciation

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY [MR. X. GEORGE]: Thank you very much, Hon. Minister. We do appreciate your presence. We understand you

Are pressed for time. Esteemed Speakers and distinguished delegates, we are running behind time. It is now 1258 hours and as per the programme, we were supposed to have completed even the second segment of the afternoon. So we sincerely apologise for the time over-run, due to starting an hour late in the morning.

We will, however, endeavour to conclude fairly quickly the second segment of our symposium, that is: The reflections by partner institutions in our multipronged disasters. The private sector who are investors in our countries. So, we have a presentation by Toyota South Africa, who had to endure a lot of damage to their plants where they assemble Toyota vehicles for the distribution to the continental market and the global market.

Likewise, the impact on the ground in terms of responsiveness in terms of the civil society. We will also receive a perspective on how civil society partners to mitigate and adapt to these disasters. They will also share with us the farmers, who also had to endure a lot of losses of their produce will also share. I would like to check if they are present here in the hall. If they are here, I invite you to come forward and take your seat. Toyota, Abahlali baseMjondolo, as well as the agro-ecology directorate in terms of farm workers, Mr. Dladla, Mr. Zikode and Mr. Moodley. Please, come forward.

The SA National Defence Force (SANDF), is the Brigadier who will be representing the army present here? Army response matter. Is Brigadier or General present? Please, come forward. From the SANDF we have Brigadier Thapelo Mohape. From Toyota we have Mr. Moodley present here. From the commercial farming community we have Ms. Lungile Dladla present. May I check, Mr. Zikode from Abahlali, is he present? Mr. Mohape, my apologies, I

thought he is representing the SANDF, he is representing Abahlali baseMjondolo. So, we do not have the Defence Force present at this moment.

However, a presentation from the army is here. We were advised that they will release one Brigadier to speak. Can team Parliament from South Africa check where that person is, if he is physically present here or he will be doing online so that we add them in the presentation. May I, without delays, request Mr. Moodley to take the stage and run his presentation and input. I have given everyone 15 minutes at most to sum up their presentation so that we can also compact the time for conversations. So, question and answer, Your Excellencies, will take place after all the four inputs have been done. So, kindly enjoy a bit of pressure on our side. Please, proceed.

MR. S. MOODLEY [TOYOTA SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, CORPORATE SERVICES]: As we started to power up the plant and started to get the plant running, one of the things that we looked at was that what do we need to do differently in case something like this ever happens. We know the one impact we have was our AVI cameras, our control panels. From a maintenance point, we have now started to look at how to pick this equipment up off the floor.

Maybe we can end it there for the interest of time. Can we go to my slide show?

I think what you saw from the video is not just an impact of the flood on operation, but rather a real humanitarian disaster. I think what is so startling is , if you look at our plant at 5:40, it was normal, but 24 minutes

later we had the flooded water coming in. What really happened was that the Songweni Dam, some 43 km west of our plant reached a level where its safety fuse gates opened and released the contents of the dam. Unfortunately, the entire dam emptied and came surging down the Umlazi River. As you can see the picture on the right subsequently the entire dam was now empty.

As someone mentioned earlier the speaker mentioned earlier that the Umlazi River, when it broke, we saw the yellow arrows followed its natural path. So, that canal was built for industrialisation purposes and with the surge of water down that canal, it could not take beam in the corner, broke its banks and even flooded the entire south basement.

This is a scenario pick of the damage again. The picture on the right you may recognise, that is the N2 Highway south. The building that you see with the white roof, that is the old airport parking terminal. So, the brown is the N2 North bound which was completely covered as well.

I think as you heard in the video, we lost all services. No water, no power, no sanitation, no connectivity nothing. We had to make very quick urgent plans to get ourselves up and running to start recovering the operation. The flood impacted us very quickly in numbers. We had to crush over 4 200 new vehicles either built or locally built or imported over just under R11 million parts, ranging from small watches to fully assembled engines that had to be scrapped. We had over half a billion rands worth of equipment, spare parts, but the real impact is we lost 104 days of production. Some may say we lost 104 days. We say it is a miracle that we recovered in 104 days.

Key to us was trying to put together a framework, some sort of management framework to be able to respond to this crisis. And our first priority in our organisation is always our people. Our first priority was to check and safeguard and understand what is happening to our employees where they are. What is their safety? Their families and our contractors on site. On any given day, we have over 10 000 on site. So, you can imagine the timing of what happened. Had it happened later, we would have been in bigger trouble.

Our second priority is the communities and our value chain, so the communities around our operations and our value chain in our suppliers and our dealers. Our third priority and lastly, is within our own operations. But we also said let us take this opportunity to not waste a crisis. Let us use this opportunity to do things differently. I have heard this morning about, le u's think differently, let us behave differently, let us react differently. That is what we did. This slogan called rebuilding better together. We said Let us look to rebuild. Let us look to create silver linings so we can come out stronger. We can come out better.

Our first priority was our people. I am not going to go through the detail of the slide in the interest of time. But what we put a process in place where we used our employers to become volunteers. Volunteers to support the community and we pay them for that. That ensured that on average, nobody got less than 84% of their normal pay for that period of time.

In terms of community, we went up cleaning breaches. Most of the surrounding communities did not have water, did not have food. We were providing 2 x 5litres bottles of water twice a week and food to not only our

people on site, but to the communities around us. We then put our framework in place on how to deal with the recovery for our own operation. It was the eight phased operation. It took us 104 days. Believe it or not, the last piece of equipment was only replaced at the beginning of this year. Because the long lead times required to procure an instalment of that equipment. Key for us was communication. You would have heard in the video. None of the offices on the ground floor were workable. We had a communication centre. We created a central command centre that became our central communication hub. Every day we would refer through into the plant to understand what was happening so we could from a central command direct, understand and listen to what was going on as well. To all our employees, we brought them in in little, small groups to come and help us to clean-up. We sent some out on community projects. We did some training, contact with our suppliers, our dealers and with our parent company, but also with local, provincial and national government. So, it required all round co-ordination. I heard earlier this morning key to any disaster recovery is central co-ordination.

Collaboration with our parent company, we would have never done this alone. In an event of a disaster, setting up frameworks where stakeholders collaborate is vital. Had we not had the collaboration with our parent company, our local city, provincial national government, we would not have survived this crisis, and we would not have recovered in 104 days. It is so important.

I think this was the important part of this presentation. If you look at what impact it does, it was basically infrastructure. The dam fuse gates

opened. Not that it had failed. It did what it is supposed to do when the dam reaches a certain level of water. It opened at all the water exits. The beam failed because it could not handle the flow of water that came down the beam. We operate in a reclaim swamp area. So it has a lot of canals around our operation. The regular maintenance cleaning and upgrading of those canals also became vital. We ended up working without various partners. We came up with what we call key lines of defence.

The first line of defence required very strong collaboration where we had to look at those canals and the beams in and around our plant and we worked together with them to try and refurbish and restrengthen those beams to make it survive a 100-year flood. The various engineers did what they needed to do but the design was completed and final installation and going live on that beam was 9 September 2023. It is almost just over a year later. That was a critical, critical infrastructure piece for us because our insurance refused to ensure our operation. If we could not assure them that beam was now operational and able to take the flow of water that came down that river.

We then have what was called our second line of defence. We created our own internal defence around our perimeter. The canals and beams outside was the first line of defence. The second line of defence is our own infrastructure. We created our own early warning systems. We improved all our cutters. We started cleaning programmes for all the canals around our plant. We also started upgrading our own internal storm water facility because we live or operate on reclaimed property or reclaimed area. We realise that the ability of water to collect is quite easy. If you look at the

picture on the right, on the top, the blue indicates all the areas that collect water quickly. The picture at the bottom shows the current conditions. We built a 1,3 million litre continuation dam or pond that actually collects the water in the storm water drain system.

Our third line of defence that you would have seen in the video was our own equipment. We have now lifted all of our equipment off the ground at the height of the water level and our plant varied anywhere between 1,5 to 1,8 metres. We could not lift everything up to that height, but where we could, we have lifted things off the ground to prevent damage, especially to the electrical equipment. This is just a wall that we now have in our plant. It acknowledges all the teamwork that was done, but I think it signifies the collaboration that was required from all different stakeholders for us to be able to survive this flood.

The key learnings for us! I think there were 10 key learnings that we went through; that I quickly wanted to take you through. The key thing is we found ourselves in an uncharted territory. It is the first time that it happened. It is the first disaster of this nature in our 60-year history. I think we had to reorganise ourselves. We had to dispel with the historical and hierarchy structures, and we had to reorganise cells to become a team. We had to make quick decisions. We did not have to work with the hierarchy. If somebody had a good idea, we went with it. If it did not work, we then change the idea again hands-on. We had to get into the plant with our boots and get hands on into understanding what was really going on so we could offer the right support. Teamwork is key. Collaboration and relationships. We created relationships with individuals, communities and community

members that we never would have interacted with before. Open transparent and open dialogue really helped. Also, it was to recognise what we could not do ourselves. Accept that we could not do anything by ourselves and asking for help. The importance of having a powerful multinational friend helped. I think as you would have heard an individual that was quite key. We had their full support. Embracing a climate resilient mentality towards our future. In this case information technology, IT, because our back cup systems were compromised. But we have taken that approach now that every single thing that we do, how do we make sure we are climate resilient and assessing alternate infrastructure solutions. We recognise, if we do not, we are going to be compromised. How do you make sure that all the infrastructure that will now be put together is able to deal with the potential consequences of future climate change.

I do think that concludes my presentation. Thank you. I have gone through rather quickly.- [*Applause*.]

MR. T. MOHAPI [SOUTH AFRICA]: Sanibonani.

It would not be good if I did not say how we greet here in this province. We say, sanibonani.

My name is Thapelo Mohapi. I am from an organisation called Abahlali baseMjondolo, and I just want to declare that, because there has been a lot that has been said about human rights organisations. I come from one. Ours is to hold the government to account. Ours is to ensure that the beautiful Constitution of this country is adhered to and that our people in informal settlements, who suffer a lot, more than anyone else, when it comes to climate change impact in informal settlements. In 2022, there was

a story that touched me deep down when I met a woman in the Annet Drive informal settlement who had lost her eight-year-old child because she was working at night, and the child was in the house, and when she came back, there was no home, no community, and everything was flooded. Up until today, that eight-year-old has not been accounted for and has not been found. So, these are very terrible stories that we have encountered in 2022, but that was not an isolated incident because climate change in this province happens every year, in February, March, or April.

In Tongaat, not so long ago, in 2024, we had a devastating tornado that took people's homes, and of course, as we know, last year, we lost six people in Ward 75, next to Umlazi, in an area called Lamontville. A 60-year-old woman who was also taken away by the floods has not been accounted for and has not been found. So these are the experiences that we have on the ground, and of course, people continue to live in flood-prone areas, and this is not because our people do not want to live in these areas, or our people do not want to listen when the government speaks, but it is as a result of our history, the dispossession of land, and the land question that has not been addressed, particularly when it comes to people who come to cities to seek better opportunities.

So, I want to speak on that because there is always an assumption that people who live in these areas along the riverbanks choose to live under these circumstances and it is not the case. But let me just go through my slides. I know that people in the government will be happy to see the logo of Abahlali base Mjondolo together with the eThekwini Municipality. It is a first of its kind. So, the presentation will focus on the partnership that we have

had. We have had a very engaging partnership with the eThekwini Municipality recently.

Before, we have never had such a relationship, because the government has not wanted to engage people on the ground, because it is assumed that when you live in a shack, and you are poor, your state of thinking is the same as the structure that you are living under. People do not recognise that you are even treated as such. We are going to talk about the disasters over the past year in eThekwini Municipality. We are going to talk about the high-risk informal settlements. There are many other settlements. I mean, if you go to an informal settlement in Nhlungwane, people are still living in flood areas.

But the most important thing that we have been engaging with the city of eThekwini is, how do we prepare when a disaster happens? Now we know that next year, in February, March, and April, we must expect a disaster to happen. How do we prepare for that? But then again, what do we do when disaster has struck? That is, during the disaster. But also, the aftermath of a disaster. How do we then allocate people into temporary relocation areas after the disaster has taken place? I mean, I am very grateful that we have a Minister in South Africa who, for the first time, would then say, we take responsibility as the government. And that is what we wanted you to say. A government that says, we want to, wherever there is a need for us to take responsibility and say, this disaster could have been prevented. It could not have gone, the government has to learn from it. So, we are very grateful for that.

Of course, we are going to talk about the disaster response and the relationship that we have had with the previous speaker, with eThekwini Disaster Management, has been a great one. – [*Interjections*] - Am I? It looks like I am going back. Can somebody assist? Oh, this one. Okay, thank you. I mean eThekwini has social movements, NGOs, and academics. We have then decided, out of the 22 devastating floods, that took more than 300 people and displaced 42 000 people from their homes, that we needed to sit down as the citizens of eThekwini, through the academia, the social movement and the non-governmental organisations, sat down together and say, how do we then prepare for the next disaster that is about to happen? Because, colleagues, I must tell you that we have been engaging scientists who, in the years to come, will show that the East Coast of South Africa must prepare for more frequent and more severe, as well as increased heatwaves because of climate change. So, it is not something that has happened, and it is not something that is happening, but it is something that is still going to happen, and that we must prepare for. Of course, out of that, I think the poor and marginalised, particularly those who are living in shack settlements, in the rural areas, in Mthatha, eThekwini, Port St Johns and other areas, are the ones that are at the receiving end. The elites, in most cases, people who are the cause of climate change, because we are in this crisis because of the well-to-do who do not live in areas that are a danger to society in as far as flooding is concerned.

So, we are also going to talk about the challenges that we have had. In the Durban Coalition, we now have what is called the People's Plan, an idea of how to build houses in the times of climate change. And we are happy,

and I know today I am complimenting eThekwini Municipality for the work that they have done. I am happy that the People's Plan, which was engaged at communities, and people have had their say on how we can respond to climate change, has now been part of the integrated development plan of eThekwini Municipality. So, it is part of the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and we are now trying to find the implementing stage.

We are now trying to find the implementing stage. We are very happy with what the eThekwini Municipality has done in as far as ensuring that the People's Plan, which comes from the people, the society itself, guides how to build houses that are resilient to climate change. We are happy about that. We are also working with the budget partnership based in Cape Town who are actually assisting us to prepare for the times when disaster comes. This is civil society working together to ensure that we respond to the issues of climate change, particularly those who are living in the informal settlements because in most cases, those are the people who are not looked into.

The People's Plan includes monitoring and research, evaluation, knowledge sharing, learning from each other and finding solutions as the poor and the marginalised. And this thing of thinking that the poor cannot think for themselves. We are sitting together as the poor, working with academics and scientists to ask: How do we prepare for the next disaster that is about to take place? So, these NGOs are actually giving us the idea of how do we then respond to that. There are many challenges that we have had at eThekwini. One of them, of course, has been the storm water. Sometimes, if you look at what happened in the area where six people died

last year, you can see the consequences of neglect. When the municipality does not collect waste, people end up throwing litter into the river. There would be blockages, preventing the river from flowing properly. Eventually, that water flows back into the community, that causes disaster and carry people away into the river.

We then decided to appoint people in our communities who are going to be stewards to clean these rivers and riverbanks and ensure that we hold the municipality to account, through the urban and solid waste units, to collect waste regularly, even in the informal settlements. This is what happened in 2022. In some of the places like Entlungwana as well as the Quarry Road informal settlements, many houses were washed away in this manner. As you can see, the roof is no longer there. So, imagine the lives of the people who were living there. This is Entlungwana, these were people's homes on the one side, on my right, but there is also a bridge which shows the scale of the infrastructure damage caused by the 2022 floods. Imagine, if a bridge can be washed away, what does that mean for human life, and for the informal settlements built out of wood and so forth?

In that particular area, up until today, there are seven people who are unaccounted for after being washed away. An entire family was washed away and wiped out. And up until today, we still do not know what happened to them because the relatives of that family have not come forward. A family of seven people was washed away and not been accounted for, up until today. That is the devastating results of the floods. Well, this is just giving you the numbers of people who are still living in dangerous areas and people who are affected, particularly in 2022.

Colleagues, what we have done with the City of eThekwini through disaster management, is to try and address the gaps in emergency response. In most cases, government would say that they have their disaster teams on the ground doing their work when there are floods. And as people on the ground, we sometimes see no one there to help save the people who are facing these disasters. We came up with a very unique way of training young people in informal settlements to be stewards , foot soldiers, who can respond and are going to save people. While government officials may try to come into these areas, it is very difficult to drive in the area when there are floods.

There are people in the community that are going to be trained to respond quickly. We then decided that these have champions and foot soldiers who are going to be on the ground will save people's lives. We have identified people who will do community mapping so that people in informal settlements can understand their communities and when they understand their communities, they can identify areas of danger and act, such as relocating people from hazardous zones. There is progress in working together with government in trying to find responses when people are facing danger in their communities. As you can see here, this is a collaboration between the eThekwini Municipality Disaster Management, where communities and foot soldiers are being trained to respond to this disaster. In fact, Palmers Road, next to Quarry Road, is one of the settlements that was heavily affected in 2022. These are officials from the city who are on the ground training our people to respond to whatever may happen next year, because climate change is here. It is not something that is still coming, so

we should not talk about it as if it is something that is still coming.

One of the issues that we have, which is a critique to government and to other services like the South African Weather Service, is the language used to communicate upcoming heavy rains. They use terms like “yellow level five” and so forth, but I do not even understand what that means, with the limited education I have. When you speak to someone in the informal settlement using terms like “yellow level five” and so forth, I do not think that language can be understood by people in informal or rural areas. I think the warnings should be communicated in a language that is clear and understandable to everyone.

There has been a challenge in South Africa of how these things can be communicated. The assumption that everyone has access to internet and cellphones sometimes is a challenge. We need to go out, like before, with loudhailers to warn residents and tell them that they need to evacuate because dangerous weather is coming. We are very happy with the weather forecast system in South Africa, but we think that it is very important that we communicate this in a language that our people on the ground understand.

In closing, I want to also say that there are people who want to engage in assisting in terms of building proper structures for people in informal settlements. Sometimes those people are prevented by government from assisting poor people. For example, we have Toyota South Africa which wanted to roll out ablution toilets in the informal settlements, but we are facing challenges getting approval from the City of eThekwini. We also have the Gift of the Givers, which is a humanitarian organisation that wants to

build houses and assist government, because we believe that there is a need for private and public sector and government to work together with civil society.

When the government does not want to assist the poor and marginalised, we do not know where that will leave us. We hope that through our engagement with the eThekwini Municipality and the government in KwaZulu-Natal, we will be able to roll out that. The private sector has a role to ensure that our people live better lives. I can see that I am running out of time. I just want to say thank you very much for the opportunity for us as the poor, who are coming from an informal settlement, to be able to have this platform to raise issues. I think it is very important that you hear the voice that has not been listened to. I am that voice. Thank you very much. – [*Applause*] -

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY: Thank you very much, Mr. Mohapi. Abahlali baseMjondolo - residents of informal settlements have a voice. They are the voice. They take charge of their destiny but are players in the State collaboration and private sector. The last presenter will be Ms. Dladla, who will reflect the impact of this on farmers. I would again just appeal to your Excellencies to endure the last two engagements. It will be the last presentation. After that, Madam Speaker of the Republic of South Africa would do the vote of thanks. I will announce lunch proceedings and afternoon site visits. Over to you, Ms Dladla.

MS. DHLADLA (AGROECOLOGY DIRECTORATE): Honourable Madam Acting President, Honourable Speaker, Ma'am Didiza, Honourable Secretary-General, Honourable Members present, Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen, I greet you all. I am Lungile Dladla from the Agroecology Directorate. My presentation would be on the small-scale farming community that was affected by the climate change in the 2022 floods, as well as the ongoing impacts. If I can just do a short introduction on who the Agroecology Directorate is.

We are a directorate under eThekwini Municipality that was formally established in 2018 to address food security and food sovereignty through sustainable agroecological farming methods. The vision is to promote agricultural projects that enhance the well-being of citizens. Also, to foster economic development through job creation and manage the environment using resilient and sustainable farming techniques.

We are aligned to quite a number of SDG goals but we focus mainly on the three, 1, 2 and 12 , which are no poverty, zero hunger and responsible consumption and production. We also have a special focus on reducing food loss and food waste along the entire value chain. The Agroecology Directorate currently supports over 500 community gardens and we do not discriminate. We support all communities that are interested in farming. We support vulnerable groups, women, youth and the elderly. The elderly, as I may note, comprise approximately 80% of the community farming projects that we support. We still urge the youth to come through and take part in agricultural activities.

We also support projects that promote local economic growth and employment through sustainable farming practices, as well as initiatives that encourage environmentally friendly farming methods. The support that we provide as the directorate is through infrastructure. We provide fencing,

irrigation systems and storage containers. We also provide production inputs like seeds, seedlings and compost. We provide some mechanisation services, tractors for ploughing and irrigation water delivery systems. We also support, through aquaculture services, where we construct ponds for farmers, provide them with fingerlings, and fish food. That all goes with training as well on how to farm properly and how to take care of the fish. That is the capacity-building side of things. We also do the monitoring and evaluation so that you can see, in terms of fish production, whether you can sell or whether you can take care of the fish and the pond. On your crops, are you able to now move from the sustenance level to the semi-commercial?

Then we move you to the next department, which is agribusiness. We also offer our services through the six regional hubs that we have. They are in Central, North Region, Outer West, South Region, Far North and then we have in the West Region, our main office. The reason why we have these hubs where they are is for ease of access for farmers. We do not want farmers taking taxis to go to the other end of town to seek assistance, so it is easier for them. Some are even within walking distance of the farmers.

Now, if we can go to the impact of climate change on small-scale farmers. We are all aware that climate change significantly harms small-scale farmers through unpredictable weather, which then reduces crop yields and increases food insecurity. The effects also include more frequent droughts, erratic rainfall, high temperatures and increased pests and disease outbreaks. This then disrupts traditional farming practices and seasonal crop scheduling. Now, our farmers cannot plan accordingly as they

used to before. Many farmers also lack resources like expensive irrigation that will help them to adapt in cases of severe weather and droughts. This then makes them more vulnerable to economic hardships and malnutrition. This is the main thing that we are trying to address as the city.

If we can now go to the issue of floods. The floods that took place in eThekwini in 2022 had a devastating and multifaceted impact on small-scale farmers, such that 68 of our community gardens were affected by floods. These 68 are just those that were affected majorly but most of them were affected because their crops could not grow as well as they should. These floods resulted in the destruction of crops, destruction of infrastructure, significant disruption to food security and livelihoods, loss of livestock and financial loss. The food security side or the disruption to food production led to the lack of income because now our farmers cannot sell their produce.

That means there is no money coming in and there is no food because most of our farmers take food from the gardens and then they sell the surplus. Now, they could not do both of those. Then there is infrastructure damage as well. Access roads were damaged, bridges, fences and irrigation systems were severely damaged and it made it difficult for people to access their farms and it made it difficult for their customers to access their farms. It made it difficult for them to now access their local markets where they sell their crops. The soil was degraded. Heavy rains caused soil erosion and nutrient leaching. This reduced soil fertility and the amount of usable land because in some areas, the garden was divided into two and now the people

cannot access all the parts of their land. Their crops were destroyed. They were washed away or they were damaged by waterlogging. All of this led to the financial loss that I indicated earlier because small-scale farmers faced financial losses from which they could not recover due to a lack of capital reserves.

It is also good to know that small-scale farmers are particularly vulnerable to these impacts as they often struggle with pre-existing challenges like limited access to land, water, funding and support systems. Drought is a severe problem within our city. It severely impacts small-scale farmers in eThekwini by reducing crop yields due to crop stress from water scarcity. The reduced crop growth is because of lack of water, which causes low plant growth, then fewer leaves and lower crop production. Also, the increased stress on crops. Drought stress negatively affects plant growth, photosynthesis and reproductive development.

There is also financial hardship. Farmers are impacted because they now face a decline in the amount of produce that they can sell, which leads to lower income, especially for subsistence farmers who rely on selling surplus to neighbours. The challenge now that we encounter as we work with the farmers is that there is no provision for direct financial compensation to farmers for flood losses. At eThekwini, under the Agricultural Directorate, we initiated programmes to repair infrastructure and build resilience. We tried for those who had lost their fences and also the roads leading to the gardens, which were rebuilt. Also, the National and Provincial Flood Relief Programme assisted in making sure that we try and rebuild for the farmers.

The critical need for government-supported crop insurance is one of the challenges that we face. Agroecology also tries to intensify education on heeding early warning signs from weather services and eThekwini Municipality platforms. When we go out and teach, we try to make sure that education on heeding the early warning signs is part of the topics that we incorporate in our training. Also, regarding the issue of improved soil drainage, we try now and intensify that education because it is quite important to make sure that the soil drainage, either in the gardens or around the gardens, is well improved.

Sustainable climate-resilient agricultural practices, as well, we try now to make sure that farmers plant in agroecological practices such as the joint events where we make beds and we make use of mulch so that we decrease the amount of evaporation and we promote that water leaches under instead of flowing over the gardens. We also now collaborate with the Climate Change Office through the DCCP so that you can have a platform where you can sit and discuss and find solutions on how to mitigate climate change factors.

We also now have challenges with community involvement. The municipality's emphasis on community involvement in climate-smart planning as part of its strategy to build more resilient infrastructure and prepare for future disasters is the mitigating factor. We are working with NGOs, other stakeholders from Local Government and any other private sector that has more of what we cannot do or where we cannot reach as the city. In working with those people, we now educate the community on

climate-smart planning, not just for agricultural purposes but for the local communities as well.

We also face the erratic weather patterns, which now force our farmers to plant but with uncertainty of whether they will get the yields that they are expecting. We now also introduce climate-smart agriculture practices so that people can be able to plan and not lose as much of the yield as they did before. The training on water management to address the water management issues, we are promoting water harvesting and we provide those tanks that I mentioned earlier, so that they can store water instead of using tap water. We also have the challenge of extra support. We still need more collaborations with stakeholders to come and provide services that eThekwini cannot, due to the mandates that we have. We are limited in going out and providing support. Government departments, as well as the private sector, who can be able to come and assist, we urge them to come and collaborate with the city in order to provide more support for farmers.

These are some of the pictures that showcase what we are now teaching the farmers on the ground. The effective contouring so that when water comes from the top, it does not just gush down and wash down the plants but it staggers down and it can also leach and be able to be used as irrigation, as well as the raised beds and mulching for water and healthy life of the plants as well. For those who are living in former settlements and have limited space, we are now teaching them how to intensify urban farming techniques. We can now plant in sacks or make use of those boards and planks to make a garden out of nothing, as well as planting along

contour lines to prevent erosion and soil runoff. In between those farms, there is furrowing just to collect water when it rains.

In conclusion, the effects of climate change are visible in rising temperatures, extreme weather events, shifting ecosystems and increased threats to food security, water availability and human health. These impacts remind us that climate change is not a distant problem but a present and growing challenge. By adopting sustainable practices, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, protecting natural resources and strengthening climate resilience, we can still limit the worst outcomes. Climate change demands urgent action from individuals, communities, industries and governments. Thank you.

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY: Thank you very much Ms. Dladla on the measures our cities take to build livelihoods and restore resilient ways of livelihoods to commercial production to improve the quality of lives of people. We have now concluded the presentations and there will be an opportunity for clarifications, contributions and questions on those three areas. The Acting President will deal with this segment and then we conclude thereafter.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Can I have indications? Who else wants to engage? Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, South Africa. Do you want to engage with the presentation or the way you are serious now? What is it? Tell us. Do you want to engage or what because you are very anxious? Speak Mandla! Speak.

HON. MANDLA [SOUTH AFRICA]: Thank you Chair. I just wanted to find out from the Executive of Toyota because of the disaster which

happened to you, to Toyota SA, I guess that there were a lot of issues besides that dam burst, hence the sludge. I guess there was an issue there, the planning itself in that particular area, which I know very well. I am not sure then whether the city council, in terms of what exactly happened, in terms of a zone, zoning that area to be where it is now. It reminds me of the Jones Canyon River in Alexandra. When it is raining, we know that we are going to have a problem. Now, I want to find out from you; to prevent that never to happen again, what steps has the municipality taken to make sure that that disaster does not happen again? Thank you.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Botswana!

HON. MEMBER (BOTSWANA): Thank you very much Madam President and to the presenters for their great presentations. I just wanted to get clarity on Abahlali baseMjondolo. You had indicated that Government was reluctant to be assisted on disaster issues by the private sector. I just wanted to understand whether it is because of the bureaucratic red tape, is it a question of political considerations or is it because sometimes it can comes in the form of help but on Government assessment, it may be something that is not good for the people? I thought you could clarify that.

I agree with you on the need for early warning systems and for the population to be more educated about early warning systems but I am sure you would agree with me that the accuracy of the information is also critical. This is because people need to have confidence in the early warning systems that are put in place because if you warn that there will be floods and then there are no floods, the next time you try and warn people that there will be floods, it may affect how they respond to such situations. I

think technology, such as the drone system that was presented to us before, comes in handy.

The last question relates to Toyota. What has been the observation in South Africa in terms of the response by the insurance industry in terms of underwriting policies? I know there has been a movement to use geospatial analytics to inform how they respond to such things. Do we see the uptake of insurance policies by citizens? How has the response of the insurance sector been in some instances because they have withdrawn from certain areas because they are disaster-prone, not financing or covering certain policies? What has really been the response? I think this is also important in the sense that when disaster strikes, part of the recovery process involves insurance companies. I just wanted to find out how the recent disasters and their frequency have shaped the underwriting policies and other insurance niceties? Thank you very much.

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY: Thank you. Eswatini!

HON. I. MAGAGULA (ESWATINI): Thank you very much Madam, for the opportunity. Just a few questions, if not comments, directed to the representative of baseMjondolo, the informal settlers' community. Well, it is well and good and I agree with them that sometimes when we do the so-called early warnings, we use technical language but then the whole exercise, the whole problem and challenge has to be reciprocal. If we say you are wrongly located wherever you are, how does it come about that there is stubbornness in really relocating or moving away? All you are told and it is frustrating that we have been here, even before you, young men were born. This is where we will die. How can you relocate us? That is the thing that is

causing a problem but we have to sympathise. Otherwise, we have to applaud that there is such an association. Let that association work with the structures and the authorities that be, instead of pointing a finger. That is all I am asking. Let us not point a finger at each other. We have an elephant in the room. We must fight that elephant together. I thank you.

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY: Thank you. South Africa!

HON. MEMBER (SOUTH AFRICA): Madam Chairperson, I take the floor at a bad time. I am fully conscious about that and I have written all the English words that I know for congratulations, including kudos and commendations. I have never been where people like Mr. Moodley and Thapelo Mohapi sit on a panel. I have never seen such. This is the best thing that I have ever seen. I have many questions. I have many ideas but for now, I do not want to remove the good feeling I have in my mind. We are going somewhere. Thank you.

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY: Mr. Moodley, you can respond. There was a very specific question for you.

MR. MOODLEY: Yes, thank you. I think, maybe just a bit of history, the prospecting area in the South of Durban is reclaimed swampland, many, many years ago. Our plant is probably more than 60 years old. So, it has been there for a long while. I think the response of the city has been very good. I mean, there are about seven or eight key initiatives that were put into place after the floods. The Umlazi berm was the first one and it has now been completed. I think a second project has also been completed. I know there are four and that is a work in progress. In fact, the canal just outside and alongside our plant is busy being widened and renovated. I think the

only last big outstanding project is the actual Mandi or the Umlazi Canal itself. I think in response to your question about the response of the city, I think they have been quite responsive in looking at how to make the canal system more resilient.

So far, as the zoning of the area is concerned and the planning survey, I am not too familiar with that. I guess the canal structure was put in place to be able to deal with the actual water flow out of the area. There is some work that still needs to be done and is in progress at the moment. I think we are happy with what we are seeing. I will also address the question at the same time, relating to insurance cover. I think we were fortunate that we were always well covered. We had our insurance companies that came and had a look. There were certain minimum requirements that they now put in place.

Certainly, the cost of cover has gone up. That is for sure but that went up, even before the floods, in terms of all the other issues going on from a climate perspective. I think the key thing was to be able to see that there are improvements being made in the infrastructure. Therefore, we have been working so strongly together with the city to ensure that those mitigation plans are indeed realised. Thank you.

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY: Mr. Tapelo.

MR. TAPELO: Thank you very much for the questions. Let me go directly to the issue. We had Toyota South Africa approaching us, as Abahlali baseMjondolo to actually do a pilot project. The pilot project was to provide ablution blocks in one of the settlements. The research was done, the city sent somebody and we were told there is no budget. Toyota said, no,

there is no need for a budget; we will be providing that. I would not understand why. I mean, one of the reasons was that if you build ablution blocks, the system will not function properly because the ablution blocks that will be built by Toyota were not part of that system that is there. I must say that the matter, of course, has been taken forward to the leadership of the city and the city is now willing to do that. In the future, something of that nature becomes very difficult when the private sector comes on board to assist in the situation that is there. I think we should enhance the relationship between the private sector, Government and civil society so that we can make the lives of the people who are living in informal settlements better. That is where it is now.

The early warning signs have been a very challenging issue. In one of the settlements, in Kwari Road, the University of KwaZulu-Natal, working with the community, came up with very useful early warning signs. People's lives have been saved on Kwari Road, particularly in the 2022 floods. The problem is, when you get an early warning sign, where do you go? That is where the problem is. We struggle with community halls because some of the community halls belong to certain communities and those communities will fight against those who are coming into their areas and so forth. Some of the issues are probably caused by communities that do not want other communities to live among them.

Right now, we have an issue in the city where people who were affected by floods in 2022 were supposed to be allocated in an area next to a middle-class community and the middle-class community said, no, we do not want these people to come here. This is a disaster. In terms of a

disaster, where the country is affected, I think we must all work together, regardless of whether we are poor or rich. I think there is a notion in South Africa of the so-called, not in my backyard, that they do not want the poor people to live amongst them. One of the things that we have made very clear is that it should not be a problem of Government that when they want to relocate people in the land that they own but that land is situated in the middle-class communities in terms of rate-payer association and so forth and these people say, we do not want these; I mean, we still have a crisis in South Africa by the way, I must say, on record because racism is still there.

Those who have previously been advantaged, who benefited from Apartheid, continue to have the power to say that we do not want black people to live amongst us. It is there in Ballito. It is there in Shallcross. It is everywhere else. This becomes a crisis when, in this beautiful land of ours, there are people who think that they are better than others and that those others should not live amongst them. It is something that we should fight against, the so-called, not in my neighbourhood.

Yes, we have challenges when people want to be relocated. People become stubborn. They hold sentimental value in the areas where they are living, and they will say, no, we do not want to be relocated to this. I have always said and people in the city who are here today will tell me, that meaningful engagement is very important. Continue to engage with the people and make people understand why they need to be relocated. Sometimes, officials will come and say, you need to be relocated and so forth and people do not understand. I think this issue of disaster responsiveness, which we do not speak about when climate change is about to strike, let us

speak now, so that we prepare in February. The people who are living in the so-called floodplain areas must be engaged now, so that next year we do not have the very same devastating issue that we had in the years 2019, up until today. We had floods that have taken people's lives.

MR. MOHAPI: If I could just quickly support on one of the comments. I think the question asked about the reluctance of the Government to get involved; our experience during the flood is that we were trying to repair or modify assets that belong to the Government. It is not our asset. There is some governance and legalities around it, where you, as a private business, are trying to effect quick change or modification to assets that do not belong to you. I think in any future policy to deal with a crisis of this nature, we need to find a way to make that a bit more flexible because businesses want to move quickly, Government has got processes that it has to follow and rightfully so. How do we find a happy median where we can both work together? I think that is the challenge we found that the city and the privileged Government were bound by their governance but it was not tailor-made to respond quickly. I think those are some of the challenges we may have to get around. Thank you.

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY: Thank you very much. I would like to hand over to the Acting President for the next final segment of the afternoon.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT (MRS ISAKS): Thank you very much SDP. Before that, let us call Honourable Mama Robele Tebuko and Chief Whip to just hand over tokens of appreciation to our members. After that, the Speaker will then assent to the vote of thanks and after that, there will be

an announcement. So, the two of you only did what I said when I was the Deputy Chairperson. Now you do not listen to me – [*Applause*.] – Let us just give the presenters a final round of applause. They did not know we are going to give them presents but we are giving you presents. That is for you. Stand for the camera – [*Applause*.] – Thank you very much. Can we now welcome the Honourable Speaker of the Parliament of South Africa for the vote of thanks?

THE HON. T. A. DIDIZA [SOUTH AFRICA]: Thank you very much Acting President of SADC and our Vice President, Speakers of the SADC Parliament and Heads of Delegations, Speakers and Deputy Speakers from the South African Legislative Sector, Members of the SADC Parliamentary Forum, Ministers of Gender and Minister of Gender and Youth of Botswana. We did not recognise her yesterday but she is here among us as a full participant and as an MP. Secretary of the South African Parliament and Secretaries of Parliaments of the SADC Region, our Secretary of the SADC Parliamentary Forum, invited guests, ladies and gentlemen.

As we come to the end of this interactive symposium, allow me to extend our appreciation to all the resource people who made this dialogue a success. Your insights were instructive on what we can all do to ensure that we stem the tide of climate change and be better prepared to adapt to the changing environment. What has become clear from all your interventions is that climate change is everybody's business.

Secondly, you affirmed that climate change exacerbates the levels of vulnerabilities for women, youth and people with disabilities. Your inputs

also gave hope that, as a region, we have the capabilities and capacities, which, if deployed, we can work together to increase our level of adaptation.

It also became clear that climate justice propelled through advocacy work remains critical. Harmonisation of policies was also indicated as one of the critical factors that can help us to ensure that we mitigate better because climate change knows no borders. The role of parliamentary diplomacy was also highlighted on how parliaments can actually use their voice in making sure that we advocate for better policies but also as lawmakers, we can leverage our power to have better legislation that creates an enabling environment for citizens, for Government and for the private sector.

Also, the role of technology in mitigation and adaptation and early warning was also emphasised. More so, the power that parliaments have was also highlighted by all the presenters who spoke here, making the recommendations of what can be done. Again, different presenters indicated the important role of engaging with citizens. We had in this last session the private sector, who are our corporate citizens. We have the civil society represented by agroecology, which talked more about the sector of agriculture but also Abahlali baseMjondolo, who also reflected their views on how, in the engagements, we can work together.

I just want to say, Vice President, maybe what Abahlali baseMjondolo have done is to provoke a conversation that must still be heard among civil society. Maybe not Abahlali baseMjondolo in South Africa, but Abahlali, including abaseMjondolo, abasemakhaya nabasemadolobeni. I do think we need a conversation that includes communities across the region who stay

in informal settlements, who stay in rural areas but also those who stay in urban settings. This is because in this conversation, we need to find a way collectively, on how to create better human settlements that can survive climate change. I think that is the goal. I understand Abahlali, the advocacy about the land issue and maybe Speaker of Lesotho must say that Abahlali baseMjondolo and other civil society have been in a number of conversations, including the land question.

I think the Director-General raised the issue of land justice, not from a historical perspective of dispossession alone, which Abahlali were raising but going forward to say, the issue of land justice and how, as traditional leaders, as Governments, we settle our communities in land where they can have land rights but also very secure, becomes important as part of climate mitigation going forward.

Lastly, allow me to thank our presiding table, our Acting President of SADC, and also our secretary, including the Secretary of the South African Parliament, who steered this programme for us. Let me thank the organisers of today's symposium. As I do so, on their behalf, extend their apologies to you. You know that there were some glitches when we started earlier, which related to the logistics but also there might have been challenges where people may not have had better seating arrangements and also maybe from a communication point of view. The organisers asked me to apologise profusely to you that it is not because they undermine you or they do not think we are important guests for the SADC Forum but it is really a weakness that they will strengthen going forward. That has also affected our next programme of excursion, which we would have had. It has affected the

time at which we would have had our lunch. I just want to say, accept their apology with all the humility and still remain with a smile – [*Applause*.] – Thank you very much.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: We want to also thank the one who thanked us. We want to thank her and request the SDP for the announcement.

THE DIRECTOR OF CEREMONY: Thank you very much Madam Acting President and thank you very much Madam Host Speaker, for your kind words. I would like to inform the following esteemed Speakers and distinguished guests to now proceed to the lunch venue. As we exit the door, we move to the right. Our ushers and protocol outside will usher all the delegates. The time is now 1425 until 1525. That will be the lunch hour. We are delayed by an hour. From there, we will proceed to the designated sites and the city of eThekwini takes leadership of that excursion. The site identified is Umdloti. It is a water treatment plant but across it, we will also experience the reflection of the damage that took place around the water floods.

We will go there. There are two buses that will be parked outside in the parking area. Our protocol, right from lunch, will take us to the buses. To the Speakers and Heads of Delegates with designated transport, VIP transport and their security detail, from lunch, they will then be ushered into their respective vehicles to go to the site, as per the established joint command protocol. That will be the schedule after lunch at 1525 hours, into the buses, into the vehicles and the city of eThekwini will take charge of those proceedings.

I have also been asked, esteemed delegates and distinguished Speakers that when there are country reports done tomorrow, the reflection of the interaction of today, as well as on the sites and when countries make a reflection, perhaps they would also make any comments based on what they would have seen there, as a suggestion. That will help us in managing the engagements properly tomorrow. On that note, thank you very much.

The Symposium Session adjourned at 1428 hours.

2 December 2025

0915 hours

Plenary Session

MOMENT OF SILENT PRAYER OR MEDITATION

(THE ACTING PRESIDENT OF SADC PF *in the Chair)*

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE ACTING PRESIDENT OF SADC PF

LANGUAGES AND DOCUMENTATION

EN.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT OF THE SADC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM

[HON. S. E. IZAKS]: Can we have order in the House, please? The Plenary Assembly Session proceedings will be in the three official languages: English, French and Portuguese. Furthermore, all documents are accessible on the portal, which the Secretariat provided to all delegations through desk officers, in accordance with the paperless policy.

NEW MEMBERS

HON. S. E. IZAKS: I have received communication from Member Parliaments submitting the names of new members designated to the SADC-PF pursuant to Article 8 of the SADC-PF Constitution. In this regard, the new Members are required to take either an oath or an affirmation of adherence, in accordance with Article 8(4) of the SADC-PF Constitution.

I will invite the Secretary-General to administer either the oath or affirmation of adherence to the following new Members: from Angola, the Hon. Speaker, Almeida and Hon. Kakuna; Botswana, Hon. Speaker, Keorapetse. Apology, Hon. Members, we will continue. We have started to announce the names of those who will take the oath or affirmation. And from Malawi, it will be the Hon. Speaker Sameer Suleman, Hon. Banda, Hon. Peter Dimba, Abigail Bongwe, Francis Piso and Mary Kembo. From Mauritius, it will be Hon. Venkatasamy, Hon. Beechook, Hon. Colette and Hon. Edward. From Mozambique, it will be the Hon. Speaker Talapa; and from Namibia, Hon. Paula Kooper, John Likando, and Nelson Kalangula. From the Seychelles, it is Hon. Speaker Ernesta.

Secretary-General, I will now invite you to allow the Members to take the oath or affirmation.

ADMINISTRATION OF OATH OR AFFIRMATION OF ADHERENCE

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL [MS. B. SEKGOMA] administered the oath or affirmation of adherence to the following Hon. Members:

Angola:
Hon. Speaker, Adão de Almeida; and
Hon. Lazaro de Oliveira G. Kakunha
Botswana:
Hon. Speaker Dithapelo L. Keorapetse.
Malawi:
Hon. Speaker Sameer Suleman,

Hon. William Susuwere Banda,
Hon. Peter Dimba,
Hon. Abigail Sharif Bongwe, and
Hon. Mary Maulidi Khembo
Mauritius:
Hon. Venkatasamy,
Hon. Beechook,
Hon. Colette, and
Hon. Edward.
Mozambique:
Hon. Speaker Margarida Adamugi Talapa,
Namibia:
Hon. Paula A. Kooper,
Hon. Nelson Tuhafeni Kalangula, and
Hon. John Musialela Likando
Seychelles:
Hon. Speaker Azarel Jolinda Ernesta.

WELCOMING OF NEW SPEAKERS

HON. S. E. IZAKS: Thank you very much, Secretary. I also want to congratulate all the newly affirmed members who have taken the oath. You are more than welcome to the SADC Parliamentary Forum. We will continue.

Hon. Members, it is now my honour to inform the Plenary of the recent leadership transitions within several of our member Parliaments. As I announce the new Speakers, I kindly request each Speaker to rise as their name is called so that the Plenary Assembly can formally welcome them. Angola, I am pleased to announce the election of Hon. Speaker Adao Francisco Correia Adão de Almeida as Speaker of the National Assembly of Angola. Hon. Speaker? – [*Applause*]

We also extend our profound appreciation to the former Speaker, Hon. Cerqueira, for her dedicated service to the SADC-PF and to regional parliamentary cooperation. We wish her every success in her future endeavours.

I am now pleased to announce the election of Hon. Speaker Dithapelo Keorapetse as Speaker of the National Assembly of Botswana. – [*Applause*] We extend our profound appreciation to the former Speaker, Hon. Phandu Tombolo Chaka Sikelemani, for his dedicated service to the SADC-PF and to the regional parliamentary cooperation. We wish him every success in his future endeavours.

I am further pleased to announce the election of Hon. Speaker Sameer Suleman as Speaker of the National Assembly of Malawi. – [*Applause*]

We extend our profound appreciation to the former Speaker, Hon. Catherine Gotani Hara, for her dedicated service to the SADC-PF and to regional parliamentary cooperation. We wish her every success in her future endeavours.

I am further pleased to announce the election of Hon. Speaker Margarida Adamugi-Talapa as Speaker of the National Assembly of Mozambique. – [*Applaus*e] - Welcome, Hon. Speaker.

We extend our profound appreciation to the former Speaker, Hon. Esperanca Bias, for her dedicated service to the SADC-PF and to regional parliamentary cooperation. We wish her every success in her future endeavours.

I am now pleased to announce the election of Hon. Speaker Azarel Ernesta as Speaker of the National Assembly of Seychelles. – [*Applause*]

We also want to extend our profound appreciation to the former Speaker, Hon. Roger Mancienne, for his dedicated service to the SADC-PF and to regional parliamentary cooperation. We wish him every success in his future endeavours.

To all newly elected speakers, we want to welcome you to the SADC-PF family. We look forward to your guidance, leadership, and active engagement as we advance our shared regional agenda.

May I also kindly request each of you to convey to your predecessors our most profound appreciation for their long-standing service, contribution, and solidarity with the work of this Forum. We wish our former Speakers the very best in their new endeavours and we extend our wholehearted congratulations to our new colleagues. I thank you.

APOLOGIES RECEIVED FROM MEMBER PARLIAMENTS

HON. S. E. IZAKS: We have received apologies from the Parliament of Tanzania.

UPDATE ON SADC PARLIAMENT AGREEMENT

HON. S. E. IZAKS: Let me just update Members on the SADC Parliament Agreement. Since the updates provided during the 56th and 57th Plenary Assemblies, where it was reported that 12 Member States had signed the agreement amending the SADC Treaty (EN | FR | PT). to establish the SADC Parliament, that the agreement entered into force on 11 July 2024, and that Botswana became the 13

All Hon. Members observed a moment of silence.

Thank you very much. May his soul find eternal peace.

COMMEMORATION OF THE 16 DAYS OF

ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

HON. S. E. IZAKS: Hon. Members, I wish to bring to the attention of this august Assembly that our 58th Plenary Assembly is convening during the global campaign of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based

Violence, which runs annually from 25 November to 10 December. This year, the campaign is being observed under the theme "*Unite, Invest to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls*". This coincidence is both meaningful and instructive. It reminds us that the struggle to eliminate gender-based violence is not an abstract aspiration but a moral, political and legislative imperative for every Parliament represented in this Forum.

Hon. Members, let us also recommit ourselves to the fight against gender-based violence, which continues to undermine the dignity, safety and human potential of millions of women and girls across our region. In commemoration of the 16 Days of Activism, I invite Members to reflect this commitment in your interventions during our debates, ensuring that gender justice remains at the centre of our policy and legislative priorities standing in solidarity with survivors of gender-based violence by raising awareness within your parliamentary delegations and constituencies and champion the domestication and implementation of the SADC-PF Model Laws on Gender-Based Violence and on eradicating child marriage as concrete actions flowing from this campaign. I thank you.

PROCEDURE TO FOLLOW DURING DEBATE

HON. S. E. IZAKS: Hon members, let me remind the House of the procedure to follow whenever you want to speak on any matter. A Member wishing to speak should raise the country's name tag. I will then recognise the Hon. Member by country. The Member will then switch on the microphone to introduce themselves before speaking. No Member should switch on the microphone before they are given the floor to speak. Hon.

Members, for the sake of precise verbatim recording, you are reminded to always introduce yourself with your name and country whenever you are granted the floor to speak.

Members are reminded to adhere to the five-minute allocated time when speaking. I will now hear from the Members. Are there any notices of motion? Remember to raise your country tag. There is Lesotho, Eswatini, Lesotho, Angola, Eswatini again, Zambia, Lesotho, there are three from Lesotho. There is one, two, three. Zambia two, Eswatini, Eswatini, Angola, Eswatini and Mozambique.

Not there. And who is there? I cannot see. Is it Eswatini? Lesotho. Okay, it is fine, we have three from Lesotho and Mozambique. Who is there? Jele is from? We have Eswatini, Jele, yes? Sure. So, I will begin with Lesotho and I will request the Hon. Speaker Sekamane to speak.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

HON. T. SEKAMANE [LESOTHO]: Hon. Madam Vice-President, thank you. I give notice that today, Tuesday, 2nd December 2025, I shall move that the 58th Plenary Assembly do adopt the report of the Executive Committee on Policy and Administrative Matters.

HON. DR. P. R. MALAMULELA [LESOTHO]: Thank you, Hon. President. I give notice that today, Tuesday, 2nd December 2025, I shall move that the 58th Plenary Assembly do adopt the report of the Executive Committee on Financial Matters of the SADC Parliamentary Forum, the Treasurer's Report.

HON. I. MAGAGULA [ESWATINI]: Thank you, Chair. I give notice that on Wednesday, 3rd December 2025, I shall move that the 58th Plenary Assembly do adopt the report of the Standing Committee on Democratisation, Governance and Human Rights. I so submit, Madam President.

HON. N. B. K. K. MUTTI [ZAMBIA]: Thank you very much, Madam President. I give notice that on Wednesday, 3rd December 2025, I shall move that the 58th Plenary Assembly do adopt the report on the 151st Inter-Parliamentary Union, IPU, Assembly and other related meetings held from 19 to 23 October 2025 in Geneva, Switzerland.

HON. DR. L. NXUMALO [ESWATINI]: Thank you Madam President, for the opportunity. I, Senator Dr. Linda Lorraine Nxumalo, do give notice that on Thursday, 4th December 2025, I shall move that the 58th Plenary Assembly do adopt the report of the Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus on Strengthening SADC Women's Parliamentarians' Leadership on Climate Change. I so submit.

HON. RUTH ADRIANO MENDES (ANGOLA): Muito obrigada Senhora Presidente em exercício. Por esta via, notifico que no dia 3 de Dezembro de 2025, quarta-feira, apresentarei a Moção que a 58ª Assembleia Plenária adopte o Relatório da Comissão Permanente do Comércio, Indústria, Finanças e Investimento.
Submeto.

HON. M. KHATI [LESOTHO]: Thank you very much, Madam President. I have two notices of motions, so please bear with me, as after one presentation, I will move on to the next.

I give notice that on Wednesday, 3rd December 2025, I shall move that the 58th Plenary Assembly do adopt the report on the Standing Committee on Human and Social Development and Special Programmes.

I also give notice that on Thursday, 4th December, I shall move that the 58th Plenary Assembly do adopt the report on the Joint Sitting of the Standing Committees.

HON. C. KASANDA [ZAMBIA]: Thank you Madam President. I have two notices.

I give notice that on Wednesday, 3rd December 2025, I shall move that the 58th Plenary Assembly do adopt the report of the Regional Parliamentary Model Laws Oversight Committee on Benchmarking for Impact, Domestication of Model Laws for Transformative Change.

I also give notice that on Thursday, 4th December 2025, I shall move that the 58th Plenary Assembly do adopt the report of the Standing Committee on Gender Equality, Women Advancement and Youth Development.

HON. S. JELE [ESWATINI]: Thank you, Madam President. I give notice that on Wednesday, the 3rd of December 2025, I shall move that the 58th Plenary Assembly do adopt the report of the Standing Committee on Food, Agriculture, Natural Resources and Climate Action. I so submit.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT [HON. S. E. IZAKS]: I will now call the Secretary to read the first order of the day.

PRESENTATION OF COUNTRY REPORTS ON THE PROGRESS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF PREVIOUS PLENARY ASSEMBLY POLICY

DECISIONS AND RESOLUTIONS AS CONTAINED IN THE VERBATIM RECORDS AND SUMMARY OF RESOLUTIONS.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: I will now invite the heads of delegation to present their countries' reports. Each head of a delegation will have 15 minutes to present the report to make the most of our time. I will open the floor for debate after all countries have presented their reports. So, we will now call the countries in alphabetical order to present their country reports. And we will start with Angola.

PT.

HON. PEDRO SEBASTIÃO (ANGOLA): Excelência Senhora Vice-Presidente do Fórum Parlamentar da SADC

Excelências Senhores Presidentes e Chefes de Delegação dos Parlamentos Nacionais

Senhores Deputados

Senhora Secretária-Geral do Fórum Parlamentar da SADC

Minhas Senhoras e Meus Senhores

Em representação de Sua Excelência Presidente da Assembleia Nacional da República de Angola, Dr. Adão de Almeida, tenho a honra de apresentar o Relatório Nacional sobre a aplicação das Resoluções aprovadas durante a 57ª Sessão da Assembleia Plenária do Fórum Parlamentar da SADC.

A Sessão realizada de 31 de Maio a 7 de Junho, em Vitória Falls, República do Zimbabwe decorreu sob o lema "Tirar partido da Inteligência Artificial para os Processos Parlamentares Eficazes e Eficientes na Região da

SADC: Experiências, Desafios e Oportunidades" produzi um conjunto de Resoluções em diferentes domínios.

Relativamente à transformação do Fórum Parlamentar da SADC em Parlamento regional, a República de Angola reitera a sua convicção de uma SADC democrática, coesa e legitimada junto dos seus cidadãos, exige um Parlamento regional forte, independente e funcional. Por essa razão, Angola defende, inequivocamente, a transformação do Fórum Parlamentar em Parlamento Regional dotado de autonomia política e funcional plena, capacidade de fiscalização das políticas regionais, poder de iniciativa legislativa em matérias de integração e participação activa na definição das prioridades estratégicas da organização.

Após análise do Projecto de Protocolo para transformação do Fórum Parlamentar Regional, Angola concluiu que o documento respeita o princípio do gradualismo e os poderes previstos para a fase inicial pelo que se manifesta favorável a sua aprovação.

Registamos, ainda, com satisfação, os progressos na modernização administrativa do órgão, destacando-se a criação de um corpo técnico qualificado, importa referir que Angola já assinou o Projecto de Protocolo e remeteu o instrumento ao Secretariado Executivo da SADC em Gaberone.

No âmbito do Projecto Saúde, Direitos Sexuais e Reprodutivos, VIH e SIDA e Governação, a Assembleia Nacional realizou 23 actividades alinhadas aos objectivos estratégicos, incluindo sessões parlamentares de sensibilização, visitas de supervisão pedagógica e transformadora de género às diversas unidades de saúde, campanhas de advocacia e reuniões técnicas com parceiros de desenvolvimento.

Essas iniciativas têm produzido impactos expressivos, beneficiando, sobretudo, crianças, adolescentes, mulheres, jovens em risco e pessoas vivendo com VIH e SIDA.

Registam-se avanços na prevenção da gravidez precoce, no reforço dos serviços de saúde, direitos sexuais e reprodutivos, na formação comunitária, na aproximação entre o Parlamento e os cidadãos e na promoção da igualdade do género.

Destacam-se, também, o lançamento da campanha da erradicação do casamento e gravidez precoce, *workshops* em escolas e as brigadas móveis numa província que ampliaram significativamente o acesso a informação e a serviços essenciais.

No domínio das alterações climáticas e do desenvolvimento sustentável, Angola reconhece os impactos adversos que afectam a segurança alimentar, os recursos naturais e a resiliência das comunidades. O país reafirma o seu compromisso com a Convenção Quadro das Nações Unidas sobre alterações climáticas, o Acordo de Paris e outros instrumentos internacionais e regionais pertinentes.

Como Estado altamente vulnerável, Angola enfrenta secas prolongadas no Sul, cheias no litoral e… (*inaudível*) hidrográficos, erosão costeira, perda de biodiversidade e riscos da segurança hídrica e energética.

Para responder a estes desafios, reforçamos o quadro estratégico com a Estratégia Nacional para as Alterações Climáticas 2022-2035. Em paralelo, diversos projectos de mitigação e adaptação foram desenvolvidos, incluindo a segunda fase do projecto de carvão vegetal, o plantio de milhares de árvores, capacitação comunitária e fortalecimento da gestão de resíduos.

No sector energético, destacam-se investimentos consideráveis de milhões de dólares desde 2023 visando alcançar 50% de electrificação e 72% das energias renováveis na matriz nacional.

No sector dos minerais críticos e da indústria mineral, Angola está a implementar reformas estruturais importantes, incluindo a revisão da Lei de actividades geológicas e minerais. A criação de regulamentação específica para terras raras e o aperfeiçoamento da cadeia de comercialização de diamantes com leilões internacionais e melhoria da rastreabilidade em alinhamento com as melhores práticas internacionais.

No domínio da paz, segurança e cooperação regional, Angola tem desempenhado um papel activo na mediação de conflitos na região da SADC e nos Grandes Lagos com destaque para o seu envolvimento em processos diplomáticos no leste da República Democrática do Congo.

Para o seu compromisso com a estabilidade regional, Sua Excelência o Presidente da República de Angola, João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, evidencia o contributo do país para a segurança continental, no exercício das suas funções como Presidente da União Africana, o Chefe de Estado tem liderado iniciativas de pacificação, incluindo mediações no Sahel, Sudão e RDC.

O país participa activamente na força em estado de alerta na SADC e reforça a cooperação no combate ao terrorismo, tráfico de seres humanos, criminalidade transnacional.

A Assembleia Nacional aprovou Resoluções de ratificação de Acordos com o Zimbabwe sobre transferência de pessoas condenadas e assistência judiciária mútua.

Os Parlamentares angolanos têm igualmente participado em diversas missões de paz e observação eleitoral.

Minhas Senhoras e Meus Senhores

Angola conhece a importância da inclusão dos jovens na actividade parlamentar especialmente no âmbito do Fórum Parlamentar da SADC considerando que constituem uma parcela significativa da população e são essenciais para promover a inovação e o dinamismo legislativo.

O País tem avançado na paridade de género com mais de 30% dos assentos parlamentares ocupados por mulheres e crescente presença feminina no Executivo e nas administrações locais.

No que respeita ao combate ao tráfico dos seres humanos, Angola reafirma o seu compromisso para com o Protocolo de Palermo ratificado através da Resolução número 21/10, promovendo formações e troca de informações.

O país reconhece, igualmente, os impactos negativos resultantes da redução de financiamentos externos, o que aumentou a pressão sobre os orçamentos nacionais no domínio da saúde, especialmente num contexto de custos crescentes de medicamentos e vacinas, em resposta, Angola tem reforçado o investimento interno.

O Sistema Nacional de Saúde dispõe actualmente de 3355 unidades sanitárias mais de 44 000 camas sendo 1609 de cuidados intensivos, 35 centros de hemodiálise e 87 laboratórios públicos.

Foram mobilizados milhões de doses de vacina contra a cólera e reabilitados laboratórios em todo o território nacional.

Nos últimos 18 meses entraram em funcionamento hospitais de grande porte em várias províncias, fortalecendo significativamente a capacidade nacional.

No sector da Educação, Angola continua a expandir e qualificar o sistema educativo, para o ano lectivo 2025-2026 mais de 9,6 milhões de alunos estão matriculados apoiados por mais de 208 000 professores e mais de 126 000 salas de aulas.

O Governo está a executar um programa especial de educação com incidência municipal financiado com largos milhões de dólares destinados a construção e a reabilitação de escolas e a formação profissional.

O Programa Nacional de merenda escolar será igualmente implementado prevendo atender mais de 5 milhões de alunos, contribuindo para o aumento da taxa do sucesso escolar.

Em alinhamento com a Conferência Nacional sobre o capital humano decorre a harmonização curricular e o incentivo a expansão de cursos nas áreas das ciências, tecnologias e engenharias, artes e matemática adequando a formação às necessidades do mercado.

No domínio da protecção social destaca-se o Programa Kwenda aprovado por Decreto Presidencial com um orçamento total de milhões de dólares destinados a fortalecer a protecção social por via de transferências monetárias directas, inclusão produtiva e geração de renda em conformidade com o plano nacional de desenvolvimento 2022-20…

(*inaudível*)

Excelências

Senhoras e Senhores

A República de Angola continua empenhada na harmonização da legislação nacional às leis-modelo da SADC e a implementação de compromissos regionais.

O país tem aperfeiçoado os seus instrumentos legais, incluindo a aprovação da Lei da Sustentabilidade das Finanças Públicas alinhadas às normas regionais, reforçando a transparência, a disciplina fiscal e a previsibilidade orçamental.

No domínio eleitoral foram aprovadas reformas que fortalecem o quadro legal, garantindo maior robustez, credibilidade e alinhamento com os princípios da SADC.

Trata-se de um passo importante para consolidar a democracia e assegurar processos eleitorais livres, justos e inclusivos. Por isso, reiteramos o nosso compromisso, enquanto membros activos do Fórum Parlamentar da SADC, de continuar a cumprir com responsabilidade as metas de integração regional, contribuindo para uma SADC cada vez mais forte, unida e desenvolvida.

Muito obrigado. – *Aplausos*

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Botswana.

EN.

HON. D. KEORAPETSE [BOTSWANA]: Thank you very much, Madam President. Let me begin on a humble note of piety and recognise you all, especially you, Madam President, the host Speaker, Hon. Angela Thoko Didiza, fellow Speakers, the Secretary-General of the Southern African Development Community, Parliamentary Forum (SADC-PF) and your esteemed staff, Members of Parliament and dear colleagues, good morning

once again. This morning, I took the oath for the third time in this Forum, a Forum which I have served for nearly a decade now. Therefore, it is my singular honour and privilege to present the report to the 58th Plenary Assembly on the implementation of resolutions of the 57th Plenary Assembly session.

Let me begin with a background that Botswana, for 58 years, has been a country governed by one single party. It had turned into a de facto one-party State. Despite this status of being a de facto one-party State, it is a country that has maintained a multiparty democratic dispensation since independence. It has never backslidden to an undemocratic system. It has an impeccable record that we are proud of. It has an unbeaten record in the Sub-Saharan African region. - *[Applause]* - Thank you.

Last year, for the first time, the former ruling party lost an election to a former opposition party, which is now the ruling party. Therefore, what is going on now, currently, in the country is a work of transformation, democratic transformation and economic transformation. Much of this report really is about that transformation.

I wish to emphasise that Botswana recognises the importance of tracking implementation of the Plenary resolutions as they serve as a roadmap for parliamentary commitment and action to affirm the need for multifaceted efforts that encompass gender inclusivity, cross-border cooperation, sustainable practices and capacity building. By addressing these issues, Botswana became more responsive to the needs of the masses, particularly in the context of rapid social change and technological disruptions.

I must say, Madam President, that we can only achieve collectively, the transformation that we seek as the region and build amongst citizens and our communities while strengthening democratic governance structures. Now, on the resolution of the symposium on the theme of the 57th Plenary Assembly, harnessing artificial intelligence, AI, for effective and efficient parliamentary process in the SADC region: experiences, challenges and opportunities. We have made progress both at the policy and developmental levels. Although technical development in the field of AI has advanced well, we still require improvement in our policies. The Ministry of Communication and Innovation is in the process of developing an AI policy, which will be brought before Parliament soon. The policy is aimed at making the government process more agile and efficient.

In August 2025, our Parliament passed the Cybersecurity Bill, which has since been enacted into law. Parliament of Botswana is on a transformative journey to become a responsive engine of change and in an endeavour to attain this, we have devised an environmental, social and governance strategy. The strategy seeks to, among others, significantly reduce Parliament's carbon footprint through embracing modern, efficient digital practices. For example, Parliament streamlines all its proceedings when it is sitting. We aim to livestream all our parliamentary committees and currently, we have been streamlining only the Public Accounts Committee.

Starting in January, we will be trying to move fast to a paperless Parliament in which we will no longer be printing Order Papers, Notice Papers, you know, all those reports, Hansard, everything will now be digital.

On the resolution on adoption of the report of the Standing Committee on Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment, Madam President, we are required to ensure that an adequate budget is appropriate for the government departments. On that note, in line with the discussion on the Prison Service, the government, in trying to transform, has changed the name of the department from Prison Service to the Ministry of Justice and Correctional Services in line with the fact that the incarcerated need to be rehabilitated. Therefore, it is a corrective justice that we emphasise.

The Prison Service launched the gender-based violence (GBV), perpetrators programme that enrolled 1 211 inmates since April 2024. This programme is aimed at combating gender-based violence. Reintegration has also been a key focus, with so far 522 Community-Based Reintegration Committees having been established nationwide and these efforts have supported 317 ex-offenders, with 167 having secured employment in various sectors of the economy, thereby contributing meaningfully to the economy but also with a reduction in recidivism and improved community participation.

Now on the Food, Agriculture, Natural Resource and Climate Action Standing Committee, it is the intention of the Government of Botswana to budget for agriculture in line with the Malabo Declaration, in which 10% of the budget goes to agriculture.

The President has unveiled an ambitious programme of A Di Tsale. This A Di Tsale basically is about the need to increase our cattle population, which was once at more than three million and now stands at about 1,7 million and the idea is to push the numbers to five million because prior to

independence, our mainstay of the economy was beef production, which was agriculture. Agriculture contributed more than 60% to the gross domestic product (GDP) but currently it contributes a paltry less than 3% and the intention is to push beef production.

You know, we have the best beef among the SADC region and in the world; we pride ourselves as among the best beef producers but also in arable agriculture, there is also the Lemang Dijo Programme, which also, you know, seeks to encourage farmers. Recently, the Ministry of Lands and Agriculture has announced a programme to help communal farmers so that, per hectare, they will be assisted by the government.

We also intend to embark on an accelerated programme of plantation of industrial hemp. Remember that Botswana, geographically, is big, slightly the size of Texas or France, 580 000 square kilometres of land but inhabited by just about 2,4 million people. Therefore, we need to use this land for arable purposes and for farming purposes to improve our economy but also to contribute towards food security in the region. Therefore, in that regard, there is a law that has been enacted by Parliament on the cultivation of hemp but also on medicinal marijuana. Those are some of the priority areas of the current government

On the resolution on adoption of the report on the Standing Committee on Democratisation Governance and Human Rights, President Advocate Duma Gideon Boko, in his inaugural speech, indicated that his government will be a human rights-based government. As a result, there is a commitment to a holistic review of the Constitution of the Republic of Botswana. Since independence, we still have that Constitution that was

donated by our colonial masters. We amended it 23 times but we need a holistic review of the Constitution. We have been drawing lessons from South Africa. Recently, we had Ambassador Bridgitte Mabandla, who came to share with us the insights on the constitutional development in South Africa and we have been drawing lessons from countries such as Kenya, Zambia and Zimbabwe on the review of the Constitution. The Constitution will form the backdrop of our democratic governance and human rights agenda.

Parliament yesterday adopted the Bill. I think the Bill is at a second reading stage, on the establishment of the Constitutional Court, which will, after a review of the Constitution, will satisfy the Constitution but also serve as a superior court of record. For 58 years, 59 now, we have had the Court of Appeal as the Superior Court of Record. But there were limitations that were identified. This is why now there is the establishment of the Constitutional Court so that it serves as a superior court of record but also, on constitutional matters, it can serve as a court of first instance.

There is a plethora of legislation that will be coming through to Parliament for consideration and possible adoption. On the reform of institutions that support democracy, like your supreme audit institution, your public protector or ombudsman, the human rights commission, your anticorruption agency, your electoral management body and other key institutions that support democracy; this is part of the democratic transformation in moving towards democratic consolidation.

On the resolution on adoption of the report on the Standing Committee on Gender Equality, Women's Advancement and Youth Development, I am pleased to inform you once again that I am here accompanied by our Minister of Youth and Gender Affairs, the youngest Minister on the continent. Not so long ago, she was reigning Miss World Africa and Miss Botswana. - [*Applause*] -I do not know if you can see her. She is a tall lady, there she is. She is hiding behind that pillar.

Mama Didiza, I lost my position as the youngest Speaker in the SADC region to the right Hon. Speaker Azarel Ernesta from the Seychelles. Congratulations to her! - [*Applause*] -

Botswana is a signatory to the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development (EN | FR | PT). The protocol, as you know, aims to empower women, eliminate discrimination and promote gender equality. Approximately 67% of women have experienced gender-based violence at least once in their lives in our country. This number translates to more than double the global average and gender-based violence in Botswana remains a hefty challenge to our nation's moral fabric and social stability. We have problems with rape. While our support systems and legal frameworks are in place to address the cultural stigma surrounding gender-based violence, the government continues to engage in community involvement and awareness-raising initiatives to combat this pervasive issue. Through the Ministry of Youth and Gender, they will be presenting a youth policy soon after it is adopted by Cabinet, hopefully tomorrow, if not next week. The expectation is that it will be considered for adoption by Parliament. The gender-based

violence law, which is aligned to the SADC model law, will also be coming to Parliament soon for consideration.

I am pleased to further report that the President of Botswana, Advocate Duma Gideon Boko, Senior Counsel, SC, in his recent State of the Nation Address, assured the nation that the government is reviewing the national strategy towards ending GBV and the strategy will infuse emerging issues and trends as well as adopt a human rights approach to the provision of services. Efforts are also underway to establish GBV One Stop Service centres to provide comprehensive services for survivors of the scourge.

In relation to that, we also have the problem of substance abuse by our young people. We have been trying to divert part of the revenues, especially from sin taxes, towards building rehabilitation centres for our young people so that they can have a second chance in life.

Around the resolution on the report of the Standing Committee on Human and Social Development and Special Programmes, I am happy to report that in the last 12 months, the government has increased the old age pension from 850 pula to 1 400 pula, to ensure our elders live with dignity and financial security. In addition to boosting incomes and job security, we have embarked on a 4 000 pula living wage. We are moving towards a living wage policy instead of a minimum wage policy. On cost-of-living relief, the government has implemented a 30% reduction on water and electricity in recognition that these are essential to life, their rights and that our people have to have access. This is alongside the 50% amnesty on previous water debts to ease financial pressure on households.

We also have the accelerated delivery of a housing scheme called Bonno akin to your RDP. We are accelerating that as well. Again, most importantly, the government has launched an initiative to fight period poverty by providing school-going girls with free sanitary pads in schools. This was not the practice in the past. It is now a practice in Botswana that in schools, sanitary pads and related products will be provided. - [*Applause*.]

In terms of our Constitution, there are two official languages, that is Setswana, which is predominantly spoken especially in the central and southern parts of the country. But now our State media broadcasts news and programmes in more languages. Most of the languages that are widely spoken are now included. We are still counting on the languages that were previously disadvantaged in official engagements.

In conclusion, I think the report will be entered into the record of our proceedings to say that the government intends to come up with a national health insurance scheme that will encompass all citizens who are excluded from the medical aid schemes that are currently in place. We are also challenged in the sense that our economy has, for a very long time, relied on diamonds and you know what has been happening with diamonds, especially with the tariffs. We managed to negotiate from 37% to 15% with the US. But challenges are still there. Our aim, really, as Botswana is to transform Botswana into a modern, high-performing economy and also to get on the path of democratisation, moving towards democratic consolidation. I thank you for your kind attention. - [*Applause*] –

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Thank you. We go to DRC.

FR.

HON. HON. CLEMENT MUYA MOBOYAYI [DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO]: Honorable Président du Forum Parlementaire de la SADC ;

Madame la Présidente de l'Assemblée nationale de la République d'Afrique du Sud ;

Madame la Secrétaire Générale du Forum Parlementaire de la SADC ;

Honorables parlementaires et chers collègues ;

Distingués invités ;

Tout protocole observé ;

D'entrée de jeu, je m'en vais me débarrasser d'un devoir, celui de transmettre les chaleureuses salutations du Président de la République Démocratique du Congo, **Son Excellence Félix-Antoine TSHISEKEDI**, qui a transmis ses salutations non seulement au Forum Parlementaire de la SADC, mais aussi à toutes les autorités de la République d'Afrique du Sud.

Et aussi, je vais me débarrasser d'un agréable devoir, celui de remercier la République d'Afrique du Sud et surtout la distinguée Présidente de l'Assemblée nationale pour l'hospitalité légendaire.

Notre présentation de ce jour tient des recommandations de la 57ème Assemblée plénière du FP SADC, tenue à Victoria Falls City, au Zimbabwe. Il tient et contient 7 points essentiels que sont : l'incidence des droits de douane sur le commerce dans les États membres de la SADC, l'initiative de réformes relatives à l'extraction et à la distribution de minéraux critiques, la solidité du cadre démocratique pour garantir la continuité et le

fonctionnement des parlements, l'examen du Protocole eu égard aux modalités de fonctionnement du Parlement de la SADC, l'intégration des jeunes membres dans les délégations nationales auprès du Forum Parlementaire de la SADC, les violations de la Charte africaine des droits de l'homme et des peuples et enfin l'augmentation des coûts pour les services de soins de santé.

Honorables Parlementaires, chers collègues,

Distingués invités,

La mise en œuvre de la législation sur la Zone de libre-échange continentale africaine (ZLECAF) est en cours en République Démocratique du Congo, en impliquant une intégration progressive par la suppression des droits de douane, l'amélioration des infrastructures et l'harmonisation des politiques publiques. La République Démocratique du Congo a signé l'accord en 2018 et l'a ratifié en 2021-2022. Des mesures législatives spécifiques ont été prises notamment avec la mise en place du Comité National de Mise en Œuvre (CN-ZLECAF) par ordonnance présidentielle de juillet 2021. Le pays s'est engagé à supprimer les droits de douane sur 6 230 produits d'ici 2031.

Ainsi pour la RDC, une mise œuvre progressive et engagée de son intégration dans la ZLCAF est satisfaisante d'autant plus qu'elle se fonde principalement sur la suppression des tarifs douaniers.

Sa position géographique unique signifie également qu'elle pourrait servir de pont pour relier les quatre blocs économiques régionaux - CDAA, CAE, CEEAC et COMESA au reste de l'Afrique.

Je ne peux terminer ce chapitre sur ce point sans paraphraser le Président de la République, **Son Excellence Felix-Antoine TSHISEKEDI**

qui dit, je cite: **“Nous ne pouvons pas achever le processus aujourd'hui, mais nous avons décidé de rassembler nos énergies et nos forces pour créer une zone d'accord de libre-échange qui aidera les Africains à renforcer le commerce en Afrique”**

Concernant le secteur minier, la République Démocratique du Congo (RDC) occupe une place stratégique dans l’économie nationale. La richesse du pays en minerais tels que le cobalt, le cuivre, le coltan, le diamant et l’or en fait un acteur majeur sur le marché mondial des matières premières. Pourtant, malgré ce potentiel considérable, l’exploitation minière en RDC a longtemps été marquée par des déséquilibres structurels : faibles retombées économiques pour l’État, non-respect des normes environnementales, exploitation informelle et conflits sociaux récurrents.

L’analyse du droit minier en République Démocratique du Congo révèle une ambition réformatrice majeure à travers le Code minier de 2018, visant à maximiser les recettes fiscales, à renforcer la gouvernance et à mieux protéger les communautés locales. Cette réforme marque une étape importante vers un secteur minier plus équitable et durable. Il en est de même du secteur de l’environnement.

Cependant, plusieurs défis persistent : la résistance des entreprises, la faiblesse institutionnelle, la corruption, les impacts sociaux et environnementaux et la difficulté à appliquer certaines dispositions légales. Sans renforcement des capacités de l’État et des mécanismes de contrôle, les objectifs de la réforme risquent de rester à moitié résolus.

Les expériences comparées à d’autres pays africains, en l’occurrence : le Ghana, le Botswana, le Cameroun et la Zambie ainsi qu’européens, à

l'exemple de la France et l'Allemagne, démontrent que la transparence, la redistribution des revenus et le contrôle rigoureux des obligations environnementales et sociales sont des conditions indispensables pour un secteur minier réellement bénéfique au développement national.

La comparaison internationale permet de dégager plusieurs enseignements pour la RDC notamment :

- Renforcer la gouvernance et les institutions locales pour assurer le respect des obligations minières ;
- Adopter des standards sociaux et environnementaux contraignants mais réalistes ;
- Garantir la redistribution équitable des revenus au niveau local et national ;
- Assurer une transparence complète via la publication des paiements et le contrôle citoyen ;
- Maintenir un équilibre entre attractivité pour les investisseurs et protection de l'intérêt national.

Honorables Parlementaires ; Distingués invités ;

Conformément à l'Objectif de développement durable 16, le parlement est souvent considéré comme un acteur de stabilité au service de sociétés pacifiques et inclusives fondées sur l'état de droit. Il est indispensable que les parlements continuent d'agir en tant que pivots de l'ordre démocratique, nonobstant tout comportement déviant que pourraient manifester d'autres institutions étatiques.

Dans cette optique, les parlements sont priés de rendre compte des règles existantes qui protègent la continuité de leur fonctionnement,

notamment de celles qui empêchent toute interférence de l'exécutif et qui leur permettent de fonctionner en toute indépendance et sans ingérence politique.

La solidité du cadre démocratique pour la continuité des parlements en RDC et dans la SADC est variable et confrontée à des défis importants. Si la SADC vise à promouvoir des institutions politiques communes, son influence reste limitée face aux dynamiques internes de chaque pays. En RDC, la continuité dépend fortement des institutions d'appui à la démocratie et de la permanence des fonctions administratives et du personnel qualifié.

Pour la SADC, il serait impérieux de promouvoir des institutions politique communes, mais l'efficacité de cette promotion dépendra de la volonté politique des Etats membres et de leur capacité à respecter les principes démocratiques. Un exercice des objectifs contre la réalité.

Le manque d'unification des cadres juridiques et institutionnels au sein des parlements qui varient d'un État membre à l'autre, limite la capacité de la SADC à garantir une continuité uniforme au niveau régional.

Du point de point de l'Intervention régionale : bien que la SADC intervienne dans la région pour maintenir la paix et la sécurité notamment avec le cas de SAMIDRC en RDC, ces interventions ne résolvent pas les problèmes structurels de gouvernance qui affectent la continuité des parlements.

Honorable Président ;Distingués invités ;

Dans la transformation de notre institution, il en va de soi que le processus d'examen de la transformation du Forum Parlementaire de la

SADC en un Parlement régional implique l'accord des parlements nationaux de la SADC pour modifier le traité de la communauté, une démarche que la RDC soutient activement. Il s'agirait d'analyser ses fonctions et son rôle dans la mise en œuvre des objectifs de la Communauté, et aussi, d'évaluer son implication dans la promotion de la paix, de la sécurité, du développement économique et de l'état de droit, tout en garantissant le respect des droits humains.

Au regard des dispositions constitutionnelles et réglementaires dans notre pays, le processus est en cours, et le Parlement reste saisi de cette question jusqu'à son aboutissement. Il est encouragé que les parlements nationaux ratifient l'accord finalisant cette transformation.

L'objectif est de passer d'un Forum consultatif à un parlement régional doté de pouvoirs accrus pour renforcer l'intégration, la paix et la sécurité.

En ce qui concerne l'Intégration de jeunes membres dans les délégations nationales auprès du Forum Parlementaire de la SADC, en prenant l'exemple de la République Démocratique du Congo, cette intégration s'appuie sur la reconnaissance du potentiel de la jeunesse et sur les politiques régionales visant à renforcer leur engagement. Des initiatives comme le renforcement du Forum des jeunes de la SADC, des programmes de développement social, économique et technologique, et le soutien à l'entrepreneuriat des jeunes en République Démocratique du Congo sont des exemples de cette intégration. Cela passe par la promotion de leurs compétences et de leur participation citoyenne, en ligne avec les objectifs de la SADC de développement durable et de croissance économique.

C’est dans ce cadre que la délégation congolaise a participé activement au Conseil de la jeunesse à Gaborone, ce qui a abouti à l'organisation future du prochain Conseil en RDC au Forum des jeunes de la SADC s'est tenu à Luanda en juillet 2024, réunissant des jeunes leaders et des experts de tous les États membres pour discuter de l'industrialisation durable.

S’agissant particulièrement du Parlement, il y a lieu de noter que la RDC est un pays à forte proportion de jeunes, ce qui justifie l'importance de politiques visant leur intégration. Ainsi, l'intégration des jeunes dans les délégations nationales est une application concrète de l'objectif général de la SADC et l’Union interparlementaire de réaliser le développement économique et social par l'intégration régionale. Tels sont les cas de la participation des jeunes parlementaires à la 53ème Assemblée plénière tenue à Arusha, en Tanzanie en juillet 2023 et à la 55ème Assemblée plénière tenue à Luanda, en Angola au mois de juillet 2024 et dans les assises de l’Union Interparlementaire.

Le parlement de la RDC tient à maintenir le cap pour toutes les organisations interparlementaires dans l’avenir.

Au chapitre de violations de la Charte africaine des droits de l’homme et des peuples, la République Démocratique du Congo et dans son sein, il y a des violations de la Charte africaine des droits de l’homme et des peuples qui sont nombreuses et variées, incluant ainsi des violences sexuelles, des crimes de guerre, l’exploitation illégale des ressources naturelles, des recrutements d’enfants soldats et des violations des droits humains dans les prisons.

De plus, des violations des droits économiques et sociaux, comme le droit à une alimentation saine, des infrastructures dégradées et l'exploitation des terres, se manifestent également. Ces violations sont commises par des groupes armés qui ne cessent de tenter de déstabiliser la République Démocratique du Congo, avec les agents de l'État et des sociétés entrainant de déplacements massifs des populations.

Aux dires de la Haut-Commissaire adjointe aux droits humains de l'ONU, Nada Al-Nashif, les violences sexuelles liées au conflit ont connu une augmentation de plus de 270 %, la crise alimentaire touche près de 26 millions de personnes, soit près d'un quart de la population tandis que les déplacements massifs de populations font état de près de 7,8 millions de personnes déplacées à l'intérieur du pays, dont 3,8 millions uniquement dans les deux provinces du Kivu.

Ainsi, l'ampleur de ces déplacements, combinée à la violence systématique, exacerbe selon elle les souffrances des civils, pris au piège dans une guerre interminable. « Après près de trois décennies de guerre et plus de six millions de morts, il devrait être parfaitement clair qu'il n'existe pas de solution militaire à ce conflit », insistant sur la nécessité urgente d'une solution politique durable.

En son temps, Madame Chantal Chambu Mwavita, ministre congolaise des droits humains, a condamné avec fermeté l'occupation de certaines zones de la RDC par l'armée rwandaise et ses alliés du M23 et de l'Alliance fleuve Congo, responsables « en toute impunité » d'assassinats de civils, de violences sexuelles, d'enrôlements d'enfants, de pillages et d'exécutions sommaires.

Face à cette situation dramatique, les responsables de l'ONU et de la RDC s'accordent sur la nécessité d'une réponse judiciaire forte pour mettre un terme à l'impunité des auteurs de crimes de guerre, d'où la nécessité d'accélérer les réformes et d'adopter une loi dédiée à la justice transitionnelle, afin de permettre aux victimes d'obtenir réparation et aux criminels d'être jugés.

A ce sujet, les aspects procéduraux liés à la protection et à la réparation des victimes dans le cadre des procédures judiciaires en matière de crimes internationaux ont connu un développement positif récent avec l'adoption de la loi du 26 décembre 2022 fixant les principes fondamentaux relatifs à la protection et à la réparation des victimes de violences sexuelles liées aux conflits et des victimes des crimes contre la paix et la sécurité de l'humanité. Cette loi holistique sur le statut et les droits des victimes de crimes internationaux établit pour la première fois en droit congolais un cadre juridique étoffé et protecteur à leur égard.

Enfin je termine avec l'augmentation des coûts pour les services de soins de santé.

Avec le retrait de 30 à 40 % des financements extérieurs qui entraîne des perturbations graves à 70% des services de santé, notamment des soins maternels, de la vaccination et de la préparation aux urgences. Cette situation provoque une réduction du personnel de santé, des arrêts de programmes et une menace pour la couverture sanitaire universelle dans plus de 50 pays du monde. Elle s'ajoute aux défis structurels des pays, tels que le sous-financement chronique, l'inflation et la dette croissante.

La RDC est confrontée à un fort niveau de dépendance vis-à-vis des financements extérieurs, ce qui rend son système de santé très vulnérable aux coupes budgétaires avec comme principales incidences : la détérioration du financement du secteur de la santé, surtout sur des projets spécifiques ; l'impact sur l'accès aux soins et la protection des ménages, car les ménages devraient supporter une part plus importantes des coûts de santé, ce qui aggraveraient leur vulnérabilités ; le risque d'affaiblissement de l'infrastructure et du personnel entrainant la fermeture de centres de santé ou la fin de programmes d'entretien et de construction ainsi que la diminution de la formation du personnel médical et leur fournir des outils de travail de meilleure qualité ; la menace pour la couverture santé universelle et l'augmentation de la vulnérabilité aux épidémies.

Face à ce retrait des financements extérieurs pour la santé, l'augmentation du budget de l'État est nécessaire dans mon pays, mais nécessite d'améliorer l'exécution budgétaire actuelle, de renforcer la fiscalité locale, et de clarifier la coordination entre les différents niveaux de gouvernance. Le gouvernement doit aussi trouver des mécanismes pour augmenter les ressources nationales afin de compenser la perte de financement externe.

C'est ainsi que les actions suivantes ont été recommandées notamment:

- Augmenter la part du budget national dédiée à la santé : L'objectif est d'atteindre 15 % du budget national pour la santé, tel que fixé par la recommandation de l'Accord d'Abuja, pour assurer le financement des soins de santé ;

- Améliorer l'exécution budgétaire : Il faut s'assurer que les fonds disponibles soient effectivement dépensés, car des budgets supplémentaires de 23 % ont été non dépensés ces dernières années en raison de faibles taux d'exécution ;
- Renforcer la décentralisation et la gouvernance locale : Il faut améliorer la décentralisation en renforçant les pouvoirs et les ressources transférés aux provinces, en clarifiant la fiscalité locale et en améliorant la coordination entre les différents niveaux de gouvernement (national, provincial, territorial) ;
- Augmenter les ressources nationales : Il est crucial de trouver des moyens de générer des revenus plus élevés au niveau national pour compenser la perte de financement extérieur. Cela peut se faire par le biais d'une fiscalité plus efficace et de mécanismes de péréquation.

Je vous remercie. Thank you. Obrigado.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Eswatini

EN.

HON. I. MAGAGULA [ESWATINI]: President and Chairperson of this august Assembly held here at the beautiful Umhlanga Coastal Hotel on the auspices of the SADC Parliamentary Forum. It is with pleasure and delight that I must present this report on behalf of my speaker, who, due to other domestic commitments, could not make it.

Mr. President, in this report, I am referring to or making points of reference and progress towards the implementation of the resolutions arrived at the 57th Plenary Assembly of the SADC Parliamentary Forum that was held in Zimbabwe. The resolutions address thematic areas including

governance, artificial intelligence, prison oversight, elections, food systems, gender equality, cyber security, sexual reproductive health and rights, climate linkages and the domestication of modern laws.

From the onset, I do not remember any meeting where this matter has not come up and I am bringing it up again, not just for the sake of bringing it up but to reinforce its importance. In Zimbabwe and elsewhere, the issue of our institution developing into a parliamentary institution has never been left out without discussion. I therefore thank you, our Secretary General and staff, for bringing that issue to ensure if all of us have adhered to a very humble plea, concrete one, that by the 30th of August, not of October, we must have all made comments on the protocol that will lead to us having this institution.

On our side, I wish to report that we have seen, commented positively and unequivocally that the institution that we are all aspiring to see and see it operating is the way to go and it will be a giant development. So, thank you on that one. The report is being submitted in fulfilment of Rule 63 of the Forum's Rules of Procedure (EN | FR | PT) and affirms Eswatini's commitment to regional integration, good governance and shared development priorities.

Hon. Chair, I will now go to those specific areas which were part of the resolutions and for which we are supposed to say something about them. The first one, not in any order, is harnessing artificial intelligence (AI), for parliamentary purposes. With pride, I want to inform this House that Eswatini has taken a quantum leap, entered and be in partnership with the Google conglomerate to leverage artificial intelligence technology in the conduct of all official business, including parliamentary business.

Parliament, through the information management and our SADC Service Desk initiated an internal baseline on AI, that is artificial intelligence readiness, focusing on digital infrastructure, cyber security posture, legislative gaps and training needs.

Consultations with the Ministry of Information, Communications and Technology (ICT), established that Eswatini already has a data protection and e-government strategy that applies even to processes in Parliament. To take it further, Madam Chair, is that for all intents and purposes, we have officially embraced and, in principle, artificial intelligence technology. However, we would want to take it further than that to give it the legal teeth, namely a legal instrument, which is on the card, being drafted and will in future, reinforce what we already have in place.

Madam President, I now turn to the issue of prison oversight or correctional services, depending on what the name or the title is in respect of our respective countries. This is one department falling under the Ministry of Justice that I must say we are very proud of. They are, to the best of their ability, under our oversight as a Portfolio Committee, doing very well. As we speak, they are using the Mandela regulations as a base for looking and ensuring the best in terms of health and care of our inmates. They are not stopping there. They are also looking at the possibility of ensuring that all our handling of our inmates is in accordance with the Paris Principles and the Mandela Regulatory Framework. The Paris Principles standards that have been set, acceded to and ratified may be adopted by most of us. In its quarterly report, the Ministry of Justice, through the Ministry of Correctional Services do, time and again, brief us and are on the

spotlight as to how our prison inmates are being treated. And as I said, they are doing well. It is not only us in Parliament but there is also the judiciary who, time and again, and maybe consequently to a case that is before court, go and do physical inspections. So, there is a lot on the ground to ensure that nothing wrong goes on in our prison services.

Coming to the other one, Madam Chair, which is the democratisation, governance and human rights. I will not say much on this one because already I have a motion which is more detailed on what we, the special committee, are saying about it. But suffice to say that the issue of model law on elections (EN | FR | PT) remains a grey area. It is one that this august Assembly may wish to address in terms of attendance, in terms of ensuring that our elections are indeed conducted according to the spirit and letter of the model law on elections. The other one, Madam Chair, is on gender equality, gender-based prevention and women's rights.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: You have one minute left.

MR. I. MAGAGULA [ESWATINI]: Yes, thank you, Madam Chair. That is kind of you. Did you say three minutes or what – [*Laughter*] - The issue of child marriages and protection of children already in marriages. We have a strong law that has been enacted and is operational. We cannot always be complacent. We need to be, now and again, looking after those areas … - [*Time expired*]- But Madam President, this is what I have within the time and thank you for listening. I thank you. – [*Applause*]-

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: We will take Lesotho and thereafter have a 20-minute break.

HON. T. SEKHAMANE [LESOTHO]: Madam President, please allow me to stand on the protocol that has already been established. I bring greetings from His Majesty the King Letsie III of the Kingdom of Lesotho, Kingdom in the Sky. Our gratitude to the hosting Speaker, Madam Thoko Didiza, for putting an abundance of resources at our disposal to be able to carry out the work for which we have come. Thank you very much, Madam and your team.

Madam President, thank you for allowing me to present Lesotho's position on the seven issues raised in the letter of the Secretary-General of the SADC-PF dated 2 November 2025. This report highlights the prevailing situation in Lesotho and interventions by Parliament where applicable. As we share experiences through the presentation of country reports, the Parliament of Lesotho stands ready and eager to learn from interventions made in other countries for the benefit of Basotho and for the benefit of the region at large.

On the effect of tariffs on trade in SADC Member States, I wish to inform this august House that, indeed, Lesotho benefited immensely from the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), since its inception back in 2000. The AGOA provided duty-free and quota-free market access for products of African origin exported to the United States. The advantage of AGOA was two-fold. First, it removed import tariff duties on over 6 000 tariff lines for African countries. Second, it was a tool for investment promotion and attraction that allowed Lesotho to export to the United States market competitively.

Lesotho was one of the key beneficiaries of the scheme, especially in the textiles and clothing sector. The sector employed over 30 000 Basotho, primarily young women, who were in turn looking after at least 60 000 dependents. With the introduction of reciprocal tariffs imposed by the United States since April 2025, these jobs are all on the line. Companies have since retrenched thousands of workers due to low and sporadic orders from the United States buyers.

The expiry of AGOA in September 2025 further compounded these challenges that were already being experienced by the sector. The effect is that the tariffs for products of Lesotho origin exported to the United States have increased substantially from 16,5% to 34%, given the stocking of tariffs under the most favoured nation for textile products and the 15% additional reciprocal tariff. The Lesotho textiles and clothing products now face between 31% and 47% tariffs in the United States.

These challenges, together with retrenchments that Lesotho is experiencing, have gone on to have a devastating effect on the public transport and logistics industries. As a result, the country is now faced with income erosion for many households, greatly reversing the recovery gains made post-COVID-19. This is unfortunate, as Lesotho was beginning to diversify her exports to the United States towards high-quality fisheries products, which now must face the highly prohibitive 15% duty as a result of the expiry of AGOA.

The Government of Lesotho has not given up. It continues to engage the United States Government to try and secure favourable conditions and market access for our exports to the United States market. However,

although the United States remains one of the priority export markets, Lesotho is also continuing to focus on other markets with preferential market access. Although, needless to mention, it will take a long time to firmly establish its presence and to make a mark in these new markets.

Madam President, in relation to reform initiatives for critical mineral mining and distribution, I wish to indicate that in the recent past, the Parliament of Lesotho has not passed any Bill on critical minerals, nor has it exercised oversight on them.

On the robustness of the democratic framework to ensure the perpetual succession of Parliaments, section 83 of our Constitution provides that each term of Parliament shall not exceed five years, and the Constitution also mandates the Independent Electoral Commission to hold elections regularly. That is, when Parliament has been dissolved by His Majesty the King. Since 2012, Lesotho has experienced successive and very successful and smooth transitions of power. The independence of Parliament is provided for in Section 54 of the recently enacted 10th Amendment to the Constitution, which states that:

> *There shall be a Parliament which shall be autonomous and independent.*

Madam President, I must explain that the issue of the autonomy of Parliament is a very important matter if Parliament is able to allocate for itself adequate resources and if Parliament is to be able to do its function of oversight.

Allow me to now move on to the consideration of the protocol on the modalities of operation of the SADC Parliament. First and foremost, let me

start by commending in the strongest of terms, the tireless efforts made by the secretaries under the able leadership of Adv. Jacob Francis Nzwidamilimo Mudenda and his team, towards transforming this Forum into a regional Parliament. Hearty kudos are well deserved in this connection. - [*Applause.]* –

Let me hasten to indicate that the Minister of Foreign Affairs has confirmed receipt of the process of the protocol and having realised that SADC issues are not well coordinated at our national level, the two Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Finance and Development Planning have jointly established a SADC National Committee mandated to engage with all stakeholders on SADC agendas. The Committee is expected to meet on a quarterly basis ahead of every council meeting. The first meeting of the committee is scheduled for mid-February 2026 and we have been duly informed that Parliament is one of the stakeholders that will be engaged in February regarding the protocol. Presiding officers of the two Houses of Parliament and their clerks will meet during the coming Christmas break to take a position in preparation for the engagement with the National Committee.

Madam President, I need to pause here again to elaborate on the matter of Lesotho not commenting on the protocol. This is very unfortunate. We have long already agreed at the highest levels that we agree with the protocol and it has been only up to civil servants to implement and to send our comments accordingly but this has not been done. Madam President, I find this very embarrassing and I assure you that it will be done forthwith.

Regarding the inclusion of youth members in SADC Youth PF country delegations. The Parliament of Lesotho strongly supports youth involvement and participation in decision-making processes. The current 11th Parliament of the Kingdom of Lesotho has a higher representation of youth than all those that came before it. The inclusion of Hon. Mahooana Mope Khati, who is below the age of 35 years currently here in our delegation, is best testimony to the fact that the voice of youth is not only recognised and appreciated but that it is taken very seriously in the Parliament of Lesotho. Let me pause to please request, with respect that the Hon. Mope Khati will stand up so that you can see and witness that this man is not 35 years old, he is below 35.- [*Applause.*] - Thank you very much.

Madam President, much as we support youth involvement, we however, strongly disagree with the proposal to amend the Constitution and the Rules of Procedure (EN | FR | PT): to provide for inclusion of at least one youth member. Instead, we would recommend that letters to new Parliament on the appointment of SADC PF representatives should emphasise the inclusion of youths in special manner, the able team led by the Hon. Adv. Jacob Francis Nzwidamilimo Mudenda in making impressive strides towards our lofty vision of transforming this Forum into a regional Parliament. Lesotho stands ready to learn from its peers in the region to implement the strategic plan of the Forum and other programmes of the Forum to support both the Executive Committee and the secretary and indeed, to fight any divisive tendencies in the Forum in the true spirit of its founding pillars, namely, solidarity, accountability, democracy and regionalism. I thank you for your kind attention. - [*Applause*] -

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Thank you, Hon. Member. I will now allow 20 minutes just for a health break and we will be back by 1200 hours.

[*HEALTH BREAK*]

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Hon. Members. Before we continue, allow me just to grant the Speaker of Angola the necessary leave because he is supposed to be leaving for other commitments. He just really found it very important after being elected last week to be here to be part and parcel of our engagements. Hon. Speaker, at your convenience, you may leave. Thank you very much.

We are still busy with the debate or with the country reports and whilst we are continuing, we will now call on Madagascar to continue with the debate.

FR.

HON. SOPHIE GABRIELLE RATSIRAKA [MADAGASCAR]:

Honorables membres;

Mesdames et Messieurs à vos rangs, grades et qualités ;

Tout protocole observé ;

Suite aux dynamiques politiques que Madagascar a connues récemment, sachez que c'est avec une joie immense que la délégation malgache se retrouve parmi vous aujourd'hui. Certains diront que nous sommes des rescapés. Mais de mon point de vue, notre présence ici traduit un signal fort qui n'est autre que le retour au calme dans notre pays.

Je tiens à mettre un point d'honneur sur l'accueil très chaleureux que nous recevons toujours auprès des membres de la SADC. Car votre soutien nous réconforte énormément et soyez en grandement remerciés.

Par ailleurs, permettez-moi de me tourner particulièrement vers Madame BOEMO qui a été constamment à l'écoute pendant cette pénible épreuve.

Plus que jamais, il est essentiel que notre Parlement joue son rôle dans le renforcement de la gouvernance démocratique, la promotion du développement durable, la protection des droits humains et l'intégration régionale.

Ainsi, Mesdames et Messieurs, Madagascar réaffirme son engagement à contribuer aux efforts collectifs visant à améliorer la libre circulation des biens et des services conformément au protocole commercial de la SADC.

Sachez que des efforts ont été déployés, à cet effet, pour moderniser les procédures douanières, renforcer la compétitivité économique et soutenir le commerce régional. Mais à côté de cela, Madagascar attache également une grande importance à la gouvernance des ressources naturelles, notamment dans le secteur des minéraux tels que le nickel, le gravite et l'ilménite. C'est pourquoi les réformes menées à Madagascar visent à garantir une exploitation durable, transparente et bénéfique pour les populations tout en s'alignant sur les priorités régionales.

Par ailleurs, notre Parlement poursuit également ses efforts pour consolider un cadre institutionnel résilient et capable de garantir la continuité de l'Etat. A côté de cela, le renforcement de capacités

parlementaires reste une priorité absolue afin d'améliorer l'efficacité législative et le contrôle de l'action gouvernementale.

Madagascar soutient pleinement la transition du Forum Parlementaire vers un Parlement de la SADC doté d'un mandat renforcé. C'est pour toute cette raison que nous suivons de près le processus de ratification et nous nous tenons prêts à appuyer la mise en œuvre du protocole relatif au fonctionnement de ce futur organe parlementaire.

Avant de terminer mon propos, je tiens à souligner l'importance que Madagascar accorde à la participation des jeunes dans les instances de décision. Notre délégation veille à intégrer des jeunes membres afin d'encourager leur engagement, former la relève et renforcer l'inclusivité de nos Parlements.

Honorables membres, nous avançons ensemble et Madagascar réaffirme sa volonté de coopérer étroitement avec tous les Etats membres afin de construire une SADC plus intégrée, plus stable et prospère. Nous restons convaincus que nos échanges, nos résolutions et nos engagements ainsi que notre solidarité contribueront toujours à renforcer la démocratie dans nos pays et à améliorer la vie de nos concitoyens.

Vive nous, Vive la SADC.

EN.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: You have enough time. Let us just deal with the unprecedented issue and we will continue and call on Malawi to continue with the debate on the country report.

HON. W. S. BANDA [MALAWI]: Hon. Chair and the House, allow me to start by standing on the salutations already observed. I present the country

report for the Parliament of Malawi on the 58th Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum Plenary Assembly, as guided by the Right Hon. Speaker of Malawi, Sameer Suleman, who is present in this House.

Madam Chair, allow me to begin by commenting on issues of tariffs on trade and SADC Member States. Malawi was among the 32 countries eligible for preferential treatment under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). During this period, Malawi's exports to the United States through AGOA increased by 6,5%. That is from $15,9 million from June 2022 to $16,94 million as of June 2023.

Malawi's export basket was dominated by unprocessed agricultural goods. The termination of AGOA has significantly affected the country in terms of its balance of payment. To lessen the impact of the AGOA termination, Malawi has put in place a two-track policy response. Short-term measures aimed at stabilising foreign exchange and managing export proceeds in the medium-term reforms to support value addition and industrialisation.

Further to that, Malawi is pursuing bilateral and multilateral trade routes, including the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, where efforts are being made to domesticate the agreement and its protocols. Malawi has also gone into open trade negotiations with East Asian and European partners to diversify export markets.

Madam Chair, allow me to comment a bit on Malawian women who work very hard to make ends meet by crossing borders to other countries to

buy merchandise. Most of them come to South Africa and Tanzania. But the hassle they experience at police roadblocks is unprecedented.

We talk of the Malawi region as one but the experiences are just too much in terms of the treatment that individuals receive when they cross borders. I think, as a region, we need to look into this matter.

Allow me, Madam Chair, to move on to mineral mining and distribution. In the past ten years, the Government of Malawi has made significant progress in reforming the mines and minerals sector. This includes the enactment of new laws by Parliament. For example, Parliament passed the Mines and Minerals Act of 2023, which is the primary legislation for governing and regulating the mining sector.

In addition, the government drafted an artisanal and small-scale mining policy to formalise and stimulate artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM), operations by administering, regulating and facilitating the growth of the sub-sector. As part of the reform agenda, the government established the Malawi Mining Investment Company (MAMICO), which is a state-owned enterprise established to promote the optimal development of Malawi's mining sector, aimed at maximising national revenue and social benefits.

Operating under the Malawi Development Corporation Holdings Limited, MAMICO aligns with national development goals, notably the Malawi Vision 2063, which highlights mining as a priority sector under the industrialisation pillar.

The mining and minerals sector is challenged by the lack of specific legislation to regulate contracts and eradicate corruption-related activities. Government is fully aware that the mining sector has a few experts

specialised in mining, minerals processing, geology, environment, land and physical planning, which makes it difficult for the country to negotiate mining and exploration contracts from an informed position.

To address the situation, public universities were encouraged to introduce specialised programmes targeting the mines and minerals sector, with the aim of having more and well-trained experts in the field.

Allow me, Madam Chair, to move on to the perpetual succession of Parliament. The Constitution of the Republic of Malawi vests all the legislative powers of the Republic in Parliament. Parliament consists of the National Assembly and the President as the Head of State, with powers and responsibilities set out in the Constitution.

Section 8 of the Constitution binds Parliament to ensure that its deliberations reflect the interests of all Malawian people and that the values expressed or implied in the Constitution are furthered by the laws enacted.

Section 66 of the Constitution states that the National Assembly shall have powers subject to the Constitution to receive, amend, accept or reject government Bills and private Bills. Parliament repealed the 1994 Constitution provision for a Senate, thereby making the Parliament of Malawi a unicameral legislature. The Members are directly elected in the single-member constituencies using the simple majority, first-past-the-post system.

The Members serve five years term. The current Parliament was inaugurated in September 2025 after the general election, with our new Speaker, Right Hon. Sameer Suleman. The election of Members is governed by the Parliament and the Presidential Election Act of 2022, which

harmonised the presidential, parliamentary and local government elections. With the Constitution Amendment Act of 2021 and the Parliamentary Service Act of 2021, Parliament has been granted increased operational autonomy.

Madam Chair, I would like to move to the protocol on the modalities of operations of the SADC Parliament. Malawi was one of the first countries to sign the agreement amending the SADC Treaty (EN | FR | PT): to establish the SADC Parliament, following the resolution of the 45*Laughter*]- I will jump to the last paragraph regarding the increased cost for healthcare services, Madam Chair, if you allow me. Unfortunately, I had a lot to say.

I will now report on the progress of the challenges of health financing in Mauritius. In the context of regional efforts to achieve universal health coverage in line with the 2019 Africa Leadership Meeting (ALM), declaration. Health financing is a core pillar of any health system. It enables access to quality services while providing financial protection to our population. Across Africa, millions of people are unable to access health services due to costs, while many others face poor quality care, even when paying out of pocket. In the SADC region, mounting challenges – [*Time Limit*].

In conclusion, Mauritius remains firmly committed to the ALM declaration and the SADC health financing agenda. Despite fiscal pressure and the gradual withdrawal of donor support, we are strengthening domestic financing, promoting efficiency, ensuring equity and building a resilient health system capable of meeting the needs of our population. Regional co-operation, strategic reform and sustainable investment will be

critical to achieve universal health coverage and uphold our shared commitment. I thank you for your attention. – [*Applause*]

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: We will now call on Mozambique. Members, you do not have to read your reports word for word. You can just summarise the report. It will help you with the time. Mozambique.

PT.

HON. RAIMUNDO DIOMBA (MOÇAMBIQUE): Sua Excelência
Senhora Presidente do Fórum Parlamentar da SADC
Suas Excelências Presidentes dos Parlamentos Nacionais
Digníssimos Deputados, Meus Pares
Excelentíssima Senhora Secretária-Geral
Caros Convidados
Minhas Senhoras e Meus Senhores

A saudação feita pelos meus antecedentes estamos juntos! Não vou repetir!

Antes de apresentar o Relatório de Moçambique sobre o nível de progressos alcançados no que se refere a implementação das Resoluções aprovadas durante a 57ª Assembleia Plenária do Fórum Parlamentar da SADC permitam-me que enderece uma saudação especial a Sua Excelência Presidente do nosso Fórum e restantes.

1. Relativamente a Resolução sobre adopção do Relatório da Comissão Permanente do Comércio, Indústria, Finanças e Investimento informar que o sistema prisional de Moçambique desempenha um papel crucial na garantia de segurança pública, na administração da justiça no país. Assim como muitos países no mundo, Moçambique enfrenta o

desafio de administrar sua população reclusória e manter a infra-estrutura e os recursos necessários para sustentar o sistema.

Um curso significativo e a manutenção das instalações prisionais, os fundos alocados para manutenção de infra-estruturas são utilizados para reparos, reformas e melhorias, a fim de garantir que as prisões permaneçam seguras e em boas condições.

Actualmente, as cadeias têm um total de 24 000 reclusos e cada um gasta pelo menos 700 Meticais que é cerca de 10 dólares por dia só para alimentação.

São contas que sufocam o orçamento dos Serviços nacionais penitenciários, sem contar com a responsabilidade de ter de garantir que tenham saúde, uniforme, energia e água.

Para mudar a situação, as penitenciárias têm estado a apostar na produção de alguns alimentos, de modo a garantir o sustento dos reclusos e reduzir a pressão do sector de justiça sobre o orçamento do Estado.

Como forma de reduzir o défice, o Ministério da Justiça leva excedentes produzidos nas penitenciárias para comercializar e os ganhos são aplicados para suprir outras necessidades do sector, incluindo produtos de higiene para os mesmos reclusos, factor crucial para prevenir doenças tais como a cólera.

2. No concernente a redução sobre a adopção do Relatório da Comissão Permanente de Alimentação, Agricultura, Recursos Naturais e Acção Climática, de referir que o Parlamento moçambicano fiscaliza as prisões, principalmente, através da Comissão dos Assuntos

Constitucionais, Direitos Humanos e Legalidade que realiza visitas às instalações prisionais para verificar a conformidade com a Lei e os Direitos Humanos.

A Comissão investiga violações como detenções ilegais e faz recomendações como a libertação de presos que já cumpriram a pena ou que foram detidos ilegalmente.

Quanto a interacção com outras instituições para garantir uma fiscalização mais abrangente, a Comissão interage com outras instituições do sistema de justiça como tribunais e procuradorias.

Recomendações e Acções

Após investigações, o Parlamento através da sua Comissão emite recomendações ao Governo para restauração de legalidade como a libertação de presos detidos ilegalmente.

3. No concernente a Resolução sobre adopção do Relatório da Comissão Permanente de Igualdade de Género, Promoção da Mulher e Desenvolvimento da Juventude, em Moçambique as medidas alternativas à prisão incluem a prestação de trabalhos socialmente úteis, a perda de bens ou valores, a multa, interdição temporária de direitos, também estabelece a liberdade condicional para reclusos com bom comportamento que cumpriram parte da sua pena.

   O Governo moçambicano defende que a aplicação de medidas alternativas a penas privativas de liberdade para as mulheres pode reduzir a sua marginalização social, facilitar a sua reintegração social e reinserção, bem como o retorno a uma vida produtiva e digna.

Ademais, a adopção de medidas alternativas à prisão pode resolver parcialmente o problema de superlotação dos estabelecimentos penitenciários e é uma forma de promoção de uma justiça mais extensiva, humana e capaz de atender as reais necessidades das mulheres em conflito com a lei.

Moçambique está a implementar políticas públicas sensíveis as vulnerabilidades das mulheres, investindo em programas de capacitação, assistência psicológica, apoio familiar e outros recursos essenciais para reinserção social.

É no âmbito deste dever que o Estado moçambicano aprovou normas e criou instituições, programas de protecção de direitos da mulher em particular a protecção contra a violência baseada no género como a criação do Plano Económico Quinquenal onde a questão do Género e protecção da mulher constitui um aspecto importante a se ter em conta nas áreas de prevenção e saúde, educação.

A criação de Gabinete de atendimento à mulher e crianças vítimas de violência doméstica.

A aprovação de Lei sobre a Violência Doméstica praticada contra a mulher.

4. Quanto a Resolução relativa a Adopção do Projecto de Resolução sobre a …(*inaudível*) implementação da Lei-modelo da SADC sobre a erradicação dos casamentos prematuros envolvendo menores e protecção de crianças em casamento, de referir que em Julho de 2019 com base nesta Lei-modelo, o Parlamento moçambicano aprovou a Lei de Prevenção e Combate as uniões prematuras aumentando o

cometimento do país no combate a estas práticas nocivas. De acordo com a Lei moçambicana, a actividade sexual com um menor de idade definida como qualquer pessoa com menos de 18 anos é um crime e punido com prisão e multa.

O país tomou medidas para melhorar o ambiente legal e adoptou estratégias para travar uma guerra contra casamentos prematuros.

A Constituição da República de Moçambique estabelece que o Estado tem o dever de assegurar a protecção dos direitos da mulher e da criança conforme o estipulado nas declarações e convenções internacionais.

5. Relativamente ao efeito de tarifas sobre as trocas comerciais nos Estados membros da SADC, Moçambique enfrenta novas tarifas de 16% acrescido sobre as exportações para os Estados Unidos imposta pela administração americana.

   O impacto para Moçambique inclui a possibilidade de desaceleração económica e pressão sobre exportações de recursos naturais como carvão e gás e ameaça das empresas multinacionais reconsiderarem planos de investimento especialmente nos sectores de mineração e energia.

   O Governo moçambicano avalia a negociação de um acordo de comércio livre com os Estados Unidos para reduzir os impostos. Criar um ambiente comercial mais estável a favor de todos os países, Moçambique e Estados Unidos de América.

   No concernente a análise do Protocolo sobre as modalidades de funcionamento do Parlamento da SADC relativo a transformação do

Fórum Parlamentar da SADC em Parlamento regional, Moçambique assinou o acordo de alteração de Tratado da SADC com vista a criação do Parlamento regional.

Relativamente a revisão ou comentários ao Projecto de Protocolo sobre o estabelecimento do Parlamento da SADC, a Assembleia da República recebeu do Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros de Moçambique o referido Projecto e remeteu em Fevereiro deste ano ao Ministério em referência os seus comentários conforme foi estipulado.

8. Relativamente a inclusão de jovens parlamentares nas delegações nacionais da SADC, Moçambique considera de extrema importância a integração de jovens parlamentares nas actividades no Fórum Parlamentar da SADC e nós, felizmente, temos um, agora está a desempenhar o papel de fotógrafo, que é jovem.

Moçambique não só concorda em incluir como também já integrou um deputado jovem na Comissão Permanente de Igualdade de Género, Promoção da Mulher e Desenvolvimento da Juventude.

Nós queremos agradecer pela vossa atenção e queremos submeter esse Relatório à Direcção máxima.

Muito obrigado. - *Aplausos*

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Thank you. Namibia!

HON. S. KUUNGONGELWA [NAMIBIA]: Hon. Acting President of the SADC Parliamentary Forum, our generous host, Speaker Angela Thoko Didiza, Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of South Africa, Hon. Speakers and Members of SADC Parliament, distinguished Secretary-General and Members of the SADC-PF Secretariat, good day. I wish to

appreciate the very warm hospitality that is extended to all of us for our meeting by our host, the Speaker of South Africa, and through her, the government and the people of South Africa. I have the honour to present the implementation report of the Republic of Namibia as follows:

On the effect of the USA tariffs on trade, while Namibia's utilisation of AGOA has been modest compared to larger textile producers, Namibia has exported more than 6 400 goods to the US since 2001, duty-free, under the AGOA. Trade tariffs of 21%, which were later reduced to 15% by the USA government, would negatively impact Namibia's export earnings by disrupting established supply chains, decreasing the competitiveness of goods exported from Namibia to the USA, impairing export earnings and undermining the sustainability of jobs, and negatively impact the economy in the near to medium term.

In response, Namibia is preparing to diversify trade routes through the African Continental Free Trade Area by leveraging tariff concessions and expanding intra-African trade. We can diversify markets, strengthen resilience, and reduce dependence on external shocks by doing so. Parliaments need to ensure the domestication of the Free Trade Agreement (FTA), protocols, the alignment of national legislation, and the readiness of local producers to compete in continental markets, as well as rules of origin, for this opportunity to yield results. This requires targeted support for exporters, reforms to sustain beneficiation and the establishment of institutions such as the National Tariff Board through the expedient finalisation of the legislation to establish the tariff board in order to guide tariff negotiations.

Namibia signed the FTA agreement on 2 July 2018 and deposited its instruments of ratification on 1 February 2019. A significant step towards operational readiness was taken on 20 December last year when we gazetted our FTA tariff offer, thereby positioning the country to commence trading under the framework. On 30 June this year, Namibia officially launched trading under the FTA at Walvis Bay, with its first consignment of 45 000 tonnes of salt destined for Nigeria.

On reform initiatives for critical mineral mining and distribution, Namibia's mining sector is significantly expanding into critical minerals like lithium, rare earth elements, and cobalt, essential for green energy technologies. These efforts are supported by the government's policy to encourage local processing and are attracting international investment. While traditional mining continues, with uranium, diamonds and copper remaining major exports, the government aims to use critical minerals to drive industrialisation and create value-added industries.

Namibia recognises the growing importance of critical minerals in global supply chains. Our approach is guided by national priorities rather than external demand. Parliament has a duty to ensure that critical strategic minerals advance local value addition, job creation and economic diversification. Several reforms are underway. Firstly, the Minerals Bill, the government has been reviewing the Minerals Prospecting and Mining Act to align it with current best practices and address gaps identified during implementation of the Act.

The Minerals Bill, which is currently under stakeholder validation, empowers the Minister, when deemed necessary for the development or

protection of Namibia's mineral resources, to declare a mineral strategy through a notice published in the Gazette.

Due to the prohibition on the export of raw materials, the government has restricted the export of unprocessed lithium, cobalt, manganese, graphite and rare earths to encourage local beneficiation. Mineral beneficiation strategy. The strategy aims to promote skill development and industrial diversification. Policies are being developed to align with this new strategy, with incentives for local processing and potential State participation in mining ventures.

A local content policy is being finalised to ensure Namibia benefits meaningfully from mining activities. Critical raw material strategy. Namibia is in the process of developing a local content framework for the extractive sector, but implementation remains at an early stage. Such a policy is vital to ensure that communities and local businesses benefit meaningfully from mining activities through procurement, employment, skills transfer and community development obligations.

Exploration and development. While potential is high, much of Namibia's critical mineral wealth remains underexplored, requiring significant investment and sustained exploration work to be fully unlocked. As Namibia advances its industrialisation under the Sixth National Development Plan, the mining sector is poised to transition from a rent-based model to a globally competitive engine for inclusive growth, export diversification and financial innovation.

On the robustness of the democratic framework. To ensure the perpetual succession of Parliament, Namibia continues to uphold

constitutional democracy, grounded in the supremacy of the Constitution and the separation of powers. Since independence, peaceful transfers of power and regular elections have safeguarded parliamentary succession.

Articles 44 to 50 of our Constitution guarantee continuity through free and fair elections. While articles 63 and 64 reinforce Parliament's legislative independence. The Executive cannot dissolve Parliament at will and the judiciary provides an additional safeguard against overreach. Namibia's multi-party system, strong media freedoms and active public participation further strengthen democratic resilience. Parliament remains committed to acting as the fulcrum of democratic governance, ensuring uninterrupted succession and stability.

On consideration of the protocol on the modalities of operation of the SADC Parliament, following the 45th SADC Summit Resolution that Member States submit comments on the draft protocol by 30 October 2025, Namibia has submitted its comments through the Ministry of International Relations and Trade for transmission to the SADC Secretariat. Namibia, as the host of the SADAC PF, has a special responsibility to ensure that the protocol is legally sound while promoting democracy and regional integration. We wish to reiterate our unwavering commitment to continue hosting this institution as it undergoes structural changes resulting from the transformation process.

On the inclusion of youth Members in the SADC Parliamentary Forum countries' delegation, Namibia recognises the importance of youth integration in parliamentary processes. A delegation is structured to reflect the bicameral nature of Parliament, with three Members from the National

Assembly and two to come from the National Council. Namibia has, in its previous delegation to the Forum, included a youth delegate as a Member and we will continue to support the inclusion of at least one youth Member in the delegation when we are done composing our delegation.

Violation under the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, Namibia remains committed to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights. While no systemic violations have threatened democratic stability, several issues have required parliamentary oversight. On conditions of detention, parliamentary Standing Committees conducted oversight visits and tabled a bipartisan report on the conditions in holding and correctional facilities, recommending infrastructure upgrades, improved separation of detainees, CCTV installation and increased resourcing.

Ombudsman's Reform Initiative. Parliament is currently considering the Ombudsman Bill, which is aimed at redefining the mandate, strengthening the administrative and financial autonomy of the office and ensuring compliance with the Paris Principles.

Mental health rights: Parliament has also tabled the Mental Health Bill of 2025 to replace the outdated Mental Health Act of 1973. The Bill aims to establish a modern human rights-based framework for mental healthcare, by prioritising community-based care, patient dignity and autonomy over the previous institutional and control-focused approach. Namibia values peer learning within SADC and will continue to strengthen oversight, harmonise legislation and uphold constitutional guarantees.

On the increase in costs for healthcare services, although Namibia has maintained commendable progress in HIV treatment and prevention, the

reduction in external funding by the USA has necessitated a greater reliance on the national budget to sustain universal access to healthcare. This shift has increased pressure on Treasury. Without careful planning, there is a risk of a higher out-of-pocket expenditure for patients and increased vulnerability for communities that rely heavily on subsidised health commodities.

In response to these pressures, Parliament has strengthened its oversight of the health sector through committee engagements and budget scrutiny. Parliament advocates for the sustainability of ARV supply chains, the affordability of essential medicines, and the need to protect primary healthcare services from budget cuts. Parliament supported increased allocation to key health programmes to mitigate the impact of external funding reductions and encourage the Ministry of Health to continue to improve efficiency in procurement systems, including exploring pool purchasing agreements within SADC.

Furthermore, Parliament advocates for clearer long-term transition planning to reduce dependence on external donors, including investment in local pharmaceutical capacity, stronger partnerships with the private sector and enhanced domestic resource mobilisation. Oversight visits to health facilities were undertaken to assess stock levels, staffing constraints and the accessibility of rural clinics, ensuring that policy decisions remain guided by conditions on the ground. Namibia remains committed to ensuring continuous access to quality health services despite shifting global funding landscapes. Parliament will continue to monitor the situation closely, support the prioritisation of essential health services in the national budget,

and work with the Executive to safeguard the gains made in public health over the past three decades.

In conclusion, Namibia approaches these critical areas with determination and commitment to fulfilling both national aspirations and regional obligations. From trade integration and critical minerals governance to democratic resilience and human rights protection, Parliament stands ready to provide strategic direction, legislative support and rigorous oversight.

We remain engaged Members of the SADC Parliamentary Forum and committed to contributing to the region's collective progress towards sustainable development, inclusive governance and shared prosperity in ensuring that our people benefit equitably from the resources and opportunities available within SADC and beyond. Thank you. – [*Applause]* -

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Seychelles!

MS. A. J. ERNESTA [SEYCHELLES]: Hon. Madam Acting President, allow me to stand on the protocols observed before me. In the interest of time, I shall probably be skipping a few; the team was a bit overzealous. So, just to begin, Seychelles on the effect of tariffs on trade in SADC Member States: Seychelles is a small, high-income, import-dependent island economy, with tourism and fisheries remaining as the backbone of the economy. Seychelles is party to the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the SADC Free Trade Areas (SFTAs) and the interim Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union (EU). Through these agreements, most trade with COMESA and SADC partners is duty-free. According to the World Trade Organisation (WTO),

tariff profiles, Seychelles supplies one of the lowest, most favoured nation tariff rates in Africa, with a simple average applied Most Favoured Nation (MFN), tariff of 2,6% in 2024, second only to Mauritius.

Most imports from outside COMESA, SADC and EPA arrangements face these low Most Favoured Nation (MF tariffs, with high duties kept mainly for narrow exclusion lists of revenue-sensitive goods such as motor vehicles, alcohol, tobacco and certain fish species. Seychelles graduated from the African Growth and Opportunity Act, AGOA, in 2017 due to its income status, so it is not directly affected by the 2025 expiry of the AGOA scheme and like many other SADC States. However, the highest US tariffs on African exports may indirectly affect Seychelles' regional partners and shipping routes. On recent measures and achievements, the Ministry of Finance National Planning and Trade has, in the last two years, led several initiatives to help local firms adapt to changing tariff landscapes, an African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), National Implementation Strategy, which positions Seychelles to use continental preferences to diversify markets beyond the EU and Indian Ocean regions, especially for processed fish, niche tourism services and professional services.

Continued participation in COMESA and SADC FTAs, reducing tariffs and non-tariff barriers for regional imports, particularly food, construction materials and industrial inputs; implementation of the export guidebook and import guide to help small exporters understand rules of origin and preferential tariffs under SADC, COMESA and the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEPA). The challenges and issues observed are that a high concentration of exports leaves Seychelles vulnerable to tariff and non-

tariff changes in a few key markets, especially the EU and some Asian buyers. Transport and logistics costs remain high for a remote island State, so non-tariff costs and shipping surges often outweigh the low tariff advantages of FTAs. As a high-income country with very low applied tariffs, Seychelles has limited room to use further tariff reductions as an incentive and must focus, instead, on standards, trade facilitation and value addition. Reform initiatives for critical mineral mining and distribution: Seychelles does not currently produce oil, gas or solid minerals and has no land-based critical mineral mines. However, its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), of over 1,3 million square kilometres, has potential for offshore oil and gas and possibly, seabed minerals. To manage these prospective resources, Seychelles has built an early governance framework.

The petroleum sector is regulated by the Petroleum Mining Act, 1976, Petroleum Taxation Act, 2008, as amended by the 2013 amendments and model petroleum agreements complemented by environmental laws and pollution control regulations. Seychelles joined the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), as a candidate in 2014 and uses the Seychelles Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (SEITI), to disclose petroleum licencing and revenue information and to guide reforms such as the Beneficial Ownership Act, 2020, for transparency in the extractive sector. Its Blue Economy Roadmap and Marine Spatial Plan (MSP), commit the country to ensuring any future seabed mining is compatible with conservation of marine ecosystems, tourism and fisheries. Although Seychelles has no critical minerals production, these frameworks are relevant to any future extraction of offshore hydrocarbons or polymetallic

minerals. I will skip a few of these. Gaps, risks and parliamentary opportunities: The existing laws on petroleum and minerals are older and were not drafted with critical minerals and deep-sea mining in mind. A comprehensive update would be needed if commercial discoveries are made. Given the high ecological value of Seychelles' marine environment, the National Assembly will need to weigh climate and biodiversity commitments against any extractive projects.

Robustness of the democratic framework to ensure the perpetual succession of Parliaments, the constitutional and institutional framework: Seychelles is a multi-party democracy with a constitution that guarantees separation of powers, regular elections and judicial independence. The National Assembly is elected on a mixed system of directly elected and proportionately elected Members, ensuring plural representation. Recent years have demonstrated that peaceful alternation of power has become the norm. In 2020, an opposition candidate won the presidency and his party gained a parliamentary majority for the first time since independence. In 2025, another peaceful transfer of executive and parliamentary power occurred, following the elections and a presidential runoff. Observers noted that the vote was generally orderly and in line with democratic standards. SADC Election Observers in 2025, assessed the Seychelles' general elections considering the SADC principles and guidelines governing democratic elections (EN | FR | PT), noting strong legal frameworks, including the constitution and the elections, while also identifying operational and logistical areas for improvement. Seychelles performs strongly on governance indices. It is ranked first in Africa for overall governance and

18th globally in perceived corruption levels, reflecting the effectiveness of institutions and the rule of law.

The Electoral Commission amended the Elections Act ahead of the 2025 polls with stakeholder consultations and reference to the Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum, model law on elections (EN | FR | PT), aiming to strengthen campaign finance rules, media access and complaints mechanisms. The National Assembly of Seychelles can continue aligning electoral and political finance laws with SADC and international standards, strengthen oversight of security forces and intelligence services, ensuring they operate within constitutional limits and ensure that parliamentary rules of procedure (EN | FR | PT), safeguard continuity, including clear provisions on dissolution, extraordinary sittings, and succession in case of a regional Youth Parliament for the Indian Ocean, officially launched in Victoria in April 2025, with Seychelles youth delegates engaging directly with the National Assembly. Progress towards youth representation in SADC-PF delegations: The National Assembly includes younger Members of Parliament and youth-focused committee Chairs in its SADC-PF delegations. Seychelles has also championed youth issues at regional meetings, including discussions on digitalisation, youth participation in elections and the establishment of Youth Parliament. Seychelles is positively disposed to the SADC-PF proposal that each delegation should include at least one Member under 35 years of age and continued collaboration with the Seychelles National Youth Council and Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Family Department will help identify and mentor suitable youth representatives. I must, at this point, point out

that our youngest Member of Parliament currently is actually 30 years old, and apparently, I am the youngest Speaker in the SADC region as well. So, yeah.

Violations under the African Charter on Human and People's Rights: Seychelles has ratified all nine core UN Human Rights Treaties and the African Charter on Human and People's Rights and regularly engages with regional bodies. Recent external assessments, including the 2024 US State Department Human Rights Report, found no credible reports of significant human rights abuses and noted that the government took steps to investigate and sanction officials implicated in abuses. In March 2025, the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR), undertook a promotion mission to Seychelles, engaging government, civil society and vulnerable groups to evaluate progress and remaining challenges under the Charter. At the national level, the Seychelles Human Rights Commission publishes annual and media reports highlighting achievements and persistent gaps, such as the need for stronger awareness, better conditions in detention facilities and improved access to justice. For the key concerns in specific areas, while there have been no large-scale violations, several issues require continued attention, including lengthy pre-trial detention in some high-profile corruption, terrorism and drug cases, which have raised due process concerns.

In fact, I just received an update that, with regards to this, a particular bail has been granted to two people who have been, unfortunately, in detention for quite a while. Isolated allegations relating to freedom of expression in media, particularly in cases touching on national security and

high-level corruption: Ongoing challenges in areas such as rights of persons with disabilities and people who use drugs, highlighted by the Human Rights Commission.

Measures and parliamentary role: The National Assembly of Seychelles has enacted amendments in line with SADC-PF model laws, such as the Domestic Violence Act and other gender-based violence-related provisions, with strong involvement from the Women's Parliamentary Caucus.

Oversight committees regularly call line ministries, the police, prisons, and independent commissions to account for the implementation of human rights standards. Increasing costs for healthcare services: Seychelles provides universal healthcare free, at the point of use in public facilities and has one of the highest health expenditures per capita in Africa. However, several factors are increasing the cost of healthcare, including rising non-communicable diseases, an aging population and climate-related health risks, higher global prices for pharmaceuticals, medical equipment and supplies, compounded by exchange rate fluctuations. Government and ministerial achievements: Despite cost pressures, the Ministry of Health, supported by the Ministry of Finance, has achieved notable progress. The National Health Strategic Plan 2022-26 prioritises efficiency, primary healthcare and better use of resources, acknowledging that increased investment is needed but must be sustainable. The Annual Health Sector Performance Report 2023 records major infrastructure gains, including the opening of St. Mary's Hospital, renovation of the National Institute for Health and Social Studies, premises, installation of a new Magnetic

Resonance Imaging machine and significant progress with an Electronic Health Information System rollout.

Seychelles maintains a high universal health coverage index of 0,82 and life expectancy of about 75.3 years, reflecting effective coverage despite rising costs. The country continues to receive targeted support from partners like the World Health Organisation, which has provided technical and financial assistance to strengthen primary care and essential services.

Challenges and way forward: Dependence on external suppliers for medicine and equipment leaves Seychelles vulnerable to global price shocks and supply chain disruptions. The National Assembly of Seychelles can scrutinise health budgets to ensure that increased allocations translate into efficiency gains, preventive care and better procurement practices. Support policy reforms that strengthen generic medicine use, pooled procurement, telemedicine and regional collaboration in pharmaceuticals within SADC.

In conclusion, looking ahead, Seychelles welcomes the transition of the SADC-PF into a fully-fledged SADC Parliament and stands ready to support the implementation of the protocol that will guide its operations. In this spirit, Seychelles remains committed to working together with fellow Member States to advance sustainable development, regional solidarity and democratic resilience for current and future generations. Thank you. - [*Applause*] –

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: South Africa!

HON. A. T. DIDIZA [SOUTH AFRICA]: Acting President of the SADC Parliamentary Forum and Vice President, Hon. Members, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, it is indeed a profound honour to present and

table the Country Report on South Africa's Implementation of the Resolutions Adopted at the 57th Plenary Assembly Session. Before I deep dive into South Africa's country report, it would be amiss of me not to preface my presentation by joining others who wish to continue to host our headquarters in Namibia.

Hon. Members, coming to the issues at hand, maybe before that, I need also to thank our Speaker of KwaZulu-Natal, Speaker Nontembeko, who has been gracious as our host and indeed welcomed us to host this 58th SADC Plenary Assembly here in KwaZulu-Natal. – [*Applause*] - I must also say that I would also want to extend our gratitude to the Speakers of our Provincial Legislatures, who also were gracious enough to participate.

On 29 June 2025, the Portfolio Committee on Police was also briefed on a progress report by the SA Police Service on cases of violence against children and further received a presentation by the Women Empowerment Platform on Violence Against Children. Correspondingly, on 26 June 2025, our Parliament joined the Multi-Party Women's Caucus, which convened to receive briefings from the SA Police Service and the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development on the implementation of gender-based violence and femicide measures, investigation and challenges around protection orders and resourcing.

I want to come to the issue, Hon. Members, some of the details you can read in your report through the SADC platform. However, I want to come now to live matters that the SG has written and asked us to respond to. Acting President, Hon. Members, allow me to address the live matters of importance for this Forum and outline the tangible progress we have made.

On the effect of tariffs on trade in SADC Member States, Hon. Members, the tariffs indeed had a direct impact, as my colleagues have said, in several key sectors, particularly in our country, which relates largely to the automotive industry and agricultural export. It would be recalled that the US is one of the major trading partners that, not only South Africa but other members have benefited from, particularly on AGOA.

Proposed or imposed tariffs, such as 25% on vehicles, have led to higher costs and reduced competitiveness for South Africa's made or assembled vehicles in the U.S market, which could potentially slow demand. I think it is important, Hon. Members, to say when we look at these issues of tariffs, it is not only about the impact of trade or its slowness but its impact on employment and on our people.

Equally, the steel and aluminium industries have been directly affected by the US tariff, disrupting global supply chains and increasing manufacturing costs. Here in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, one of the steel companies, *ArcelorMittal*, had announced the closure of one of its plants in Newcastle, an area where it had been largely dependent on that assembly plant.

I think it is important to also appreciate that when such industries are affected, it has an impact on the downstream industry, which also employs several people. However, it is important that in our response, not only as South Africa but also as other countries, is to what extent we really increase our trade among ourselves, utilising the instrument of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area, as we have heard from Namibia.

We have indicated that they have deposited their instruments, South Africa has done so and I know some of the countries in the region have equally done so. However, at the same time, how do we diversify our trade from only dependence on the West but also utilising the East, the Middle East, as well as other developing countries, where we could have a competitive advantage?

On the reform initiatives for critical mineral mining and distribution, South Africa is actively pursuing mineral beneficiation to add value to its resources and boost economic growth. This involves transforming raw minerals into higher-value products, fostering industrialisation and job creation.

It is important, Hon Members, to indicate that this, equally, will require dedicated investment from our governments, to ensure that enough resources are put in this direction that we and not just we in South Africa but other countries, would like to take. How do we make sure that these critical minerals become the base of our industrialisation, that we can regulate them and coordinate our strategies in the region, so that we are able to protect our capabilities?

On the robustness of the democratic framework to ensure the perpetual succession of parliaments, indeed, Hon. Members, I can say here that our constitutional democracy with a three-tier system of government, legislation and an independent judiciary is standing firm. We have ensured, as Parliament, that we put in place oversight to ensure that the way in which our instruments, such as the Independent Electoral Commission, does its work is of quality, fairness and independence.

At the same time, Parliament, as a body, is the one that would interview and make the recommendation of the appointments of commissioners to the Independent Electoral Commission. Nevertheless, it is important to indicate that on an ongoing basis in these three tiers of government, continuous elections are done on a cycle of five years but also when there are by-elections, which might have been occasioned by one reason or the other.

Simultaneously, there has been an increase in the participation of women and young people because we have ensured that these are part and parcel of the important sectors of our community, whose voices must be heard in the consideration of the protocol and modalities of operation of the SADC Parliament.

Indeed, we have deposited our instruments, and we do trust that, sooner, in 2026, we can remove the PF and just remain with a P. – [*Applause*] - I am happy that Lesotho has indicated that they are already far gone into the process. I am sure the remaining Member Parliament who has a brand-new Speaker, Malawi, will do the same sooner, with the ululations - [*Ululations*] - for ensuring that this protocol indeed is finalised. - [*Applause*] -

Again, it is important to thank our forebears, who really made sure that they championed by lobbying several heads of State in our region, led by our Ambassador Mudenda, our Speaker and former Speaker Katjavivi, who really made sure that they, together with other members of the Speakers, such as Speaker Mutti, as well as Speaker Mbete initially and Angola, would really make sure that they represent this Forum well. Today, we say thank

you to them, even those of them who may not be Members of Parliament today. – [*Applause*] -

On the violations under the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, Madam Chair and Members, I want to say that South Africa's compliance and implementation of this charter, also known as the Banjul Charter, is characterised by commitments stemming from its post-apartheid constitutional democracy.

Hon. Acting President and Members, thank you very much. You will then read our report, like we will read yours, on the website of the SADC Parliamentary Forum. Thank you very much. - [*Applause*] –

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Zambia!

HON. M. C. MAZOKA [ZAMBIA]: Thank you very much Madam President. I am really honoured to present Zambia's country report on the progress of the implementation of the resolutions of the 57th Plenary Assembly held in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. Madam President, on the initiatives for critical mineral mining and distribution, Zambia's mining sector is a key driver of socio-economic development, contributing 17,5% to GDP, 70% of foreign exchange earnings, 30% of government revenues and substantial formal employment.

From 2021 to 2025, Zambia undertook policy, legal and institutional reforms to align the sector with the country's transformation agenda and the global energy transition. Parliament played a central role in Zambia's mining sector reforms by enacting key legal frameworks, including the Minerals Regulation Commission Act No 14 of 2024 and the Geological and Minerals Development Act No. 2 of 2025. These laws established a semi-autonomous

minerals regulation commission, new directorates for artisanal and small-scale mining, large-scale mining and geological surveys.

The 2025 local content regulations were also approved, which require mining companies to progressively allocate a portion of procurement to Zambian suppliers, thereby enhancing local participation in the value chain institutional reforms. This included the creation of the Minerals Regulation Commission, directorates for various mining sectors and a dedicated fund to support artisanal and small-scale miners, ensuring effective implementation and accountability.

The mining sector reform process, which involved developing and implementing new policies, laws and institutions to govern Zambia's mining sector, faced several challenges. These included balancing the different needs of communities and the mining industry and limited community participation due to distrust. Tensions between local demands for ownership and the foreign investment and the differing priorities among different government stakeholders and local actors, made reaching consensus difficult.

This is on the robustness of the democratic framework to ensure the perpetual succession of Parliaments. In Zambia, Parliament operates as a continuous legal entity under the principle of perpetual succession, ensuring that the institution continues to exist and function despite changes in individual Members of Parliament, elections or dissolutions. The doctrine of exclusive cognizance allows Parliament to regulate its internal affairs independently, free from interference by the courts, while the

Constitution provides limits to ensure compliance with the fundamental rights.

Parliamentary leadership, including the Speaker and the Deputy Speakers, are elected for fixed terms linked to the life of each National Assembly but the officers continue administratively during the solutions, ensuring continuity. The Clerk of the National Assembly and the permanent administrative staff maintain the functions of the institution, providing local and procedural advice, overseeing elections of parliamentary leadership, managing records and executing Executive functions. These rules and practices collectively protect the parliament's perpetual succession, safeguard its independence from the Executive or other institutions and ensure it continues to operate as a stabilising factor for democratic governance, even between elections.

On the inclusion of youth Members in SADC-PF country delegates, in Zambia, the selection process of Members of Parliament appointed to delegations, such as the SADC-PF consider:

1, Political party representation.

2. Gender balance to ensure fair representation of women and men.

3. Other considerations such as experience, expertise or participation in the relevant parliamentary committees. Currently, the delegation does not include a youth Member of Parliament as the National Assembly itself has limited youth representation with only one youth Member of Parliament. The Zambian Parliament recognises the importance of youth inclusion and will consider appointing youth Members to future delegations, including

potential participation in the Standing Committee on Gender Equality, Women Advancement and Youth Development.

Now, on the effect of tariffs on the trade in SADC Member States, African Growth and Opportunity Act, AGOA, exports contribute only 0,5% of Africa's GDP and Zambia's exports to the United States under AGOA from 2000 to 2023 were 1.43 billion US dollars, representing 0,4% of SADC AGOA exports. Zambia mainly exports copper 90%, alongside honey, sugar, groundnuts, tobacco, coffee, fruits, vegetables and flowers. New United States tariffs largely spare refined copper and the key critical minerals, which helps cushion Zambia, though the measures may still reduce Zambia's export competitiveness and demand. Likely effects of the new tariffs: One, there are reduced benefits, none.

Competitiveness of Zambia’s exports compared to goods from non-tariffed countries, lower demand and export volumes, potentially worsening Zambia’s trade balance with the United States and reducing revenue.

Proactive government measures to strengthen intra-African trade and the economic resilience: Zambia has ratified and domesticated the African Continental Free Trade Area and joined the guided trade initiative.

Ongoing awareness and the capacity building with support from the African Continental Free Trade Area Secretariat and Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, GIZ, regional trade engagements removing existing trade barriers and avoiding new ones.

Strengthening bilateral trade agreements with Angola, DRC, Mozambique and Tanzania, including beef exports. Robitaille Corridor Project, Zambia is one of the three beneficiary countries. It aims to integrate

Zambia into global value chains, especially in mining, energy, agriculture, tourism and electric vehicle battery manufacturing.

Export Financing Zambia Export Development: This fund provides affordable financing for SMEs, women and youth in export businesses.

On digital trade and the African Continental Free Trade Area adjustment Fund: Zambia is domesticating the African Free Trade Area, digital trade protocol and preparing to access the AfCFTA adjustment fund and it is working with the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, UNICEF, and the GIZ only simplified AfCFTA – as this is a tongue twister.

Trading guidelines:

On the industrial and the value chain development, Zambia capacity building in this one in sectors, such as leather, with support for design studios and the clusters and it has also hosted the Africa Leather Forum in November 2025,

On establishment of export councils: New structures are being developed to coordinate export promotion beyond current projects and Zambia is streamlining border procedure implementing the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, COMESA, Simplified Trade Regime with Zimbabwe and Malawi.

The joint regional industrial projects: Zambia is pursuing joint ventures like Zambia and Zimbabwe common agro-industrial park and Zambia-DRC electric vehicle value chain partnership.

As regards the consideration of the protocol on the modalities of operation of the SADC Parliament, Zambia has made significant strides at

the national level in advancing the transformation of the Forum into a SADC Regional Parliament. On 2 July 2024, Zambia became the 11th SADC Member States to sign the agreement amending the SADC Treaty (EN | FR | PT) to establish the SADC Parliament.

Three, Zambia hosted the 56th SADC PF Parliament Plenary Assembly in December 2024. During the session, the Vice President, Mrs. W. K. Mutale Nalumango, reaffirmed Zambia's commitment to the establishment of the SADC Parliament and pledged support for all processes leading to each successful completion. Regarding the draft protocol, Zambia has submitted its comments to the SADC Secretariat pursuant to the decision of the 44th SADC Summit. Madam, Deputy President, I thank you for your time. - [*Applause*] -

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Hon. Members, we are left with Zimbabwe. I think if you allow, let us finish with Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe!

HON. M. MBOHWA [ZIMBABWE]: Thank you, Madam President. I had already packed my papers because you had said, after lunch. Let me ride on the protocols already established before me. I will present my report on behalf of my Speaker of Parliament, Hon. J. F. N. Mudenda, who is not here due to pressing issues at home.

Madam President; Hon Members; I am honoured to submit the Zimbabwe national progress report to facilitate the exchange of information and best practices on issues of regional concern.

The Effects of Tariffs on Trade in SADC Member States with the African Growth and Opportunity Act's (AGOA) expiry, SADC exporters now face higher Most-Favoured-Nation (MFN) tariffs in the United States, threatening

sectors that had long relied on duty-free access. This development highlights the urgent need for the region to deepen regional value chains and fully utilise the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), the world's largest free trade area, covering 1.3 billion people and a $3.4 trillion market. Parliaments are critical in advancing regional integration. Parliaments enact legislation, ratify treaties and approve the harmonised standards, including rules of origin, which make tariff liberalisation truly effective. Zimbabwe has demonstrated leadership in this regard. Having ratified the AfCFTA in 2019 and commenced trading in 2021, Zimbabwe is now reviewing its tariff schedules and has committed to eliminating duties on raw materials within five years and on intermediate goods within ten, while preserving tariffs on sensitive products.

Reform Initiatives for Critical Mineral Mining and Distribution: Zimbabwe, endowed with over 40 minerals, including lithium and Platinum Group Metals (PGMs) vital to the clean energy transition, has introduced key reforms to ensure communities benefit from local resources. Parliament has restricted raw exports, increased domestic processing and established a 1% levy on lithium proceeds for mining-affected communities.

Robustness of the Democratic Framework to Ensure the Perpetual Succession of Parliament: The Constitution of Zimbabwe guarantees the Legislature's independence by empowering Parliament to defend the Constitution, enact laws for good governance and protect Members of Parliament's privileges and immunities.

Consideration of the Protocol on the modalities of operation of the SADC Parliament: Hon. Members, Zimbabwe, Chairs the Strategic Lobby

Group on Transformation advancing the SADC PF Transformative Agenda, supporting the creation of a Regional SADC Parliament to enhance regional governance and complete the Pan-African institutional framework.

Inclusion of youth Members in SADC-PF country delegations: Hon. Members, the Parliament of Zimbabwe acknowledges the significant role of the youth demographic in national and regional development initiatives. This recognition is firmly established in the Constitution of Zimbabwe and consistently reflected across administrative procedures, including representation within international parliamentary organisations such as the SADC PF.

Violations under the African Charter on Human and People's Rights: Madam President, Parliament of Zimbabwe has strengthened justice and human rights protections through key interventions. During the 9th Parliament, Committees held Public Hearings that led to the adoption of a minimum 15-year sentence for rape and other serious sexual offences, enhancing deterrence and security for women and girls. Parliament has also advanced prison reforms, working with the Zimbabwe Prisons and Correctional Services (ZPCS) and the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC) to create open prisons that safeguard the dignity and family life of children of incarcerated mothers. Further, Parliament tackled child and women's rights violations through extensive consultations on the SADC Model Law on Child Marriages, resulting in the new Marriage Act, which bans child marriages and enforces marriage equality.

To sustain oversight and accountability, Parliament continues to provide budgetary support to key human rights institutions, including the

Zimbabwe Gender Commission (ZGC) and the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission.

Increase in costs for health care services: Hon. Members; Zimbabwe's health sector is confronted with a profound financing deficit precipitated by the withdrawal and curtailment of external assistance, most notably from PEPFAR and USAID, whose commitments had exceeded US$400 million for HIV programming in the 2024–2025 period. The cut in funding has resulted in escalating user fees and a contraction in service accessibility, disproportionately burdening vulnerable populations. To mitigate the challenges, the Government is seeking supplementary budget allocations to reduce the funding gap, as well as create a conducive environment for the private sector to contribute meaningfully to the health sector. Parliament has introduced targeted health-related taxes to close the financing gap, including:

• A 3% National AIDS Levy on personal income.

• A 3% corporate health tax on employer and trust profits.

• A sugar tax earmarked for cancer treatment and procurement of medical equipment.

• Increased "sin taxes" on alcohol, cigarettes, fast food and sugary drinks to support health sector funding.

Report on the implementation of the Resolutions of the 57th Plenary Assembly: Hon. Members; the Report on the resolution under the theme: "*Harnessing Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Effective and Efficient Parliamentary Processes in the SADC region: Experience, Challenges and Opportunities*".

On recommendation number one, “ENCOURAGES SADC Members States to embrace AI, given that the AI juggernaut is inexorably moving forward, and its benefits far outweigh the risks, notwithstanding the pitfalls associated with its adoption, as the SADC Region cannot afford to be left behind in this revolution’. Parliament and the Executive recently facilitated the adoption of the National Artificial Intelligence Strategy (2026 2030). This places Zimbabwe among the early adopters in SADC to harness AI for national development. This is a build-up on Smart Zimbabwe Master Plan and the Digital Economy Framework, which continue to drive our digital transformation journey.

Regarding recommendation number five “IMPLORES SADC Parliaments to oversee the equitable roll-out of AI in Member States by ensuring that everyone, regardless of location or socio-economic status, has equal access to technology and digital literacy skills, to leave no one behind.” In line with the requirement, there is the National Broadband Plan, the rollout of Community Information Centres and the GIGA School Connectivity Programme, all of which are meant to extend broadband access, build ICT labs and ensure that rural and urban communities can participate in the emerging AI-driven economy. At the institutional level, Parliament’s digitalisation efforts, which include automated Hansard systems, digital document management and virtual sittings, lay a solid foundation for integrating AI into legislative work.

Concerning recommendation number six, which “CALLS UPON Parliaments to, through enactment of appropriate legislation, create an enabling legislative and policy environment for the adoption of AI, whilst

guaranteeing the safety and security of users and the nation from latent threats to personal and national security". The Parliament of Zimbabwe has strengthened the legal framework for the ethical use of Artificial Intelligence through the enactment of the Data Protection Act, the operationalisation of the Data Protection Authority and the gazetting of the Postal and Telecommunications Amendment Bill. Accordingly, the Parliament of Zimbabwe fully supports the finalisation and adoption of a regional Model Law on AI to guide its safe, harmonised and effective deployment across the SADC region.

Report on the resolutions under the theme "Adoption of the Report of the Standing Committee on Food, Agriculture, Natural Resources and Climate Action". Recommendation number one reads: "URGES SADC Member Parliaments to institutionalise regular Parliamentary oversight of prisons, including periodic visits and inspections by Members of Parliament or relevant Portfolio Committees. Parliaments should establish formal mechanisms, including through a dedicated Standing Committee, to routinely monitor and report on prison conditions covering food quality, water and sanitation, healthcare, and general treatment of inmates to promptly identify and address issues." During the Second Session of the 10th Parliament, Committees conducted nationwide prison visits and presented their findings to Parliament, prompting reforms under Sections 50 and 51 of the Constitution to improve food, water, sanitation, healthcare and the general treatment of inmates. The Prisons and Correctional Service Act is being reviewed to strengthen accountability, require regular prison inspections by magistrates and judges, institutionalise joint oversight by the

Zimbabwe Prisons and Correctional Services and the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission and Parliament, align prison conditions with the Nelson Mandela Rules (EN) and Luanda Guidelines and advance decriminalisation of petty offences and non-custodial sentencing to ease overcrowding.

With regards to recommendation number five, which "ENCOURAGES SADC Member States to implement climate smart and sustainable practices within their prison systems to improve food security and resilience, including through promotion of prison agriculture programmes where feasible, enabling prisons to produce some of their own food and impart agricultural skills to inmates". Zimbabwe Prisons and Correctional Services is rolling out green initiatives such as tree planting, biogas projects and eco-friendly farming to cut firewood use, curb deforestation and produce food sustainably. At prison farms like Mazowe, new water-propelled irrigation systems replace electricity and diesel, advancing both climate goals and the Government's wider green economy agenda.

On recommendation number six which reads: "APPEAL to SADC Member States to also invest in environmentally friendly infrastructure in prisons, for example, installing rainwater harvesting systems to augment water supply, deploying energy efficient cooking stoves or transitioning to cleaner energy sources for kitchen and lighting needs, and improving ventilation and insulation of prison buildings to cope with extreme temperatures." To that effect, Zimbabwe has taken notable steps towards greening its prison infrastructure. The Zimbabwe Prisons and Correctional Service, in partnership with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA), has embarked

on initiatives to improve access to water at the Chikurubi Prison Complex in Harare, one of the country's largest prisons, drilling boreholes and installing a new water distribution system. This intervention has improved access to clean water for over 10,000 inmates, officers and their families. Zimbabwe is implementing climate-smart agriculture and horticulture in prisons, including drip irrigation and market gardening at facilities like Gwanda, Zvishavane and Khami prisons, to secure food production despite erratic rainfall while building inmates' agribusiness skills. Anju Farm Prison has added greenhouses and a large seedling project that supplies prisons and nearby communities, helping improve food security and support reintegration.

Report on the resolutions under the theme "Advocating for Women's and Children's Rights in Prison Management". Recommendation number three (3) reads: "URGE Member Parliaments to enact laws that would facilitate decongestion in the prisons, such as non-custodial sentence, especially for the vulnerable groups such as women, juveniles and children imprisoned with their mothers". Zimbabwe's legal system supports the implementation of non-custodial measures, including community service, suspended sentences or bail. It also emphasises the separation and protection of vulnerable inmates and ensures child-sensitive detention practices, all in accordance with constitutional provisions.

Additionally:

• Correctional facilities like Connemara Open Prison and Whawha Young Offenders Prison now prioritise rehabilitation, education and skills training to support reintegration.

• Gender-sensitive reforms include mother-and-child units in selected women's prisons, allowing incarcerated mothers to care for young children in humane conditions.

• A new Prisons and Correctional Services Bill seeks stronger protection for pregnant women and regular health checks for mothers and children, reinforcing Zimbabwe's commitment to human dignity and gender equity in line with GEWAYD principles.

Report on resolutions under the theme: "Adoption of the Report of the Standing Committee on Gender Equality, Women Advancement and Youth Development". Recommendation number five reads: "CALL UPON the Member States to introduce programmes against GBV in the school syllabus so that learners, both boys and girls, are taught and become knowledgeable of the evils of GBV at a young age". To this end, Zimbabwe has integrated the Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) as a core part of the Guidance and Counselling Curriculum. It covers cognitive, emotional, physical and social aspects of sexuality, empowering students to make informed decisions and protect their rights and dignity. Gender based violence (GBV) prevention is a key component of CSE. Students, especially girls, are taught to recognise and resist harmful practices such as child marriage, sexual exploitation and domestic abuse. Additionally, teacher training has been enhanced to equip educators with the skills to deliver GBV-sensitive content effectively.

Report on resolutions under the theme: "The Adoption of the Report of the Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus". Regarding the recommendation which reads: "Encourage SADC Governments to be

receptive to the advocacy calls by the RWPC for increased accountability by financial institutions with respect to the obligation to be responsive to and address the financial needs of women". The Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development promotes the economic empowerment of women, girls, youth, children and disadvantaged men through dedicated funds such as the Community Development Fund and the Economic Empowerment Fund. The Zimbabwe Central Bank, the Reserve Bank's National Financial Inclusion Strategy, targets disadvantaged groups by expanding access to formal financial services, while the Treasury issues annual gender-sensitive budget guidelines to ensure that ministries integrate gender equality and women's empowerment into plans and budgets.

Report on resolutions under the theme: "Adoption of the motion on Increasing Efforts to Prevent the Spread and Impact of HIV and AIDS in the SADC Region". On recommendation number five "Prioritise sustainable domestic financing for HIV responses in National budgets, with active Parliamentary oversight to ensure accountability and alignment with international commitments". The Ministry of Women Affairs, Community and SMEs Development promotes the economic empowerment of women, girls, youth, children and disadvantaged men through dedicated funds such as the Community Development Fund and the Economic Empowerment Fund. The Reserve Bank's National Financial Inclusion Strategy targets disadvantaged groups by expanding access to formal financial services, while Treasury issues annual gender-sensitive budget guidelines to ensure

that ministries integrate gender equality and women's empowerment into plans and budgets.

In conclusion, Hon. Members, this presentation clearly demonstrates that the Parliament of Zimbabwe is actively implementing the resolutions of the 57th Plenary Assembly, translating regional commitments into concrete laws, policies and oversight actions at national level. It confirms Parliament of Zimbabwe's resolve to align its work with SADC PF priorities and to continuously report on, review and strengthen this implementation for the benefit of the people of Zimbabwe and the wider SADC region. I so submit, Madam President.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Thank you very much to all the countries. We have concluded all the presentations. It is now almost 1430 hours. I think we can go for lunch now and be back at 1530 hours for the discussion on the country reports.

[*LUNCH BREAK 1426 hours*]

Business resumed at 1537 hours

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Welcome back. Now that all countries have presented their country reports, we will allow debate. Members wishing to debate should signal by raising, again, their country's flag or tag and if you ask a question, indicate to whom your question is addressed. And please, identify yourself by stating your name and country and each one of you will get five minutes for an input.

Can we just use the name of the country and raise it!

Yes, South Africa is there. Madagascar, you still want to make an input? Because you are not indicating now.

So, if those are the only ones, let me allow Madagascar first and then come to South Africa.

FR.

HON. R. SAVATSARAH [MADAGASCAR]: Merci Madame la Présidente de nous avoir donné la parole. Et merci encore pour l'opportunité que vous nous donnez pour pouvoir continuer la présentation du rapport conformément aux directives du Forum Parlementaire de la SADC pour cette 58ème Assemblée plénière suivant les domaines, thématiques retenus.

Donc à ce qui concerne l'incidence de droits de douane sur le commerce dans les Etats membres de la SADC, des efforts substantiels ont été entrepris pour faciliter le commerce régional. Il s'agit notamment de la modernisation de procédures douanières grâce à l'intégration accrue du système SYDONIA WORLD, la réduction de délai de dédouanement concernant certains produits au niveau de ports et de postes frontaliers, la simplification partielle de la grille tarifaire pour les produits essentiels et aussi l'exemption de droits et taxes à l'importation pour les produits, marchandises qui répondent au critère de l'accord de la SADC.

En ce qui concerne le secteur minier, Madagascar, riche en minerais critiques essentiels à la transition énergétique mondiale, poursuit plusieurs réformes visant à améliorer la gouvernance du secteur minier. Et en 2024, il y a eu la révision du code minier effectué pour attirer les investissements tout en renforçant les exigences environnementales et sociales. Il y a aussi la mise en place des mesures de traçabilité pour lutter contre l'exploitation illicite. Il s'agit notamment du renforcement du cadre légal et règlementaire,

en particulier pour l'or ainsi que l'application de contrôle plus strict à l'exportation.

Et la Parlement malgache exerce un contrôle attentif sur ces réformes en lien avec les voix de la Société civile et des collectivités territoriales décentralisées.

Et sur le cadre démocratique, le fonctionnement de Parlement, en ajoutant tout ce qui a été dit tout à l'heure, la solidité du cadre démocratique du Parlement malgache est actuellement mise à l'épreuve suite aux événements politiques en octobre 2025 et qui ont entrainé en fait la suspension temporaire des institutions. Et bien qu'en Madagascar, la Constitution malgache a établi un cadre de République semi-présidentielle. Les évènements récents soulèvent des questions sur sa capacité à garantir la continuité du fonctionnement parlementaire en cas de crises majeures.

Et le Parlement doit jouer son rôle de pouvoir législatif indépendant et un pouvoir de contrôle de l'action publique, donc de l'exécutif qui est vraiment nécessaire à l'existence, à la stabilité et la solidité d'un régime démocratique. Quelle qu'en soient les causes, j'attire notre attention et notre réflexion sur le fait que les institutions issues de suffrage universel sont affectées de plus en plus par les crises cycliques cédant ainsi place à d'autres organes transitoires ou non et démontrant ainsi la faiblesse structurelle de nos parlements, là où notre pouvoir est subordonné à celui de l'exécutif et aux dynamiques de rue.

Pour le cas de Madagascar, les dispositions constitutionnelles relatives à la continuité de l'Etat, bien que modifiées, ont permis d'éviter un vide constitutionnel durant la situation critique qu'a traversé le pays. Et tant

bien que mal, l'Assemblée nationale malgache a pu maintenir la majorité de ses activités législatives et de contrôle.

Les dynamiques politiques observées chez nous et dans certains Etats membres de la SADC soulignent la nécessité d'un cadre institutionnel solide, assurant la continuité du Parlement surtout en période de crise, afin de faire respecter l'Etat de droit et pour qu'on puisse continuer la solidité de la gouvernance démocratique et la transition consensuelle indispensable pour la refondation du pays.

Et en ce qui concerne l'application de la Charte africaine des droits de l'homme et des peuples, Madagascar reste attaché au respect et à la protection des droits humains en conformité avec ses engagements continentaux. Bien que de violations flagrantes de droits humains persistent encore, plusieurs avancées sont à noter. Il s'agit de la participation active au cycle de rapportage de violation et de respect de la Charte africaine, à la Commission africaine, des actions de sensibilisation au niveau national sur les droits fondamentaux et des réformes qui sont engagées pour améliorer les conditions de détention.

En conclusion, Madame la Présidente, nous signalons que les priorités des autorités malgaches actuelles reposent sur six (6) axes : l'accès à l'électricité, l'accès à l'eau, la santé pour tous, l'éducation et la création d'emplois et de développement inclusif. Et Madagascar demeure pleinement engagé à contribuer au renforcement de l'intégration régionale, à l'harmonisation de pratiques parlementaires et la consolidation de la démocratie au sein de la SADC. Merci Madame la Présidente.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. But can you just please say your full name, for the record?

HON. R. SAVATSARAH: RABY SAVATSARAH, Députée de Madagascar. Merci.

HON. N. V. MENTE-NKUNA (SOUTH AFRICA): Madam Deputy President and good afternoon to all the colleagues. I ride on all the protocols that have already been observed. I am Ntombovuyo Veronica Mente from South Africa.

Madam Deputy President, let us welcome the reports from countries. But firstly, we need to say that there ought to be a monitoring process that the Southern African Development Community employs, which then seeks to consolidate the reports and establish those which we find satisfaction and comfort in as SADC, that all these model laws, resolutions and instructions that we give to Member States are indeed implemented and are indeed adhered to.

I move then to say we ought to establish such a tool with the assistance of the Secretary-General so that we can have comfort.

Secondly, Deputy President, I also have an issue with countries that still have exceptions in the eradication of child marriages. Except for Eswatini, which has outrightly convinced us that they have enacted a law that now puts all marriages at the age of 18, alongside the countries that have adhered to that model law, as well as the global standards of the marriage age. Persuade the countries that have not done that and that have not convinced this House that they are doing anything about the existing

laws. Exceptions should not be allowed. There is no room for an exception that a child, if a parent had signed off that they can get married, that is equivalent to child trafficking. That is equivalent to sex trafficking. That is equivalent to trading a girl child in particular. Therefore, we ought to have a move in domesticating the model law in eradicating child marriages and get rid of all these exceptions in countries that have put the age of marriage at 18, yet carry some kind of justification for why a child less than 18 years would be married.

We also welcome the programme of free sanitary towels from Botswana. It is a good programme which I think the other countries should also implement. The fact that it is provided in schools acts as an encouragement to other children who have already given up on going to school due to their poor status, that they cannot access sanitary towels and now that sanitary towels are available in schools, it encourages and motivates every girl child to not have a break in school and go to school. Therefore, we plead with other countries to also have similar programmes of free sanitary towels, at least to start with. If it is the provision of sanitary towels to schools, it would be much more welcome and it would make sense for the girl child.

We also welcome the South African programme on curbing the teenage pregnancies, that they have multi-party and committees that are dealing with the scourge of teenage pregnancies and the criminality thereof, which comes with impregnating children as young as 10 years old. We want to plead with other SADC Member States to look into the teenage pregnancies because perpetrators hide behind raping and molesting children because they can no longer marry them in many countries, but they still impregnate

children and nothing happens to them. Therefore, we would implore other countries to also look into the statistics of teenage pregnancies and try all systems in place to care and arrest all that which is related to child pregnancies, in particular the molesters and the rapists that are engaging in sexual activities with children.

The third point, Deputy President, is that we as South Africa have suffered the trade wars and in SADC these trade wars, especially by the US have been very clear and have been ongoing. We have now seen Trump, the President of the US, who has now put a ban on South Africa for the upcoming G20 and has withdrawn aid on AIDS-related activities. He has now also raised tariffs in terms of trade. We implore the SADC countries to trade with each other. Implementing the African Continental Trade Agreement is what is best for us. We all in this SADC, carry the largest share of platinum, diamonds, and manganese. All these minerals are the wealth of SADC, which could be a starting point as to how we trade with each other and actually start industries that will manufacture the products that will get out of the SADC as finished products instead of seeking help from the West. We also welcome what the South African - [*Time Limit*] - Thank you very much. I so move with those recommendations. Thank you

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Secretary, maybe you can just update the Hon. Mente on the issue of child marriages and the work that has been done by the SADC-PF and the Secretary. I think she made a specific point on the issue of how we must deal with the reports and specifically on the issue of child marriages and monitoring and evaluation. That is why I thought maybe you could just update her on the research that has been done.

No, it is fine. It is just the procedural issues that are actually impeding us now. We will make sure that we update the Members on the work that has been done, particularly at the Joint Committee Session. I think the issue of child marriage and the instrument that has been developed will possibly be one of the things that will be in the report.

Motion put and agreed to.

Motion with leave, adopted.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Just a rider on the issue of the country reports, the issues that have been requested by the Secretary-General should be responded to. If there are countries that have not necessarily responded to their specific issues, we would still love to have that information so that we can have a tracking mechanism on the issues that have been requested to be responded to. I think it is more or less the same issue that the Hon. Mente also made an observation on.

MOTION

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL MATTERS (TREASURER'S REPORT)

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Pinkie, you must move first so that there can be a seconder. You say I move the motion in my name.

DR. PINKIE MONAMULELA [LESOTHO]: Thank you Madam President. On your behalf, I wish to move a motion that the report of the Treasurer be adopted by the Plenary Assembly. Thank you.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Is there any seconder?

AN HON MEMBER [BOTSWANA]: Yes, Madam Acting President, I will be seconding from Botswana.

HON. I. MAGAGULA [ESWATINI]: I second Madam President.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: You can now present your report, Hon. Monamulela.

DR. PINKIE MONAMULELA [LESOTHO]: Thank you, Madam President. Madam President, the Treasurer's Report consists of the following: Paper 1, which is the Management Accounts for the period 1 April 2025 to 30 September 2025 and Paper 2, which is the Budget Proposal for the financial year 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027. I wish to advise that the Treasurer's Report was already circulated and I trust that Members have read through it. Hence, my presentation will be brief and I will focus on the salient matters. Also, bear with me as I will be rounding off the figures for presentation purposes. All amounts are in Namibian dollars.

Hon. Members, Paper 1 consists of the following:

1.0 Update on Annual Mandatory Member Contributions;

2.0 Budget Performance Report as of 30 September 2025 and

3.0 Update on the Sale of Properties Situated at 66 Eros Road, Windhoek, Namibia.

1.0 UPDATE ON ANNUAL MANDATORY MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS

The update given at 1.0 regarding Annual Mandatory Member Contributions is the position as of 30 September 2025. This is summarised in Schedule at paragraph 1.2.1 with details provided from paragraph 1.2.2 to 1.2.6. Madam President, it is pleasing to note that 14 out of 15 Member Parliaments are either paid up or owing only for the current financial year.

Mozambique is the only Parliament that has outstanding arrears as it is still owing for two financial years, namely the year that ended 31 March 2025 and the current financial year ending 31 March 2026. I have an update as from 2 December 2025.

Madam President, yesterday, I received an update that Mauritius has now settled its contribution for the current financial year and is therefore paid up. I wish to, therefore, submit for the record. On paragraph 1.2.7, there is an appeal for the timely settlement of contributions with parliaments being urged to consider settling annual mandatory contributions in a timely manner, preferably the first half of the financial year, to facilitate cash flow management.

1.3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE PLENARY ASSEMBLY.

1.3.1. The Plenary Assembly is requested to consider and take note of the status of the annual mandatory contributions as of 30 September 2025 and to appreciate the commitment of Member Parliaments in ensuring that contributions are paid.

1.3.2. The Plenary Assembly is requested to note the appeal for the timely payments of contributions, preferably in the first half of the financial year, to ensure a healthy cash flow throughout the financial year and to urge Member Parliaments to consider the same.

2.0 BUDGET PERFORMANCE REPORT AS OF 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

Section 2.1 is about the context of the 2025-2026 budget, which was approved by the 56th Plenary Assembly, in Zambia. It is provided for Membership to fully appreciate what assumptions and implementation measures underpin the 2025-26 budget, including highlighting the budgetary constraints when compared to the financial resources generated. Details are provided in paragraphs 2.1.1 to 2.1.3.

Section 2.2 provides an update on cost management measures and other related initiatives that seek to ensure the optimum use of available financial resources. This includes the use of virtual platforms to host meetings, a paperless environment and taking advantage of synergies with cooperating partners and other stakeholders in implementing activities.

Section 2.3 details the actual revenue and compares that against the budgeted revenue as of the 30th of September 2025. Paragraph 2.3.1 to 2.3.4 provide the detailed analysis. Of note is the total budgeted income plus allocation from the reserves for the 2025-2026 budget. Of note is that the total budgeted income plus allocation from the reserves for the 2025-2026 budget was 28,1 million. This consisted of Annual Mandatory Contributions of N$21,1 million, interest of N$480,000 and an amount of N$6,500,000 that was to be allocated from Reserves. Actual total income was N$27 million, resulting in a deficit of N$402,382. This was because the interest received of N$77,618 was only 16% of the budgeted amount of N$480,000.

At 2.4 is the Budget Variance report as of the 30th of September 2025, which details actual expenditure compared against the budgeted expenditure. This is summarised in the schedule at 2.4.1 with details

provided at sections 2.4.2 to 2.4 4. The schedule at 2.4.1 details the budgeted expenditure, actual expenditure and the variance by budget line.

2.4.2 BUDGETED EXPENDITURE

The total budgeted expenditure for the financial year 2025-2026 is 28.06 million. This resulted in a budgeted supply. Surplus of 64,000 and some 36, against the budgeted income of 28.1 million.

3.4.3 Budget performance analysis: total actual expenditure as of 30th of September 2025. The budget performance analysis takes into account that the period 1st of April 2025 to 30th September 2025 is halfway through the financial year. However, timing of expenditure is not evenly spread throughout the financial year but depends on the scheduling of activities, except for certain fixed current monthly expenditure.

(ii) Total Actual Expenditure as of 30th September 2025 amounted to N$11 million, representing 41% of the total budgeted expenditure for the year, leaving a balance of N$16,4 million representing 59%.

(iii) All budgeted lines had favourable variances as of 30th September 2025, with utilisation rates ranging from 0% to 59% and averaging 31%. This trend is not concerning, as more expenditure is anticipated for all budget lines in the remaining six months.

(iv) Members are reminded that some of the expenditure pertaining to Standing Committee meetings and programme activities are catered for by external funding, which is not part of this budget analysis as indicated at 2.3.1. above. For example, Standing Committees met physically in April 2025 in Johannesburg, South Africa, with the support of funding from

Sweden under the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, SRHR, Human Immunodeficiency Virus, HIV and Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome, AIDS, Governance Project and other cooperating partners. The total cost for the joint session and statutory meetings of the Standing Committees was N$2.1 million.

The favourable total variance is, therefore, made possible with the support towards statutory activities, programmes, operational and administrative expenses from the collaborating partners.

2.5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE PLENARY ASSEMBLY

2.5.1. The Plenary Assembly is requested to take note of the context of the 2025-2026 budget and the measures put in place to manage the limited financial resources.

2.5.2. The Plenary Assembly is requested to consider and take note of the performance of the budget as of 30th September 2025.

2.5.3. The Plenary Assembly is also requested to appreciate the reasons for the favourable total variance, which include the following:

(i) Effective implementation of cost management measures; and

(ii) Support towards Human Resource, programme, operational and administrative expenses from collaborating partners such as Sweden.

3.0. UPDATE ON SALE OF PROPERTY AT 66 EROSWEG, EROS, WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA

3.1. The Plenary Assembly is advised that, the sale of the property at 66 Erosweg, Eros, Windhoek, was concluded on 1st September 2025.

3.2. The amount of N$2.1 million realised from the sale was paid towards the Mortgage for the Secretary General's Residence, situated at 89 Joseph Mukwayu Ithana Street, Ludwigsdorf. In this regard, the remaining loan term for the mortgage has been reduced from 63 months to 26 months at the current monthly instalment of N$83 000.

3.3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE PLENARY ASSEMBLY

The Plenary Assembly is requested to record that the matter is now closed. Madam President, allow me to move to Paper Two.

Madam President, Paper 2 is the budget proposal for the financial year 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027. Paper 2 begins with the executive summary at 1.0. Members may wish to note that the 56th Plenary Assembly, held on 13 December 2025 in Livingston, Zambia, resolved to increase the mandatory member contributions by 50%, effective 1 April 2026. This decision was made in view of the fact that the institution's going concern was under threat, given the then-current level of contribution, among other factors, as indicated in the summary. This budget proposal, therefore, is based on the new level of contributions as detailed in section 4.0.

Section 1.2 emphasises the reasons advanced to the 56th Assembly in making the case for the urgent need to increase mandatory member contributions. This still applies to the 2026–2027 budget considerations and is detailed in paragraphs one to four in section 1.2. I wish also to emphasise that the 50% increase in contributions will result in an increase in total revenue from mandatory member contributions of US$10,6 million per

annum and will therefore address some of the concerns raised regarding the going concern and the capacity of the Forum to effectively deliver on its mandate.

Paragraphs 1.4 to 1.7 speak to the priorities of the agenda of the Forum and how we intend to ensure that our objectives are met within the limited financial resource base. The budget proposal for 2026–2027, therefore, takes into consideration all the matters raised in the executive summary and is accordingly submitted for the consideration of the executive of the Plenary.

Section 2.2, subsections 2.1 to 2.6 provide the details regarding the assumptions and other considerations that inform the budget proposal, including sources of finance and the proposed mode of operation and implementation of activities.

One emerging and growing risk or concern is flagged at 2.6, which is the lack of participation in Forum activities by members due to inadequate financial incentives. A more detailed risk assessment is included in the President's report.

Section 3.0 contains the detailed budget proposal for the period 2026–2027. At 3.1, the proposed budget for the financial year 2026–2027 is attached to the report as Annexure B001 with support Schedules A to D and 1 to 20. At 3.2 is the master budget summary schedule, which shows the budget-by-budget line items. The notes to the budget are detailed in sections 4.0 and 5.0.

As indicated earlier, in section 4.0, subsections 4.2 to 4.7, are details indicating the total budgeted income. This is summarised in Schedule 4.2.

Of note is that total revenue is US$76,7 million. Of particular interest is that, out of this, US$31,7 million is from annual mandatory member contributions. As I alluded to earlier, this amount has increased by 50% from US$21,1 million in the 2025–2026 financial year.

In addition, there is a US$1,1 million allocation from reserves and US$720 000 estimated interest from investments, whilst US$43,2 million is donor funds that have already been secured. However, the donor funds are restricted and have separate budgets and therefore, the whole amount is also reflected as expenditure, resulting in a zero net effect on the budget. Despite the 50% increase in annual mandatory member contributions, the total increase in total revenue is only 28% for the following reasons. The allocations from reserves are reduced by 83% from US$5,5 million to US$1,1 million. On the other hand, donor income has increased only by 36%, with the addition of funding from the Austrian Development Agency.

At this point, Madam President, kindly allow me to briefly highlight some of the salient features of this budget. Regarding the allocation from accumulated reserves, that is US$1,1 million as outlined in paragraph 4.5, despite the fact that we have indicated that we do not want to continue to use reserves, this allocation is necessary to cater for an upgrade in the human resource and financial accounting systems, to cater for emerging requirements which are detailed in the report.

Members may wish to note that while the increase in mandatory annual member contributions is sufficiently covering operational costs in the year 2026–2027, this cost is a once-off capital expenditure, with only maintenance costs for the year also included. The amount is submitted

under the budget line for “administration and office expenses”. In addition, a provision of US$500 000 has been made for the development of parliamentary systems, policy and procedure in preparation for the transformation into a regional Parliament. It is emphasised that member Parliaments will provide the necessary expertise in this regard and hence the provision is to facilitate meetings of a technical working group, among other processes. The amount is budgeted under “professional consultancy and legal fees”.

In subsection 4.7, it is explained that the inclusion of US$43 million donor funds as income in the budget is simply to facilitate transparency and accountability and to acknowledge the support of the partners. As also indicated in 4.3, the exact amount, US$43 million, is then included under “expenditure”, resulting in a zero net effect on the budget. Details of donors are contained in Schedule D. The reflection of donor funds also presents an opportunity to compare the donor contributions against contributions from member Parliaments. It is worth noting that the donor funds are 136% of member contributions. Donor budgets and expenditure are compiled and reported separately according to the respective agreements signed.

5.0. Notes on the budgeted expenditure. Section 5.0 gives detailed notes on the budgeted expenditure, further broken into budget lines from subsection 5.1 to 5.6. The table at 5.1 summarises the proposed total budgeted expenditure, while section 5.2 provides the details. Total budgeted expenditure, including donor funding, is 76.6 million compared to total budgeted expenditure of 59.8 million in the 2025-26 budget, an increase of 28%.

Budgeted expenditure excluding dollar funding is 33.4 million compared to 28.1 million in 2025-26, an increase of 18.9%. Excess of budgeted revenue over expenditure is negligible at 174 79 after providing a contingency of only 30 000. Sections 5.5 to 5.6 give details on budgeted expenditure, breaking down into the following broad categories:

5.3. Administrative overheads 4.47 million. This budget line caters for the operations of the secretariat. It also includes various ventures that the secretariat must undertake towards enhancing operational efficiency and accountability, building external relationships, supporting the transformation process and maintaining the reputation and visibility of the institution.

5.4 Staff Emoluments, 21.4 million. The budget is based on the current secretariat structure and caters to the current staff on board. The proposed budget takes into account the annual increases and proposes a slight adjustment to the salary structure, based on a Plenary resolution regarding the same. This results in 17% increase in the total salaries budgeted from the previous year. Secondments by member Parliaments to vacant positions are still encouraged. Details are indicated in the report.

5.5. Direct operational expenses, 6.1 million. This budget line caters to the statutory activities of the Forum, including Plenary Assemblies and EXCO and committee meetings. This constitutes the core business and is supplemented by programme work, which is mostly supported by external funding. In the absence of external funding, the standing committees are proposed to meet virtually. On the other hand, the Plenary Assemblies are to be held physically.

Host Parliaments are contained in the President's report. The budget for the two Plenary Assemblies caters for secretariat-related costs which include promotional materials, media and ICT costs, interpretation and translation, compilation of reports and administrative and logistic costs.

5.6 Nonrecurrent expenditure, 1.4 million. This includes capital expenditure and loan repayments for the mortgage and motor vehicle. A minimal contingency amount of 30 000 is provided for any unforeseen circumstances that may arise. Members are encouraged to intimately familiarise themselves with the provisions which are hereby tabled for the consideration of the 58th Plenary Assembly.

6.0. Recommendations for the consideration of the Plenary Assembly. The Plenary Assembly is requested to consider and approve the budget for the financial year 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027. The Plenary Assembly is requested to take note of the external funding from donors or cooperating partners, which is included in the budget for appreciation only. The following attachments are attached to the report. Annexure B001, which is the budget summary by budget line and schedule A to C and 1 to 19 which are the detailed budget schedules. Madam President, I beg to submit. Thank you. - [*Applause*] -

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Hon. Dr. Monamulela, Treasurer of the Forum. I shall now allow the seconder to present his seconding speech. The seconder is Senator Hon. Magagula.

HON. SEN. I. MAGAGULA (ESWATINI): Madam President, of course with all protocols established, I am riding on: I rise to second the Treasurer's

Report to the 58th Plenary Assembly. I must say I offer my fullest support to the Plenary Assembly to adopt the Treasurer's Report that has been ably presented on behalf of the Executive Committee by the Treasurer, without prejudice to other budget areas to which she has alluded as she presented the report. I wish to add my voice, if not plead for the Assembly's understanding that critical, amongst other issues in this report, is the budget proposal for 1 March 2026 to 31 March 2027, which is critical as I want to underscore.

Madam President, it is pleasing to note that the Forum is focussing on progressively moving towards financial self-sufficiency. The old days when we used to gather here and mourn about this and that, in particular, the sustainability of the Forum may be gone. This is due to the increase, about which we are very grateful, as approved by the Plenary. The 50% increase in membership contributions, which becomes effective on 1 April 2026, together with the commitment that Parliaments have demonstrated in the past few years in settling their contributions, is indeed testimony to the importance that membership accords to the institution.

We are thankful for this commitment, Madam President, since ours as an institution ideally is to have the ability to sustain the operations of the Forum.

Madam President, ours is, and I repeat, since ours is an institution that wishes to ideally sustain its operation primarily through the support of its member Parliaments, with reduced support from co-operating partners

and other external sources; meaning Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, that we can no longer rely on external funding and external sources for the purposes of running our institution. So, you are all applauded for coming on board, understanding the plight of the institution in terms of its funding and sustainability status.

As I also indicated, ladies and gentlemen, to the 57th Plenary Assembly in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, as we continue on the path towards transformation into a regional Parliament, the issue of finances and sustainability will continue to be high on the agenda. Soon, we will be required to demonstrate that the Forum, once transformed into the regional Parliament, will be able to raise enough resources to sustain its operations and ensure that it maintains its independence and determines its own agenda in the interest of the citizenry of this region.

Madam President, amongst the resources that we must now review is the human resource. This means that we must ultimately secure adequate financial resources to implement an organisational structure that will conform to a regional Parliament, including reviewing the current Secretariat structure.

The Treasurer has indicated that the proposed budget for the financial year 2026-27 caters to the current staff on board only. This is a matter of concern and there are several vacant positions that are however, not catered for in the budget. You will note that the institution is currently struggling to

secure secondments of staff from member Parliaments to feel the vacant positions mainly due to the cost-implications of such secondments.

Madam President, the Forum has made commendable progress in the pursuit of regional integration, including developing model laws that have been effectively used to renew legislation in some areas of regional concern. However, we need to retain a dedicated staff with the right qualifications and experience to secure the reputation that this Forum has earned and as an efficient and effective institution for the interaction of Members of this region.

I therefore, Madam President, urge member Parliaments to seriously consider seconding suitably qualified and experienced staff to the current positions indicated by the Secretary-General. Perhaps consideration may be made and I am just throwing this to the House to Members that, without a proper word, mandatory contributions in kind may be what we might consider for critical positions. Perhaps it is just food for thought on a rotational basis.

Madam President, a new concern has arisen and has shown its ugly head one way or the other amongst ourselves as Members that one reason why we appear to be short-staffed and deficient in manpower resources; when we hold our meetings like this, one is that the fringe benefits need to be looked into and maybe normalised to ensure that we all attend scheduled meetings for the greater good of our organisation. For instance, there is the tendency for Members, if I may quote, in the virtual format of meetings, that

people or candidates or officers will not attend, instead will look at where it is better to go for a normal sitting, where the sitting allowance will be more than going to a virtual meeting.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: As you conclude Hon. Member.

HON. SEN. I. MAGAGULA: Thank you, Chair. I still have five minutes.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: The rest of the time must be used for other Members to make inputs. It is the allocated time for this whole process.

HON. SEN. I. MAGAGULA: I think I have made the point, Madam Vice President, that we need to look at that as well.

Madam President, I wish to conclude by reminding the membership that the future of the Forum lies in our hands. As the Regional Legislative Arm, it is important that member Parliaments continue to support the Forum through the allocation of adequate funding from the national budgets to facilitate participation in SADC PF activities and to ensure the timely settlements of annual member contributions. This is especially so as we move forward, beginning with the coming financial year, where contributions will increase by 50%. Thank you very much for your patience and your understanding, ladies and gentlemen. I am done. – [*Applause*]

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Hon. Magagula.

Hon. Members, we still have a few minutes in which members can make inputs if they want to make inputs on the report tabled. Namibia!

HON. N. T. KALANGULA [NAMIBIA]: Thank you so much, Madam Acting President. This is quite an interesting report from the Treasurer. I just want something to be clarified.

My name is Nelson Tuhafeni Kalangula, a new Member of the Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum. I am quite puzzled. I do not know, according to one point on paper two, the executive summary indicates that a resolution was made next Saturday, perhaps that is correct or is it just an error? For it says the 56th Plenary Assembly on 13 December 2025 in Livingstone, Zambia, resolved to increase mandatory Member contributions by 50%. So, perhaps time-travelling is happening here. – [*Laughter*] - Can we perhaps get clarity on that? Thank you.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Thank you, Hon. Nelson, you are really awake and very sharp. That was definitely a typo because the Conference in Livingstone was last year in December. So, if there is no other input or question. I think I do not have to call the Treasurer because there is no need for a response.

Motion put and agreed to

Motion with leave, adopted

MOTION

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ON POLICY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS (THE REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ON POLICY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS)

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: The Notice of Motion for the adoption of the Report of the Executive Committee on Policy and Administrative Matters is by Honourable Speaker Tlohang Sekhamane, a Member of the Executive Committee.

HON. TLOHANG SEKHAMANE [LESOTHO]: I hereby move on behalf of the Parliament of Lesotho: That the Report of the Executive Committee on Policy and Administrative Matters be adopted by the 58th Plenary Assembly.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Who seconds?

HON. DUMELANG SALESHANDO [BOTSWANA]: I second the Motion that the Report of the Executive Committee on Policy and Administrative Matters be adopted by the 58th Plenary Assembly.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. I understand that there were a few months that we were not meeting, then we forgot all the things. I am doing the same. Hon. Sekhamane, present your report.

HON. TLOHANG SEKHAMANE [LESOTHO]: Madam Acting President, the Executive Committee, which I will refer to as EXCO, as the management board of the Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum met on the 26th-27th November 2025 at the Coastlands Skye, Hotel Resorts in eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality, Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa.

This meeting of EXCO was conducted in line with the mandate of the Forum under the SADC-PF Strategic Plan, 2024-2028. The Plenary Assembly is requested to note that the current Report of EXCO to the Plenary Assembly is made pursuant to the management and administrative

functions of EXCO under Article 12(9) of the SADC-PF Constitution. This report consists of two parts. The first being issues for noting and the second, for decision.

I should explain, Madam, that this is a long report. As a result, I decided that for some parts, I will read verbatim from this report. But some parts, where the meaning will not be compromised, I will only summarise, and when I do so, I will refer Members to the particular item, which I am going to proceed on.

Number two is issues for noting by the Plenary Assembly. In this regard, the Plenary Assembly is requested to note the following issues, which were processed by EXCO:

One, introduction of Hon. Siteny RANDRIANASOLONIAIKO, President of the Forum:

(a) requests this august Assembly to take note of the developments in the Republic of Madagascar whereby Members of the National Assembly appointed a new Speaker, notably Right Hon. RANDRIANASOLONIAIKO Siteny Thiery, on 16th October 2025, pursuant to an extraordinary session.

(b) In line with Article 11(4) of the SADC-PF Constitution which provides that positions in the leadership of the Forum are country positions for a term of two years, the new Speaker appointed by the National Assembly of Madagascar seamlessly and without further formality, replaces the previous Speaker as of the date of the new appointment at the national level.

2.1.2 The Plenary Assembly is requested to note the continuation of the two-year term of the Presidency of Madagascar at the SADC-PF, with Hon.

Siteny RANDRIANASOLONIAIKO replacing Hon. Justin Tokely, pursuant to the operation of Article 11(4) of the SADC-PF Constitution.

2.1.3 Consequently, the Plenary Assembly is requested to warmly welcome Hon. Siteny RANDRIANASOLONIAIKO for his term of Office until December 2026 and to salute the work accomplished by the Vice President, Hon. Sylvia Elizabeth LUCAS, in steering the Forum during this transition period. Are you going to applaud this? - [*Applause*] -

2.1.4 The Plenary Assembly is also requested to note that the Right Hon. President has duly taken his Oath of Adherence pursuant to Article 8(4) of the SADC-PF Constitution before the proceedings of EXCO.

3. REPORT FROM MADAGASCAR ON THE CHANGE IN POLITICAL REGIME AND THE STATUS BRIEFING ON DEVELOPMENTS IN THE EASTERN DRC AND RWANDA

3.1 The EXCO received a report from the Parliament of Madagascar on the recent regime change, which led to the replacement of the President and it took cognisance that all legal and procedural requirements were observed for the regime change. The change in political leadership was operated lawfully by the Decision No.10- HCC/D3 of October 14, 2025 of the High Constitutional Court which entrusted the functions of Head of State to Colonel Michael RANDRIANIRINA following the departure of the ex-President and his abandonment of office and this event was then followed by the election of a new Speaker of the National Assembly, which took place by democratic vote.

3.2 EXCO also took note that, according to the decision of the High Constitutional Court, a presidential election is envisaged within 30-60 days in accordance with Article 53 of the Constitution of Madagascar.

3.3 The Plenary Assembly is requested to take note of the report from the Parliament of Madagascar and to wish the Parliament, as well as the people of Madagascar, a peaceful and fresh start in this new configuration of state of affairs.

3.4 REPORT ON THE PEACE AGREEMENT IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

3.4.1 EXCO received a report from the Rt Hon. Speaker Aime BOJI SANGARA BAMANYIRWE, Speaker of the National Assembly of the DRC. The Hon. Speaker anchored the presentation on the historical Nairobi process, which is a regional peace initiative aimed at resolving the conflict in the eastern DRC, reiterating the value of dialogue and regional leadership.

3.4.2 EXCO was apprised of the 27th of June 2025 peace agreement signed between DRC and Rwanda with the facilitation of the Secretary of State of the USA, towards dismantling armed militia, which has destabilised the eastern part of DRC.

3.4.3 The Plenary Assembly is requested to join the SADC region in applauding the outstanding work of President Joao Lourenco of Angola, who laid the foundation for sustainable peace and encouraged Parliaments to continue with their efforts on conflict resolution and sustenance of peace in the region.

4. UPDATE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SADC MODEL LAW ON PRISON OVERSIGHT IN READINESS FOR ITS ADOPTION AT THE 59TH PLENARY ASSEMBLY

4.1 EXCO requests the Plenary Assembly to take note that widespread consultations with stakeholder groupings took place between the 17th of September and 21st October 2025, on the SADC Model Law on Prison Oversight.

I wish to take you straight to the end of the paragraph, which is 4.2, which reads thus:

The Plenary Assembly is requested to note that currently, the feedback garnered from the diverse stakeholder groupings is being progressively considered for incorporation into the Model Law by the legal drafters and that the Model Law will be finalised and tabled for adoption at the 59th Plenary Assembly of the SADC-PF.

5: Report of the Parliamentary Business Sub-Committee. I wish to start at 5.2: The Plenary Assembly is requested to note this report which further approved the operational modalities of this august Assembly including hosting facilities, transport arrangements and the venue as is requested to heartily thank the Hon. Sylvia Elizabeth Lucas for her sterling leadership of the Sub-Committee to ensure that the preparations for this 58th Plenary Assembly are well in place ahead of time. I think some people are very jealous. - [*Applause*] [*Laughter*] - Thank you.

6: Update on the completion of year two of the sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), governance project 2023 to

2026. The Executive Committee requests the Plenary Assembly to note that the SRHR project completed its second year on 31 October 2025 and that significant progress has been made in the second year.

I wish to proceed now to 6.2: The Plenary Assembly is requested to note the positive developments registered under the SRHR project and encourage participating parliaments to report on the gains made in year two in accordance with the project agreement and thereafter to continue implementing project activities in year three in accordance with the project's theory of change.

6.3. The Plenary Assembly is further requested to note the support of Sweden, which has unflinchingly assisted the Forum for over a decade to promote SRHR and to note the importance of rallying other partners to equally support the Thematic Committees of the Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum.

7: UPDATE ON THE LEADERSHIP OF MEMBER PARLIAMENTS.

7.1: EXCO requests the Plenary Assembly to note that in the past year, 13 new Speakers of SADC PF member Parliaments have been elected. The Hon. Vice President and President of the Forum wrote congratulatory letters to all outgoing and incoming Speakers, acknowledging the support of the former Speakers during their tenure and welcoming those who are incoming.

7.2: The Plenary Assembly is requested to congratulate the new speakers and to appreciate the successful tour of duty of the previous speakers who have contributed to interparliamentary co-operation under the aegis of the SADC-PF.

8. SUCCESSION PLANNING OF EXCO FOR THE TERM 2026 TO 2028.

I want to take you to 8.2.

The Plenary Assembly is requested to note that the positions of President, Vice President and Treasurer will be vacant in December 2026, and countries are thus invited to plan their candidacies and prepare in advance for the succession.

8.3: The Plenary Assembly is also requested to thank all member Parliaments that have contributed to completing the rotational cycle and completed their tour of duties of the Presidency, Vice Presidency and Treasurer of the Forum over successive two-year terms in the last decades.

9. STANDING COMMITTEE SESSIONS PROMOTING THE IMPLEMENTATION CAPACITY OF SADC PF.

9.1. EXCO considered that Standing Committees of the Forum successfully met from 24 October to 1 November 2025, in Johannesburg, South Africa, under the theme: "*Enhancing the role of parliamentarians in advocating for the signing, ratification, accession, domestication and implementation of SADC protocols*."

9.2. The session opening was graced by the host Speaker, Hon. Thoko Didiza and the deliberations benefited from technical backstopping of the SADC Secretariat and other like-minded partners who are involved in the timely implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Universal Health Coverage, among others, in view of assisting the Forum's committee to align with and mirror SADC committees thus enhancing the implementation capacity of SADC.

9.3. EXCO requests the Plenary Assembly to note that a pressing concern raised by the committee session was that less than 50% of adopted SADC protocols were ratified by Member States, which greatly mitigates their impact and the implementation of the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan 2020 to 2030.

9.4: Consequently, the Plenary Assembly is requested to note that Standing Committees of the Forum have advocated for greater synergy between parliamentary committees and the Executive to strengthen the effective implementation capacity of SADC by bolstering the political drive for protocols adopted by SADC to be ratified and domesticated.

10: Arbitration award dated 6 August 2025, issued by the arbitrator appointed by the Labour Commissioner in the case of Mr. Lovemore Mabuku versus the Forum. I have made notes and I summarise. In this long-standing case, the arbitrator instructed that Mr. Mabuku be paid a certain amount, which he was paid but was not satisfied with the amount and he has appealed to the High Court of Namibia and the Forum has already instructed the Secretary-General to fight the appeal accordingly.

I now want to take you to 11. Risk Assessment at the Forum.

11.1. EXCO favourably considered that the Secretariat of the Forum was actively monitoring the risks of the organisation in accordance with the approved risk management framework which relates to both strategic risks and financial risks and that consequently, most risks within the organisation have been identified as low and medium risks whereas the high risk identified pertains mostly to the financial constraints of the Forum thus mitigation measures to address such risks are for the time being limited.

Most risks are under control and are mitigated by redress measures. For instance, training of staff in the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), has been initiated to reduce the risk of a lack of compliance with accounting standards.

11.2. In this regard, the Plenary Assembly is requested to note that the risks of the Forum continue to be monitored by the secretariat under the supervision of EXCO, with mitigation measures promptly taken and followed up on.

12. ISSUES FOR APPROVAL BY THE PLENARY ASSEMBLY.

12.1 The 58th Plenary Assembly is requested to approve the following matters processed by EXCO –

12.2 Report from the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, Parliamentary Forum (ICGLR-PF).

12.2.1. EXCO considered the report from the ICGLPF presented by the President of the organisation, Hon. Adão Francisco Correia de Almeida, Speaker of the National Assembly of Angola, and welcomed the initiatives of the organisation, including the successful electoral mission in Tanzania in October 2025 and in its support through parliamentary initiatives for peace in Sudan, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and the Central African Republic.

12.2.2 The Plenary Assembly is requested to note the momentous work conducted by the ICGLR-PF, especially the parliamentary fact finding mission to take place in Sudan, South Sudan and the Central African Republic, which has been approved by the 15th Plenary Meeting of the ICGLR-PF, with a view to assessing the political, security and humanitarian

situation in the respective countries, as well as the Conference on the Role of Women Parliamentarians in Peace, Security and Development Processes in the Great Lakes region to be held in November 2026 in Tanzania.

12.2.3. In light of the foregoing, the Plenary Assembly is requested To approve that, in view of reinforcing the strategic collaboration with the ICGLR-PF, a memorandum of understanding be concluded between the SADC-PF and the ICGLR-PF to determine specific and constructive areas of collaboration.

13.0 THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PEACE AND SECURITY CAUCUS AS AN ORGAN OF THE FORUM.

13.1 The EXCO considered the peace and security issues on the African continent, in particular, civil revolutions, strife, kidnappings and attempted coups, which constitute threats to democracy and the rule of law and deliberated that there is a need for the Forum to be better equipped to represent the region's peace and security interests at the international level. It was reflected by the EXCO that this representation is important, given the prominent role of the international stakeholders, such as the UN or the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the Forum's constitution or if the SADC Model Law on the Rule of Law and Constitutionalism and the SADC Model Law on Critical Minerals should be made robust on provisions which reinforce democratic accountability, conflict resolution and peace-building measures and that a fresh call be made to member Parliaments for election observation missions to be made to observe elections across the SADC nations with a view to building confidence

in electoral processes that also impact lasting peace and security.

14. SUBMISSIONS OF COUNTRY REPORTS ON MEASURES TAKEN TO ADDRESS PUBLIC DEBT.

I have prepared notes, and I am summarising. Having noted the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) findings on debt escalation and that at least 29 African countries are paying over 5% of their exports. Having noted the various reasons why countries fall into debt, examined issues of debt quality and examined the AU-EU Summit of November 2025, the effects of corruption and the silo mentality in tackling these matters. Having noted the struggles of the Southern Africa Development Community Organisation of Public Accounts Committees, SADCOPAC, to empower public accounts committees to be more effective in dealing with their oversight functions, I take you to:

14.5. The EXCO considered that the Forum should take sustained action to combat the escalation of both public debt and corruption, which together threaten to destroy economies and affect the livelihoods of financially innocent citizens.

DECISION THREE

Consequently, the Plenary Assembly is requested to approve that;

a) member Parliaments be enjoined to take measures to reduce the debt quantum in view of mitigating the eventual expenditure on the consumer pairs and limiting a country's ability to respond to economic shocks and be resilient;

b) member Parliaments, through their delegations, be made to submit progress reports to the 59th Plenary Assembly on the measures being taken at the national level to mitigate public debt;

c) the secretariat engages with the SADCOPAC to further empower parliamentary committees to act on the report of the Auditor-General, especially by engaging with the Treasurer's minutes and reporting contraventions in accordance with the provisions of the SADC Model Law on Public Financial Management (EN | FR | PT); and

d) the Regional Parliamentary Model Laws Oversight Committee, be made to engage with the Finance Budget Committees at national levels to fully domesticate the SADC Model Law on Public Financial Management (EN | FR | PT), which provides for enhanced oversight of the debt strategy by parliaments and contains pertinent provisions on misappropriations, money laundering and corruption.

15. TAX ARREARS FOR LOCAL STAFF AT THE FORUM.

15.1 The EXCO requests the Plenary Assembly to take note that there is currently a lack of alignment between the host agreements of the SADC PF and the Government of Namibia and the SADC Protocol on Immunities and Privileges, which has led to an administrative conundrum affecting five local staff of the SADC PF.

15.2 While article 5(2) of the SADC Protocol on Immunities and Privileges extends tax exemptions to locally recruited staff; this is the position for locally recruited staff at the SADC Secretariat in Botswana. The host agreements between the SADC PF and Namibia provide for tax exemptions only for regional staff.

As opposed to national staff. This led to confusion, which has lingered for years until an organisational assessment by KPMG in 2019 requested clarification on the position with the tax authorities. In this regard, the Namibia Revenue Agency, NAMRA, has clarified that local employees need to be enrolled on the system of Pay-As-You-Earn, which is an employer's obligation according to Paragraph 2(1) of Part 2 of the Second Schedule to the Income Tax Act. Additionally, the tax agency also maintained that employees are to pay arrears for the period 2005 to 2018, that is, before the time when the Forum registered the employees on Pay-As-You-Earn. Consequently, some of our employees now have the heavy financial burden to meet, with tax arrears exceeding a R4,4 million cumulatively for the five employees.

15.3: EXCO has considered the matter on a humanitarian basis with the understanding that it is partially the Forum's own fault if it did not start the registration of employees on Pay-As-You-Earn since 2005, and that the employees had acted in good faith at all times.

DECISION FOUR

15.4: Consequently, the Plenary Assembly is requested to approve that:

(a) negotiation team be established, constituting of Members of EXCO from Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Angola, and the Hon. Treasurer representing Members of the Legal Subcommittee and the Finance Subcommittee, as well as the Secretary General, to deal with the relevant line ministries in Namibia, including Finance and Foreign Affairs, for a compassionate plea to be made to amend the host agreement to expressly exclude local staff of the Forum from

payment of taxes in Namibia. In this regard, align with the position of local staff of the SADC Secretariat in Botswana and ensure employment parity with regional staff of the SADC-PF. The Secretary General is to provide a report to the next EXCO on the outcome of the negotiation.

(b) in case the negotiation does not succeed, then the Forum should be liable for the tax arrears due to its own omission to register these employees on the system of pay as you earn in the period 2005 to 2018.

This is how EXCO intends to proceed in solving the conundrum that affects five of our employees.

16. UPDATE ON THE PROTOCOL OF THE SADC PARLIAMENT:

16.1 EXCO considered the latest update on the protocol on the SADC Parliament, whereby all countries in the SADC-PF membership have signed the agreement to the SADC Treaty (EN | FR | PT), with Madagascar and Mauritius having formalised their signatures in the margins of the 45th SADC Summit in Antananarivo, Madagascar, thus opening the way for the protocol to be adopted.

16:2: In this regard, the SADC Summit, on the advice of the council, fixed the extended deadline of 30 October 2025 for comments to be made on the protocol. The Plenary Assembly is requested to note that all countries commented on the protocol except Lesotho, DRC and Namibia.

Shame on Lesotho. I did explain that we are already advanced in getting this done and that it is imperative for the momentum to be

maintained for a swift consideration and ratification of the protocol by Member States.

DECISION FIVE

16.3: In this respect, the Premier Assembly is requested to approve that:

(a) SADC-PF member Parliaments liaise through the office of their respective Speakers with relevant authorities and line ministries' consent to accelerate the commenting process on the protocol in countries where commenting has not yet been made and thereafter motivate relevant authorities' consent to approve the protocol.

(b) The lobby group headed by the Hon. Advocate Jacob Francis Nzwidamilimo Mudenda, Speaker of the National Assembly of Zimbabwe, pursues lobby initiatives with the Heads of State and Government, where necessary, to ensure the expeditious consideration of the protocol before the 46th SADC Summit to occur on the 17th to 18th of August 2026.

(c) The Forum proceeds to develop the rules of procedure (EN | FR | PT) for the SADC Parliament, since the Parliament will spontaneously become operational as soon as two-thirds of Member States or member countries ratify the protocol.

17.0. UPDATE ON SADC-PF AND ITS SUCCESSORS TRUST:

17.1. EXCO considered that the SADC-PF and its Successors' Trust will, in the next few years, need to deliver on its resource mobilisation strategy. In this respect, it is necessary to revive the willingness of the

trustees to continue to pursue their functions in accordance with the Trust Administration Act 2023 of Namibia and the Trust Instrument.

DECISION SIX

17.2. The Plenary Assembly is thus requested to approve that the Secretariat engages the trustees to gauge the willingness to remain available in view of addressing the current trust issues, cede capital, need for a qualified trust practitioner, identification of donors or to be replaced in accordance with paragraph 9.5.3 of the Trust Instrument, which empowers EXCO to replace trustees under certain conditions.

18. BASELINE SURVEY ON OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AT THE FORUM.

18.1. EXCO considered a presentation delivered by Dr. Claudius Chigozo, an independent consultant on baseline values on SADC-PF's operational efficiency, which was carried out under the Australia Development Agency's framework, administered by GIZ.

DECISION SEVEN

18.3: EXCO requests the Plenary Assembly to note that the baseline survey is yet another study which demonstrates that the Forum should undertake active staff reforms whilst awaiting becoming a SADC Regional Parliament.

Consequently, the Plenary Assembly is requested to approve that the Secretariat takes all adequate measures necessary to ensure that the Forum fills the human resources and skills gap, whilst bearing in mind that the onset of the SADC Parliament will occur spontaneously, as indicated above.

19. UPDATE ON THE HEALTH OF HUMAN RESOURCES AT THE FORUM:

19.1. The Executive Committee took cognisance that three new staff members were recruited, notably Mr. Sheuneni Kurasha, Director of Parliamentary Business and Programmes; Dr. Jacob Segale, Monitoring and Evaluation Manager; and Mr. Munashe Tofa, Programme Officer for Climate Change, Environment and Health/Sexual and Reproduction Health and Rights (SRHR), Project. The latter two positions are project-dependent since they are funded under the SRHR project. Can I humbly request these three officers to stand right here in front of me so that you see them? – [*Applause*] - I do not see the other two; I see only one. The one who is standing near me has been with us since 2014. It is just that he changed jobs. The ones I really need are the two other new people. – [*Applause*] - If I read your name, you raise your right hand. Mr. Sheuneni Kurasha. – [*Applause*] - Thank you. Dr. Jacob Segale. – [*Applause*]- Thank you. Mr. Munashe Tofa. – [*Applause*] - Thank you very much. Please take your seats. There will be plenty of women next time. The Executive Committee requests the Plenary Assembly to take note of these appointments that add to the staff complement of the Forum.

19.2. DECISION 8A:

The Executive Committee requests the Plenary Assembly to note that the human resource analytics presented by the Secretariat demonstrated efforts to promote gender equality, with the Forum employing more female staff than men and further put into perspective that the Forum has a high retention rate of staff since many evolved from previous positions of experience. A good example here is Mr. Kurasha, whom we just saw. Taking

into account both projects and core staff of the Forum, all SADC nationalities are represented at the organisation, except only the Seychelles and Tanzania, thus positively impacting the geographical representation within our organisation.

B: The Executive Committee further requests the Plenary Assembly to note that staff have performed efficiently and their hard work has resulted in 100% donor compliance, 100% clean audits, as well as resource mobilisation, which stood at US$100 000 for October 2025 only.

C: Nonetheless, the Plenary Assembly is requested to note the stress under which staff have to work to deliver their work assignments, with all staff having had to forfeit 50% of their annual leave and off-days and for working overtime. That deserves a round of applause. – [*Applause*] Staff shortage has been identified as a pressing concern that needs to be addressed to maintain the Forum's ability to deliver on its statutory and donor obligations. This finding was also reiterated in the baseline survey that I just referred to.

19.3. DECISION 9, which is the last decision: In this regard, the Plenary Assembly is requested to approve that:

A. In view of filling the human resource gap, each member Parliament of the Forum is mandated to second one experienced staff member to the SADC-PF, whilst taking on board the payment of the staff member's salary, relocation and attendant costs, an arrangement that will continue until the Forum is in a better financial position and able to recruit its own staff;

B. The contracts of existing staff be infused by mutual consent with innovation and flexibility, such that new tasks - I am being given some

support. It says that there are some typos in the paper. As opposed to ‘thirteen Speakers are new Secretariat 2024–25 elections’. That is the first typo. The second typo is in relation to the Hon. Sylvia Lucas-Izaks. “Izaks” was omitted. Apologies. I am very familiar with the word Lucas and not Izaks. Namibia has signed. We got feedback after the report was already tabled. Namibia has signed. Thank you very much.

The Plenary Assembly is requested to approve that:

B. The contracts of existing staff be infused by mutual consent with innovation and flexibility such that new tasks can be assigned to staff to prepare for the transformation to a SADC Regional Parliament.

Madam President, I beg to move. — *[Applause]* -

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Hon. Sekhamane. I will now call on the seconder, the Hon. Dumelang Saleshando, to present the seconding speech.

HON. D. SALESHANDO [BOTSWANA]: Thank you Madam Acting President. I am advised, I hope rightly so, that the secondment speech needs to be as long as the actual report. Bear with me, it will not last that long.

Madam Acting President, I beg to second the motion presented by the right Hon. Speaker from Lesotho to this august Assembly on the Executive Committee report.

Madam President, as you can all determine from the report, the Executive Committee has dealt with various issues pertaining to the performance and efficiency of the Forum, as well as risk management and good governance.

This report has demonstrated that the Forum is on a clear path to implement its strategic plan through various initiatives accomplished by the Forum. At the same time, the Forum is not shying away from internal governance processes and is pursuing meticulous risk management to identify both strategic and financial risks. With these safeguards in place, we can be confident that the Forum is subscribing to the quality standards expected of parliamentary organisations of similar stature.

The report also demonstrates that the Forum is visible in the international arena and is an inter-parliamentary organisation to reckon with in a world with diverse parliamentary history and practices. We shall keep it that way and only improve as we move forward together. From a corporate governance perspective, this is a report from the management board of the organisation. This august Assembly is the representative or proxy of the stakeholders who are the member Parliaments of the Forum.

This is, of course, an analogy, but it demonstrates that there are checks and balances within the organisation and that EXCO is committed to ensuring that best practices are in place and consistently observed. The Plenary Assembly is thus favoured with a fair and transparent overview of the Forum's progress over the last six months through the EXCO report.

This is a care and necessary foundational background as the Forum aspires to transition to a SADC regional Parliament. In the words of the South African Speaker, dropping off the ‘F’ and remaining with the ‘P’, it is with a strong administrative backdrop that we can aspire to consolidate and move forward as a region that upholds parliamentary excellence. I believe EXCO has also set the right tone for this august Assembly to reflect on the

need to make expeditious progress on the protocol, which represents the last legal step in our quest for transformation.

I entreat representatives present today to ensure that we continue to garner this momentum that was revived in 2018 until today. After seven years, the Forum has managed to persuade the relevant organs of SADC that the transformation is necessary in the interest of regional democracy and the agreement to the SADC Treaty (EN | FR | PT). is now behind us. With the protocol

HON. D. KEORAPETSE [BOTSWANA]: Thank you very much, Madam President. I am in full support of the report. I wish at this point, to extend my empathy to the people and Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo on developments in the Eastern Congo and also to the people of South Sudan and the Central African Republic.

I reminisce on the role of former President Quett Masire, former President of the Republic of Botswana, for his steady leadership in the Inter-Congolese Peace Dialogue. Let me also recognise the efforts, role and contribution of the Republic of Botswana in ensuring the peaceful resolution of conflicts in the SADC region and Africa at large. We have sent troops to Mozambique under the SADC Mission in Mozambique recently.

We have also, in the past, contributed to peace efforts in 1998 in the Kingdom of Lesotho. We were also, in the 1990s, on the UN Peacekeeping Mission, deploying troops in Mozambique and Somalia. Madam President, I can assure you that it is our wish as Botswana to see a peaceful resolution of conflicts because a peaceful SADC region in Africa is a prerequisite to socioeconomic development and regional integration.

We must continue to work together as a region towards peace and stability and condemn acts of aggression which result in violation of human rights and flagrant violation of international law. The loss of lives at unprecedented scale and untold human suffering must end in some parts of Africa. The DRC has been yearning for peace for far too long and they deserve it.

Madam President, we need to develop a culture of telling each other the truth on these matters and defend democracy, lest we become complicit in acts of undermining democratic values by some governments. As Desmond Tutu has said: “If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.” Martin Luther King Junior has said: The ultimate tragedy is not the oppression and cruelty by the bad people but the silence over that by the good people.”

Let us resuscitate the election observation mission by SADC-PF, based on our norms and standards. Madam President, questions arise on whether the EXCO accepted a report from the Parliament of Madagascar that is accurate and correct without other profound yardsticks to measure the veracity of the information. Was there no need for a fact-finding mission? We are told, for instance, that the President abandoned the office in the report. That is not what the President is saying. He is alleging an unconstitutional change of power. What is the position of SADC? What is the position of the AU? These are the matters that we need to ponder.

In conclusion, Madam President, it is also important to emphasise the role of national Parliaments in providing effective oversight on security matters. In our efforts as MPs, we need to scrutinise the formulation of

defence and security policies and enact appropriate laws. We need to ensure more transparency and accountability on matters relating to safety and security.

Democracy has been found by the Afrobarometer Pan-African Think Tank to be in short supply from its leaders. We need, as Parliamentarians, to ensure that this democracy is in adequate supply to our people. In the same report, the 2003 Afrobarometer report has resoundingly rejected undemocratic systems. They have equally demanded democracy from the African leaders. Our role as Parliamentarians should not be reduced to rubber-stamping Executive decisions on matters such as these. We need to be seen to be proactive. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Finally, let us encourage SADC, AU, UN and other international organisations to put regional peace and security issues at the top of their agendas, in particular, the conflicts in the eastern DRC and recognise the sovereign right of these countries to effectively defend themselves against any form of armed violence, including internal and external aggression. I thank you, Madam President. – [*Applause*] –

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: I call on South Africa.

HON. A. T. DIDIZA [SOUTH AFRICA]: Thank you very much, Madam President and thank you to the presenter of the report on the Executive and the required decisions that we need to reflect on.

I just want to flag a few issues in the report that require a decision. One of them relates to asking us to support the formation or rather, having a memorandum of understanding, MOU, with the Forum of Parliaments of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. Maybe it would be good

that we get a little bit of detail on what the MOU would require before we are asked to finalise.

The other issue that arises, Hon. Members, is what becomes our relationship as SADC with some of the African Union, AU, instruments, for instance, the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) but also the peace and security organ of the AU, as well as SADC. Yes, I understand that some of those might be at an Executive level but those that relate to PAP, maybe they do not have such capacity or they do not have such fora but I think it is something that we need to reflect on. Also, when we enter into an MOU, we also need to appreciate what the obligations are that we, as a SADC-PF, might have.

The second decision that is required of us relates to the establishment of a peace and security caucus. Again, Chairperson, I do want to say that in principle, I support the formation of this caucus but it is also necessary for us to look at how we are going to ensure that it is funded to do its work. Also, as a caucus, how will it be composed? Will it be one Member per Member States or will it be a few Members that will form part of that? I think there needs to be some clarity in that regard.

I agree that, in terms of the submission of country reports on members' measures taken to address public debt, we need to include that in our reports. However, again, in this regard, I would like to support the proposal that was made by Hon. Mente earlier on that maybe as the secretariat of the SADC-PF, we will need to have a measure of monitoring to what extent countries are indeed implementing such decisions but also the veracity of reports that are so presented.

I agree on the text areas for local staff at the Forum that we must negotiate but it is important to understand what the norms are in respect of multilateral institutions in this respect, particularly when it relates to local staff, so that we do not demand of the Namibian Government, which is not the norm. So, that would be a proviso that I put, Hon. President, which we need to reflect on.

The last issue in terms of the decisions relates to the secondment of staff, which I would agree to. However, maybe we might just need to get an appreciation regarding some clarity as to why there has not been an uptake of such proposals from member countries. Is it the issue of financing? Is it the issue of costs that are associated with having somebody seconded there? All of those might need to be explained so that we can understand why, as countries, we are not taking up this opportunity. Thank you very much. I support the report.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Hon. Speaker. Hon. Sekhamane, if you wish, you can respond and also move for the adoption.

HON. T. SEKHAMANE [LESOTHO]: Thank you very much, Madam President. That was quite a mouthful. Let me hustle some responses.

Firstly, on the issue of the MOU, the reason why we need that instrument and why it will work for us is that we have overlapping memberships. So without that instrument, it will be very hard to operate, but with that instrument, we are able to traverse a balanced road, so to speak.

Now, on the issue of Madagascar, raised by the Speaker from Botswana, we note that we are Parliament, we note that there is already a

SADC panel of elders that is working on that and the panel of elders will give feedback to our governments. We will then be guided accordingly. In the meantime, we have proceeded as the Executive, given the material that we had and observing the good principle of the separation of powers, we will leave the Executive to do its job. Then we will hear what the panel of elders has to say and what position our Executives take.

Madagascar expressly indicated that it will be most willing to welcome a mission from SADC-PF for fact-finding if we need that. However, our approach in this case is to follow the Executive, run our affairs as a Parliamentary Forum but follow the Executive in terms of matters of diplomacy and so on.

Now, I do not know if I have answered all; yes, there are two more issues. The other issue is that of the caucus, which was raised again by my sister Thoko Didiza. In terms of the questions, I think those were very specific questions in terms of how it will be composed, how it will be resourced and so on and so forth.

We are arguing at this point in terms of principle that it is needed. Now, when it comes to actually working it out, that is another level of detail that we feel the Executive should be able to enter into, as long as we accept the principle that we need a caucus, we need a caucus because it is clear that we are getting feedback from others and we are not proactive ourselves. We need to be proactive ourselves.

Now, on the issue of secondments, we have not been very expressive in terms of secondment. I wish to refer Members to the secondment document, and guides and policy. However, what I need to say now is that we made a

very difficult decision last year at Victoria Falls to carry the resource and financial responsibility of our own organisation because we need this organisation. We find that there is a problem of human resources, HR and we are saying, let us confront this problem head-on. Let us dedicate ourselves to each Member States, seconding at least one officer to our Forum. In that way, we share the burden. In that way, we increase the exposure of our officers because they will eventually come back to us again and they will be much more experienced in matters of governance, in addition to matters of running Parliaments. So this is already like an investment. By doing this, we are also investing in our own personnel.

However, we are solving the problem of HR, where people have to forfeit their leave, they have to forfeit their days off and so on. We cannot go on like that. We cannot just bank on these people to keep making those sacrifices. We must find a way to practically solve those problems. If it means pinching a little bit within our own parliamentary staff, let us please be prepared to do so.

Madam President, thank you, unless maybe there is something else? I am just being reminded here that in terms of making the secondments mandatory, it has already been done by Zambia and it has already been done by Zimbabwe and it is quite comparable. We are not asking Member States to do the impossible. We are saying, just follow the example of Zambia and follow the example of Zimbabwe. Let us come to the table because it is time to do that. Otherwise, if we had another way of solving the problem, we would find a way. This is the best we can, as your Executive. This is what we are proposing. Thank you, Madam.

THE ACTING PRESIDENT: Thank you Hon. Sekhamane. I take it that with regard to other issues, we will be able to avail the information. You should have moved us to adopt the motion.

Motion with leave, adopted.

The Plenary Assembly adjourned at 1802 Hours

3rd December 2025

MOMENT OF SILENT PRAYER OR MEDITATION

(THE HON. PRESIDENT OF SADC PF in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE HON. PRESIDENT

PROCEDURE DURING DEBATE

EN.

THE HON. PRESIDENT OF SADC PF [HON. SITENY THIERY RANDRIANASOLONIAIKO]: Good morning everyone. I wish to remind Hon. Members that our meeting is in all three official languages. Hon. Members,

let me remind the House of the procedure to follow whenever you want to speak on any matter as follows: A Member wishing to speak should raise the country name tag. I will then recognise the Hon. Member by country. The Member will then switch on the microphone to introduce themselves before speaking. No Member should switch on the microphone before they are given the floor to speak. Hon. Members, for the sake of precision recording, you are reminded to allow yourself to introduce yourself with your name and country whenever you are granted the floor to speak. Members are reminded to adhere to the five-minute allocated time when speaking. Are there any notices of motion? Commencement of business of the day. First order, one hour. The Secretary-General shall read the first order of the day.

MOTION

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SPECIAL PROGRAMMES

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Motion for the adoption of the report of the Human and Social Development and Special Programmes is being moved by Hon. Mope Khati, Chairperson.

HON. M. KHATI [LESOTHO]: Mr. President, I hereby beg to move that this Plenary Assembly do adopt the report on the Standing Committee on Human and Social Development and Special Programmes to the 58th Plenary Assembly Session of the SADC Parliamentary Forum that was laid on the table on 2 December 2025. I so move.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Any seconder? Please.

HON. L. KARENYI [ZIMBABWE]: Thank you, Mr. President. My name is Lynette Karenyi, Zimbabwe. I second the motion.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: I call upon Hon. Khati to present the report.

HON. M. KHATI [LESOTHO]: Thank you very much, Mr. President. As rightfully mentioned, my name is Mope Khati. I am a Member of Parliament from the Parliament of Lesotho and I am the Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Human and Social Development and Special Programmes. I am presenting the report of the Committee session that was held in Johannesburg in the month of October. The report will be structured as follows: the composition of the Committee Members, the terms of reference, the background, the summary presentations from the resource persons that we received, and then the presentation on the status of the ratification of the selected sector-specific SADC protocols. Then I will be presenting the conclusions of the Committee.

On the composition of the Committee, the Standing Committee on Human and Social Development and Special Programmes is composed of Members as contained in Appendix 1 of the report and I am assuming that Hon. Members have had this report shared with them in advance, so for the sake of time, I will not be going back to the appendix to read the names of the Members. The list of the officials and the resource persons who attended the meeting is also contained in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3 of the report, respectively. The specific terms of reference for the Committee are set out in Rule 42(e) of the Rules of Procedure of the SADC Parliamentary Forum (EN | FR | PT). The Committee convened its statutory meeting on 30 and 31 October 2025 at the Premier Hotel at O R Tambo, South Africa. The meeting was convened under the theme: *Enhancing the Role of Parliamentarians in*

Advocating for the Signing, Ratification, Accession, Domestication and Implementation of SADC Protocols.

The meeting formed part of the standing Committee session for the 58th Plenary Assembly, which included the Joint Sitting of all SADC Parliamentary Forum Standing Committees. The Southern African Development Community has established a robust normative framework to advance rational integration, with a specific focus on the human and social development pillars being critical to sustainable progress. Central to this framework are key legal and strategic instruments, including the Protocol on Health (EN | FR | PT) of 1999, the Strategy for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights of 2019-2030 and the recently adopted Protocol on Employment and Labour (EN | FR | PT), of 2023. These instruments are designed to translate the SADC Common Agenda into concrete actions, aiming to enhance the standard of living and protect fundamental rights and foster equitable socioeconomic development across the region. However, the efficacy of these regional commitments is Hon. Khati. Now we hear from the Seconder.

HON. L. KARENYI [ZIMBABWE]: Mr. President, I am Lynette Karenyi, the Deputy Chair of the Committee and I am from Zimbabwe.

Mr. President, may I take this opportunity to add my full and unequivocal support to the powerful report just presented by the Chairperson of the HSDSP Committee. The mover has laid bare the critical gap between our regional promises and our national realities. I wish to echo these concerns not just with rhetoric but with the cold, hard facts that should jolt this Assembly into decisive action. The mover rightly pointed to the SADC Protocol on Health (EN | FR | PT): (1999) and the funding crisis that

stifles it. But let us be specific about the cost of inaction. According to the World Health Organisation's Global Tuberculosis Report (2024), the SADC region accounts for nearly 40% of the global TB incidence, with an estimated 2.5 million people contracting the disease in 2023 alone. This, Mr. President, is a regional emergency. The mention of the SADC Pooled Procurement Service by the Chairperson is in itself a lifeline, as observed by the SADC Secretariat

Hon. Members, we have 33 minutes to debate. South Africa, after South Africa, Madagascar and Mozambique. The floor is yours. We can start with South Africa.

HON. B. S. MADIKIZELA [SOUTH AFRICA]: Mr. President and Hon. Members, thank you for the opportunity. I rise to support the adoption of this Standing Committee Report. My name is Bonginkosi Madikizela. I am also a Member of the Committee. Like my fellow esteemed colleagues, I join this august gathering to acknowledge the commendable work and remarkable progress that has been made on the ongoing transformation of the Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC PF), into a SADC Parliament. Indeed, the domestic consultations on the draft protocol to establish the SADC Parliament have raised our hopes that once empowered with full legislative authority, this veritable hub of parliamentary democracy will equally play a more critical role in promoting citizen engagement and participatory governance across the region.

However, having said that, Mr. President and Hon. Members, please allow me to also join in acknowledging the commendable work by the SADC

Parliamentary Forum Secretariat to embark on efforts aimed at developing the SADC Model Law on Prison Oversight. This law is long overdue. On the main, this is so because prisons in the SADC region are often severely overcrowded, understaffed, lack proper ventilation and sanitation and do not offer inmates sufficient healthcare, nutrition or recreational time. Poor conditions such as these increase the likelihood of sexual violence and perpetration as well as the transmission of diseases such as human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and tuberculosis (TB).

This not only presents a human rights violation for inmates but also has the potential effect on populations at large because inmates are not a static population; they move around the prison system and back and forth from the outside world. This therefore underscores the critical role of a proactive, effective and impactful parliamentary oversight, which is crucial to prevent cruel and degrading treatment of inmates and ensure that they are detained in conditions that preserve their rights and well-being. As elected public representatives, we should always remain mindful that prisoners' health is our problem too.

This is so because prisons not only threaten the health of people incarcerated within them, but also Prison staff and the population at large are also at risk because prisoners are not a static population; they move around the prison system, as I said, back and forth. What this means is that as we discharge our law-making and oversight duties in our respective Parliaments, we should be cognisant of the fact that prisons are very important in the fight against HIV in our respective countries.

More importantly, this underscores the need for more proactive and impactful oversight on our part as parliamentarians and to support the work of statutory bodies established to exercise oversight over the Executive, such as South Africa's Judicial Inspectorate for Correctional Services. Thus, South Africa supports the development of the SADC Model Law on prison oversight, not only to act as a benchmarking reference for National Parliaments of SADC countries but also to ensure that Parliaments are sufficiently empowered through legal provisions to demand accountability from government for protecting prisoners' rights.

However, on the same breadth, Mr. President and Hon. Members, let me remind all of us that SADC was founded on the principle of cooperation, solidarity and shared development. The protocols that emerge from this regional body are not abstract documents. They are frameworks designed to uplift our people through strengthened governance, economic development, peace and social cohesion. Yet many of these protocols remain unsigned, unratified or undomesticated, rendering them ineffective within our national system. As a result, critical regional initiatives, stall and benefits intended for our citizens are delayed or lost entirely.

As Parliamentarians, we are uniquely positioned to change this trajectory but we can only be able to do so if we work collaboratively with other stakeholders. We can clearly delineate our normative role in advocating for the signing, ratification, accession, domestication and implementation of SADC protocols.

However, over and above that, South Africa agrees with proposals and recommendations contained in the report, particularly on those and I am not going to repeat them, Mr. President and Members and those that were mentioned by my Chairperson and my Deputy Chairperson.

As I am about to conclude, I do want to also say that as South Africa, we have moved with speed to really plug the hole and close the gap in terms of the President's Emergency Plan for acquired immunodeficiency syndrome Aids Relief (PEPFAR), funding that was withdrawn by the United States. I think we have now made available R753 million, which was released immediately after that crisis. I think regarding the issue of prison, we have also shown with the inspectorate that is responsible for inspecting the prisoners.

Therefore, with those few words, Mr. President and Hon. Members, I would like to express and submit South Africa's support for the adoption of this report. I thank you. - [*Applause*]

PT.

HON. JERÓNIMA AGOSTINHO (MOÇAMBIQUE): Muito obrigado, Senhor Presidente.

Sua Excelência Presidente do Fórum Parlamentar da SADC,

Sua Excelência Senhores Presidentes dos Parlamentos Nacionais,

Senhora Secretária Geral,

Dignissímos Deputados, meus colegas,

Minhas senhoras e meus senhores,

O impacto do Protocolo da SADC sobre a saúde em Moçambique inclui a melhoria do acesso a cuidados de saúde, a cooperação regional na gestão de crises de saúde, harmonização de política e fortalecimento dos sistemas de saúde nacionais.

Este protocolo visa promover o desenvolvimento económico, a paz e a segurança, reduzir a pobreza e elevar a qualidade de vida dos cidadãos, impactando directamente na saúde da população moçambicana através de uma abordagem coordenada e integrada.

Cooperação Regional em Crise de Saúde

Moçambique beneficia da cooperação regional para gerir crises de saúde como pandemias e surtos de doenças através de sistemas de alerta precoce e respostas coordenadas.

Harmonização de Políticas

O Protocolo promove a harmonização de políticas e regulamentos de saúde na região, facilitando o comércio de produtos farmacêuticos e a partilha de boas práticas.

No fortalecimento dos sistemas de saúde, a adesão ao Protocolo da Saúde da SADC motiva Moçambique a reforçar o seu Sistema Nacional de Saúde, incluindo o sub-sistema público, comunitário e privado, com o objectivo de melhorar a gestão, a infra-estrutura e a prestação de serviços.

As implicações para Moçambique do Protocolo da SADC sobre a saúde são o alinhamento com os Objetivos Regionais de Desenvolvimento Económico, Paz, Redução da Pobreza e Melhoria da Qualidade de Vida. O protocolo incentiva a cooperação regional em saúde, a integração de serviços e a troca de melhores práticas para combater doenças e fortalecer os sistemas de saúde em toda a região da SADC.

Combate às doenças

A colaboração regional é essencial para combater doenças que atravessam fronteiras como VIH-SIDA, tuberculose e malária. O protocolo pode facilitar a partilha de informações e estratégias de saúde pública para combater essas doenças em conjunto com os países vizinhos. Senhor Presidente, posto isso, apoio o relatório.

Muito obrigada. – *Aplausos*

EN.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Hon. Members, you are reminded that for the purpose of a correct verbatim recording, you should always introduce yourself by your name and country whenever you are given the floor by the Speaker. Could you please give your name?

HON. JERÓNIMA AGOSTINHO (MOÇAMBIQUE): Jerónima Agostinho, Moçambique.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Madagascar!

FR.

HON. RABY RAVATSARAH (MADAGASCAR): Merci Monsieur le Président de m'avoir donné la parole.

Monsieur le Président ;

Chers membres de ce Forum Parlementaire,

Je suis RABY RAVATSARAH, Députée de Madagascar et j'interviens pour soutenir cette motion par rapport à la transformation de la stratégie SDSR en protocole contraignant au niveau de la SADC.

Je pars, en fait, du fait que, en matière de VIH/SIDA, Madagascar actuellement est vraiment dans une situation préoccupante avec de chiffre en augmentation selon l'ONUSIDA et le ministère de la santé. Parce qu'on estime que 90 mille personnes vivent avec le VIH, mais seulement 32 mille connaissent leur statut sérologique et la prévalence est particulièrement élevée chez les jeunes adultes entre 20 et 49 ans et le traitement n'est pas systématiquement accessible à toute population qui est touchée.

Donc pour les nouveaux cas, entre 3 000 et 4 000 nouveaux cas sont détectés chaque année. Donc sur cette proposition, nous vraiment, nous soutenons vraiment cette motion parce que c'est très important pour la population atteinte de cette maladie.

En outre, Madagascar dispose également au niveau de l'Assemblée nationale le Groupe de travail national sur le SDRS et l'objectif, c'est de combler les lacunes juridiques, les lacunes politiques en matière de SDSR et ce, dans plusieurs domaines, notamment sur la sécurité d'approvisionnement dans le cadre d'une couverture sanitaire, la promotion d'égalité de sexe et l'élimination de mariages d'enfants, le mariage ainsi que

les grossesses précoces et non désirées et la promotion de l'avortement sécurisé.

Donc, Monsieur le Président, nous ne pouvons que soutenir cette motion. Merci.

EN.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: I just want to remind you again to introduce yourself by your name and your country, not only your country but also your name.

FR.

MS. R. SAVATSARAH: Je m'appelle Raby RAVATSARAH Gabrielle.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Next is Angola.

PT.

HON. TERESA JOSÉ ADELINA DA SILVA NETO (ANGOLA): Muito obrigada, Senhor Presidente. Eu sou Teresa José Adelina da Silva Neto, sou Deputada de Angola.

Excelência Senhor Presidente do Fórum Parlamentar da SADC,

Senhora Secretária Geral do Fórum Parlamentar da SADC,

Excelências Senhores Presidentes dos Parlamentos Nacionais e Chefes de Delegações,

Todo o protocolo observado.

Relativamente ao ponto sobre estratégia da SADC para a saúde e direitos sexuais reprodutivos, gostaríamos de partilhar o grau de implementação do mesmo na Assembleia Nacional e sublinhar o impacto da execução do Plano de Actividade do Projecto de Saúde e Direitos Sexuais Reprodutivos, VIH-SIDA, Governação do Fórum Parlamentar da SADC, findo em Novembro último.

É com muita satisfação. Essas imagens que estão a ser ilustradas é praticamente o que nós vamos aqui frisar. É com muita satisfação que dizemos que temos trabalhado com afinco, diligência e responsabilidade para alcançar as metas preconizadas de capacitação e sensibilização dos 220 Deputados da Assembleia Nacional, funcionários parlamentares, sociedade civil, técnico de saúde sexual reprodutiva e planeamento familiar, professores, bem como técnico de assistência às pessoas vivendo com VIH, sobre os vários pilares de acção do projecto.

As nossas actividades têm sido multiplicadas em várias iniciativas, desde a sensibilização sobre questões de género, protecção da família, através do combate ao casamento infantil, da gravidez precoce e indesejada, protecção das pessoas vulneráveis e protecção do ambiente.

Estamos muito gratificados com os esforços dos nossos pesquisadores, pois sabemos que não é tarefa fácil engajar todos os actores ministeriais, sociais, organizações não-governamentais e com elas criar parcerias sólidas que observamos nas actividades do Grupo Nacional do projecto em Angola.

Esses esforços permitiram a materialização de 23 actividades alinhadas aos objectivos estratégicos destacando-se, sessões parlamentares de sensibilização sobre educação sexual, saúde reprodutiva VIH, visita de supervisão pedagógica transformadora de género em três unidades de saúde, campanha de advocacia à comunidade pública através de programas de rádio, reuniões técnicas com o processo de desenvolvimento. Os impactos são expressivos. Internamente, vemos o projecto atingir proporções consideráveis.

Hoje, todas as Comissões de Trabalho Especializadas da Assembleia Nacional envolvem-se nas actividades realizadas pelo projecto actuando de forma directa na sua prossecução. A nível nacional, o projecto alcançou visibilidade provada alcançando ouvintes de todo o país, beneficiando particularmente crianças, adolescentes, jovens em situação de vulnerabilidade, mulheres e pessoas vivendo com VIH em matérias relevantes.

Gostaríamos de partilhar, particularmente, duas actividades: actividade de extensão comunitária de brigadas móveis na província do Cuanza Sul, realizada de 25 a 29 de Setembro de 2025, abrangendo duas localidades recônditas e a cidade do Cuanza Sul. A actividade visou levar cuidados de saúde das populações que não têm acesso aos serviços de saúde, especialmente a saúde materno-infantil, planeamento familiar e testagem do VIH-SIDA.

Durante a presença da brigada móvel, nestas localidades, foram prestados aconselhamento psicológico às mulheres, trabalhadoras do sexo e adolescentes vivendo com VIH. As aldeias seleccionadas têm uma grande distância da capital da província e são caracterizadas por comunidades rurais que não têm acesso às unidades de saúde.

Caminhada de sensibilização e conscientização para a importância do diagnóstico precoce e da prevenção do cancro da mama e do colo de útero, realizado no dia 24 de Outubro.

Essas iniciativas mobilizaram um número de actores e participantes sem precedentes. Foram actividades massivas que incluíam o Governo Provincial do Cuanza Sul, a Administração do Waku-Kungo, a Comissão do Bairro de Cambango, a Administração da Conda e a Comunidade Aldeia do Dumbo dois, Direcção Nacional de Saúde Pública, técnico do Governo Provincial do Cuanza Sul, Director Provincial Adjunto da Saúde do Cuanza Sul, PNUD, Ajuda ao Desenvolvimento do Povo para o Povo, UNICEF, Instituto Nacional de Luta contra a Sida, Comité do Género e Ministério da Saúde, Directores Municipais, técnicos da ADECO e funcionários parlamentares.

A Assembleia Nacional está profundamente alinhada com os objectivos do projecto e se revê nas suas nobres intenções. Por essa razão, queremos replicar o impacto até ao final do ano de 2026. Apoio o relator, Presidente. Muito obrigado. – *Aplausos*

EN.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Could you please introduce yourself?

PT.

HON. TERESA JOSÉ ADELINA DA SILVA NETO: Senhor Presidente, eu sou a Teresa José Adelina da Silva Neto do Parlamento de Angola.

EN.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Hon. Khati, to wind up the Motion please.

HON. R. M. KATHI [LESOTHO]: Thank you very much, Mr. President. Thank you very much to Hon. Members who supported the adoption of the report. I do realise that in most of the interventions, really, it was in support of the report. There are no specific questions or any concerns for clarification.

But if I start with Hon. Member from South Africa, he did talk about the situation of public health concern within our correctional service facilities, which still speaks a lot about why it is important for us to fast-track the adoption of the protocol on health (EN | FR | PT), as we believe that it will address these kinds of issues that continue to persist within our countries.

He also highlighted that South Africa is making a couple of efforts to close the funding gap in health that exists after the loss of funding from the donor through the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), programme.

Then we also had a Member from Mozambique, who also came in support of the adoption of the report and shared with us the progress in

Mozambique around the implementation of the protocol on health (EN | FR | PT). She reiterated the importance of the rational integration and how Mozambique is benefiting from this noble initiative as a country.

We had a Member from Madagascar as well, who also came in support of the adoption of the report, who did mention or highlighted the concerning situation of HIV in the country and further making a case why the health protocol should be domesticated in our various countries to help in response of the situation that we are seeing of rising incidence of HIV infections, which actually is the reversal of the gains that have been achieved by many countries over the past years.

She highlighted the efforts in place as well for the country to address the financing gap, to continue to strengthen its health systems and be able to provide quality healthcare to its citizens.

And lastly, we had the Hon. Member from Angola as well, who did not have any questions, any concerns but rather she also shared the progress of the country on the strategy on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights. And it was quite interesting that as she was speaking, our screens were actually sharing the real impact and the initiatives that she' i speaking about at the country level. To me, that was very, very relevant and very convincing in terms of the initiative that their Parliament has taken in addressing the issues of SRHR.

With this, Mr. President, I believe all the Members have actually come in support of the adoption of the report. Thank you. – [*Applause*] -

Motion put and agreed to.

Motion with leave, adopted.

MOTION

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEMOCRATIZATION, GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Motion for the adoption of the Report of the Standing Committee on Democratisation, Governance and Human Rights is moved by Hon. Magagula.

HON. I. MAGAGULA (ESWATINI): Thank you, Chair. I rise to move the motion.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Any seconder? Angola!

PT.

HON. P SEBASTIÃO (ANGOLA): Eu apoio, senhor Presidente

EN.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. I call upon Hon. Magagula to present the report.

HON. I. MAGAGULA: Riding on the protocols already established, may I, Mr. President, present the report of the Democratisation, Governance and Human Rights, DGHR, Committee to this august meeting.

The report is in various subtopics, starting with the composition of the Standing Committee on Democratisation, Governance and Human Rights. I will not waste the Plenary's time by naming the Committee Members because those are there and have been annexed as Appendix One.

But suffice it to point out that I am standing in here as an Interim Chairperson following the inability of Malawi as Chairperson and Madagascar as a Vice Chairperson.

The next item on my presentation, Mr. Chairman, the terms of reference of the meeting. The specific terms of reference for the DGHR Standing Committee are set out in Rule 42(D) of the Rules of Procedure of the SADC Parliamentary Forum (EN | FR | PT).

The Committee convened its statutory meeting on 30 and 31 October 2025 at Premier O R Tambo Hotel in Johannesburg.

The meeting was convened under the theme, Enhancing the Role of Parliamentarians; I will repeat that, “Enhancing the Role of Parliamentarians in Advocating for the Signing, Ratification, Accession, Domestication and Implementation of Protocols.

I will go for some brief background. The Committee engaged in a wide-ranging discussion on the status of signing, accession, ratification, domestication and implementation of key protocols and instruments with particular focus on the SADC Protocol against Corruption 2001, the SADC Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation and the revised SADC Principles Governing Democratic Elections 2021. I will now go one by one of those areas I have just mentioned, Mr. President. One is funding for the SADC Parliamentary Election Observation Missions.

Noting with concern the long-standing challenge of ensuring sustainable funding for the SADC Parliamentary Forum Election Observation Missions and the continued lack of meaningful progress in incorporating election observation financing into national budgets and operational budgets, despite several Plenary Assembly resolutions.

Acknowledging that the non-participation of Speakers and Members of Parliament in several election observation missions deprives legislatures of

first-hand exposure to electoral processes, thereby diminishing their capacity to exercise credible oversight and effectively contribute to democratic consolidation in the SADC region.

Recalling the pioneering role of the SADC Parliamentary Forum in establishing rational electrical norms, including its development of the norms and standards for elections in the SADC region in 2021, the first regional election instrument with both SADC and the African Union, which laid the groundwork for subsequent electoral frameworks.

Further noting that Article 8.2.1 of the revised SADC Principles and Guidelines governing democratic elections (EN | FR | PT), 2021 identifies legislatures as integral in SADC electoral observation

Mr. President, allow me to submit that as the Republic of Zambia, I wish to inform this august Forum that Zambia ratified the SADC Protocol against Corruption in 2003 and since then, the country has continued to implement various interventions towards domestication of the protocol. These measures have primarily been realised through a combination of successful national policies and legal frameworks.

Mr. President, under two minutes, with regards to the legislation, Zambia's framework aligns with the requirements contained under the SADC protocols, which provides for the corruption, criminalisation and enforcement. This domestication is demonstrated in a ratification of substantive laws that include the following: the Anti-Corruption Act No 3 of 24 and the Penal Code Domestication of Articles 345 and eight of the Protocols regarding acts of corruption, prevention, investigations and prosecution of corruption.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Thank you.

HON. V. LUMAYI [ZAMBIA]: Mr. President, very unfair.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Thank you. Can you please introduce yourself by your name and the country please?

HON. V. LUMAYI: I introduced myself as Hon. Victor Lumayi from the Republic of Zambia.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: I appreciate it. Namibia to come in please.

HON. P. KOOPER [NAMIBIA]: I am Paula Kooper from Namibia. Hon. President, Hon. Members, I support the report as submitted by our interim Chairperson as a Member of that Committee and I want to highlight the importance of election observers. Election observers play a pivotal role in promoting credible, transparent and peaceful elections in the SADC region. Their presence enhances public confidence, deters election malpractice and ensures that elections comply with regional, international, democratic standards. Observers also provide independent assessments and recommendations that support electoral reforms, strengthen democratic institutions and contribute to long-term stability.

Mr. President, Hon. Members, if proper deployment of observers, is done, comprehensive coverage of the electoral cycle, capacity building activities and follow up on recommendations is easy. Insufficient funding must not limit the scope of the effectiveness and credibility of these missions. Undermining the SADC's ability to fulfil its mandate in promoting good governance, accountability and democracy across Member States. I do not know whether the three minutes are over or not, whether I can continue.

SADC Member States can coordinate elections, observation and funding by establishing a shared regional fund. Harmonising electoral standards and creating a regional pool of trained observers for timely deployment. Strengthening cooperation between the SADC PF, the SADC Secretariat and national electoral management bodies that improves planning and information sharing.

Joint pre-election assessments, co-ordinated follow up on observer recommendations enhance consistency in accountability across the region. Hon. President and Hon. Members, in conclusion, SADC Member States can also engage development partners collectively and budget in our national budgets and mobilise additional support and promote peer learning to improve electoral processes. I so submit. - [*Applause*.]

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Malawi!

HON. W. S. BANDA [MALAWI]: Mr. President, my name is William Susuwere Banda from Malawi. I want to join my colleagues who have commended the clarity of this report. I think we all agree that it is a good report. As Malawi, we will not regret that we are not part of that Standing Committee because of the situation that we experienced in Malawi. We were undergoing general elections.

However, Mr. President, I just wanted to check whether this august House would want to just focus on the observation of elections. We all appreciate that the elections are a process and value needs to be added at every point. We have seen in other countries tension building and people just let it proceed with that tension. The result has been a crisis when all of

us were able to see that issues are not being managed well. So, going there to observe is simply to record the endpoint of the whole process.

I was wondering whether the House would also consider bringing in interventions at the other levels of the process. Much as Malawi appreciates that we have a challenge of funding, adding value to the whole process is not just about evaluating the end of the process. Thank you, Mr. President. – [*Applause]* –

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Madagascar!

FR.

HON. SOPHIE RATSIRAKA [MADAGASCAR]: Sophie RATSIRAKA, Députée de Madagascar. L'Afrique représente la jeunesse et l'avenir avec sa population en croissance. Ce sont des opportunités commerciales considérables pour les entreprises mondiales, sans oublier toutes nos ressources.

Mais, notre continent est vulnérable au changement climatique, aux conflits, aux maladies et sans oublier la fragilité de nos démocraties et des droits humains.

Avec fierté, je dis que le devenir de l'Afrique est étroitement lié à la stabilité et à la sécurité mondiale. Car l'Afrique est un arbre qui porte de fruit en tout genre pour le monde entier. Mais cet arbre immense a besoin des racines solides ancrées avec de bonnes résolutions et de bonnes décisions.

Certes, nous ne rattrapons pas notre retard, mais nous avons ensemble et de façon certaine avec la population, avec la conscience, pardon, de nos populations.

Alors, montrons que nous sommes en action et qu'en adoptant ces résolutions, nous nous donnons la main, et nous méritons d'être des racines de l'Afrique d'aujourd'hui, de demain et pour toujours. Cette Afrique qui a besoin de paix, des réformes et de sécurité. Merci.

EN.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: South Africa!

HON. K. M. MMOEIEMANG (SOUTH AFRICA): My name is Kenny Mmoeiemang from South Africa, a Member of the Committee. Allow me to rise in support of the adoption of the standing Committee report, as it encourages us to note transformation in the SADC Parliamentary Forum into SADC Parliament. We note with great enthusiasm the domestic consultation on the draft protocol to establish the SADC Parliament.

Secondly, let us support the report but one of the perennial issues that we should not fail in attending to and addressing is the need of enhancing the role of Parliamentarians in advocating the signing, ratification, accession, domestication and implementation of various SADC protocols, such as SADC protocols against corruption. The legislative mandate and policy imperative speaks directly to our responsibility to ensure that we put a halt to corruption.

Thirdly, South Africa agrees with the proposals and the recommendations as contained in the report, particularly upon institutionalising structured oversight in the implementation of the SADC protocol on politics, defence, security and cooperation. Secondly, in institutionalising support on the involvement in election observation as a strategic measure for promoting the domestication and implementation of

SADC for the law on elections thereby advancing electoral reforms, strengthening democratic governance in the region.

With those few words, Mr. President and Hon. Members, I would like to express and submit South Africa's support for the adoption of the report. Thank you, Mr. President. – [*Applause*.]

THE HON. PRESIDENT: DRC!

FR.

HON. CATHY SAKOMBI MOLEKA [DRC]: Merci Monsieur le Président pour la parole.

Je suis membre de cette Commission et je soutiens ce rapport.

Néanmoins, j'ai des observations à ajouter concernant la RDC. La RDC a marqué des avantages significatifs dans les domaines suivants, notamment la corruption.

Bien qu'elle a ratifié le protocole de la SADC contre la corruption, elle mène un combat tendant à endiguer ce fléau, qui fait des désastres tant dans le secteur public que dans le secteur privé, en ruinant notre économie et en apportant un frein au développement de notre pays.

Et d'autre part, une proposition de loi modifiant et complétant le code pénal congolais, portant sur les infractions de corruption et infractions assimilées, a été initiée récemment.

Sans oublier que dans les deux chambres du Parlement, les responsables étatiques, auteurs de corruption ou des faits assimilés, sont entendus et même sanctionnés.

Deuxièmement, concernant le protocole de la SADC sur la coopération en matière de politique, de défense et de sécurité, oui, la RDC n'a pas encore ratifié le protocole.

Etant depuis des décennies, théâtre de conflits, de groupes armés et actuellement victime de l'agression rwandaise, la RDC a bénéficié néanmoins de l'appui militaire de la SADC, que nous ne cesserons de remercier assez. Car au prix de leur sang, des vaillants combattants de troupes de la SADC ont défendu le peuple congolais et son territoire.

Eu égard à cette expérience, la RDC s'emploie dans un proche avenir, et nous les parlementaires en faisant le lobbying, afin de ratifier le protocole d'une importance stratégique et capitale pour elle.

Et enfin, concernant les principes régissant les élections démocratiques, la RDC a ratifié la loi type de la SADC sur les élections. Mais nous, les parlementaires, devons mettre à jour cette loi en tenant compte des nouvelles menaces sur les machines à voter, surtout liées à la cybersécurité. Car nos machines électorales font de plus en plus l'objet d'attaques informatiques par les hackers, afin d'influencer les élections.

Voilà ce que je peux dire à ce sujet. Je vous remercie pour votre attention.

EN.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Hon. Magagula to close the debate.

HON. I. MAGAGULA (ESWATINI): Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for the comments and clarifications here and there by the Hon. Members from the floor. I may say, in summary, there is no one that is maybe saying

something different and that is not within the spirit of the report delivered. I am very grateful to the Members that they are, in total, proposing that the report be adopted but they are emphasising the point of implementation. There is no use having White Papers that do not serve any purpose in the future when we have problems of corruption, security, defence and other challenges.

So, Mr. President, I can only say, without mentioning, that I am recognising anyone but thanking everyone, including the one that has seconded the report. I thank you.

Motion put and agreed to.

Motion with leave, adopted.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: We have 30 minutes for a health break. We return by 11:30.

[1102 HOURS HEALTH BREAK]

Business resumed at 1133 Hours

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Hon. Speaker from Namibia, apologies we could not see you when you raised your hand. Can we give the floor to you, Hon. Speaker from Namibia?

HON. SAARA KUUGONGELWA [NAMIBIA]: Thank you very much, Mr. President, for your consideration. My name is Saara Kuugongelwa. I am the Speaker of the National Assembly of Namibia. I wanted to add my voice to support the report on governance and fighting corruption. I just wanted to add that it is very important for us to address illicit outflows that come especially from our natural resources to the Global North as part of our anti-corruption fighting. Without that, I think we will not be able to address the

impact of corruption on our economies, to ensure that the perpetrators are prosecuted, including those who are paying bribes, those who are avoiding taxes, that the flows out of the illicit flows are returned to our countries and that we have cross-border cooperation amongst ourselves and that crimes committed online involving monies that flow out of our region are also somehow brought back to the region. This is all that I wanted to say. Thank you very much, Mr. President. – *[Applause]* -

MOTION

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON TRADE, INDUSTRY, FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Motion for the adoption of the report of the Standing Committee on Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment is being moved by Hon. Mendes.

PT.

HON. RUTH MENDES (ANGOLA): Senhor Presidente, proponho à 58.ª Assembleia Plenária a adopção do Relatório da Comissão Permanente do Comércio, Indústria, Finanças e Investimento, cuja notificação foi feita ontem, dia 02 de Dezembro de 2025.

EN.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Any seconder? Botswana?

HON. D. SALESHANDO [BOTSWANA]: My apologies for hiding. My name is Dumelang Saleshando from Botswana, and I will be seconding. Thank you.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: We are happy to have you in the front, Hon. Member. I call upon the Chairperson, Hon. Ruth Mendes, to present the report.

PT.

HON. RUTH MENDES (ANGOLA): Senhor Presidente,

Senhores Deputados,

Senhores Presidentes dos Parlamentos da SADC aqui presentes e

Chefes de Delegações,

Todo o protocolo observado.

Passo a apresentar o Relatório da Comissão Permanente do Comércio, Indústria, Finanças e Investimento e vou pedir antes a atenção de todos, tendo em conta a extensão do relatório, vou apresentar os pontos um e dois e vou apresentar a seguir só a segunda parte do quinto ponto e as conclusões. O relatório está estruturado em cinco pontos:

1. É a composição da Comissão Permanente de Comércio, Indústria, Finanças e Investimento;
2. É o mandato e o tema da reunião;
3. É o enquadramento;
4. Resumo das deliberações e recomendações à Assembleia Plenária;
5. Conclusões.

A reunião sobre a composição da Comissão Permanente Comércio, Indústria, Finanças e Investimentos.

A reunião da Comissão Permanente de Comércio, Indústria, Finanças e Investimentos contou com a presença dos seus membros constantes do

anexo primeiro e dos funcionários e palestrantes constantes dos anexos segundo e terceiro, respectivamente.

Sobre o mandato e tema da reunião.

A Comissão Permanente de Comércio e Indústria, Finanças e Investimento, realizou a 30 e 31 de Outubro de 2025, no Hotel *Premier Oliver Tambo*, Johanesburgo, África do Sul, a sua reunião estatutária, subordinada ao tema, *Reforçar o Papel do Deputado* ao pugnar pela assinatura, ratificação, adesão, transposição e aplicação de protocolos da SADC.

A referida reunião fez parte da sessão das Comissões Permanentes em forma de preparação para a 58.ª Assembleia Plenária e incluiu uma sessão conjunta de todas as comissões permanentes do Fórum Parlamentar da SADC.

Ponto três, Enquadramento.

A Comissão do Comércio, Indústria, Finanças e Investimentos solicitou ao Secretariado da SADC uma análise minuciosa dos protocolos relevantes da SADC para verificar o estado da sua implementação.

A Comissão debateu a situação da assinatura, adesão, ratificação, transposição e implementação dos principais protocolos e instrumentos da SADC, com especial destaque para os protocolos sobre Trocas Comerciais de 1996, Finanças e Investimentos de 2006, Indústria de 2019 e Facilitação da Circulação de Pessoas de 2005, todos da SADC. Estes protocolos são fundamentais para a prossecução da integração económica da região, por promoverem políticas e legislação harmonizadas, reforçarem a colaboração

transfronteiriça e apoiarem o desenvolvimento de cadeias de valores regionais.

Enquanto colectivo, contribuem para a criação de um mercado regional mais vasto e competitivo, atractivo para o investimento nacional e estrangeiro.

O actual quadro económico da SADC exige políticas sólidas e abrangentes para fazer face aos desafios persistentes, incluindo o elevado nível de desemprego e as vulnerabilidades dos comerciantes transfronteiriços.

A adopção dos protocolos da SADC facilita o desenvolvimento e a integração de pequenas e médias empresas na economia em geral, através da melhoria do acesso ao financiamento, maior desenvolvimento de competências e maiores oportunidades de mercado, tendo em conta que as pequenas e médias empresas constituem a espinha dorsal de todas as economias modernas.

Além disso, a harmonização dos regimes fiscais e a introdução de incentivos fiscais específicos são fundamentais para atrair o investimento estrangeiro, ajudando assim a colmatar as lacunas do financiamento existentes e a proteger a região dos actuais choques económicos e globais. Peço desculpas, mas estou aqui a ver por onde posso começar para não ter que ler todo o documento. Peço perdão, mas parece que ficou uma parte do documento ali no meu lugar. Muito obrigada e peço mais uma vez as minhas sinceras desculpas.

Neste entretanto, o Protocolo da SADC sobre as Finanças e o Investimento de 2006. Afirmando que o Protocolo da SADC sobre Finanças e

Investimento, adoptado em 2006 e que entrou em vigor em 2010, visa promover e manter um clima de investimento sólido e sistemas financeiros robustos em toda a região, apoiando assim uma integração económica regional mais profunda.

Registando que o protocolo procura harmonizar as políticas financeiras de investimento entre os Estados-membros, incentivar o investimento transfronteiriço e os fluxos de capitais, promover a estabilidade e a convergência macro-económica, reforçar a governação financeira, fomentar a cooperação entre os bancos centrais, os ministérios das finanças e as agências de promoção do investimento, reforçando assim a integração regional através de quadros monetários fiscais e de investimento coordenados.

Reconhecendo que o protocolo foi ratificado por alguns dos Estados-membros, à excepção da Tanzânia, Madagáscar, Seychelles e Comores, e observando que, embora Madagáscar e a República Unida da Tanzânia tenham assinado o protocolo, aquando da sua adopção, em 2006, não depositaram instrumentos de ratificação e que as Seychelles, tendo-se retirado da SADC na altura, não participaram na negociação, adopção, ou assinatura do instrumento.

Registando que o artigo 4.º, sobre parcerias público-privadas, obriga os Estados-membros a cooperar em matéria de políticas e medidas conexas destinadas a incentivar e facilitar o recurso a parcerias público-privadas como meio de impulsionar o desenvolvimento sustentável da região. Reconhecendo que o protocolo sublinha a importância do investimento directo estrangeiro com o artigo 3.º do anexo 1 e exigir que os Estados-

membros promovam o empreendedorismo em indústria, conducentes à atracção do investimento directo estrangeiro, com o artigo 4º do anexo 3, a orientar os Estados-membros a colaborar na elaboração de um quadro regional de incentivos fiscais, que atraia mais investimentos estrangeiros para a região.

A Comissão Permanente de Comércio, Indústria, Finanças e Investimentos decidiu recomendar à 58.ª Assembleia Plenária as seguintes acções:

- Sobre o Protocolo de Trocas Comerciais, recomendar que os Parlamentos dos Estados priorizem e pugnem pela ratificação dos instrumentos, alterações e anexos pendentes incluindo os relacionados com o comércio de serviços, cooperação aduaneira e industrialização, tais como postos fronteiriços de paragem única, a fim de assegurar a plena participação e conformidade a nível regional.

- Apelar aos parlamentos para que reforcem a fiscalização dos compromissos do Executivo, exigindo a apresentação atempada de relatórios sobre os protocolos e anexos assinados, mas não ratificados, promovendo assim a responsabilização e a transparência nos processos regionais.

- Incentivar debates parlamentares, sessões de informação específicas e sessões de capacitação do Deputado sobre os benefícios e obrigações do protocolo e seus anexos em termos de conteúdo, a fim de apoiar a tomada de decisões, com base em dados concretos antes da ratificação.

- Exortar os parlamentos a alinharem a legislação nacional ao artigo 3.º do protocolo relativo à eliminação das barreiras não tarifárias ao comércio intra-SADC.

- Apelar aos Estados-membros para que integrem as disposições do protocolo nos seus planos nacionais de desenvolvimento, assegurando que a liberalização do comércio, a competitividade e os objectivos de desenvolvimento industrial se reflictam nas políticas económicas e comerciais nacionais.

- Exortar os Estados-membros a integrarem as dimensões de género e da juventude nos seus quadros de implementação, assegurando que as políticas internas decorrentes do protocolo promovam o comércio inclusivo e reforcem a participação da mulher e da juventude no comércio e no empreendedorismo.

- Mandatar o Fórum Parlamentar da SADC, a trabalhar com o Secretariado da SADC no reforço da monitorização e avaliação de implementação do protocolo e a apresentar relatórios periódicos aos parlamentos sobre os progressos, desafios e cumprimento, incluindo a adesão ao artigo 7.º sobre restrições quantitativas à importação, e o artigo 8.º sobre restrições quantitativas à exportação para uma fiscalização parlamentar sólida e para garantir que os Estados-membros não imponham cotas comerciais restritivas contrárias às disposições do protocolo.

Sobre o protocolo da SADC sobre a indústria.

- Exortar os parlamentos a priorizarem a ratificação da convenção e das suas alterações nos seus calendários legislativos, reconhecendo a sua importância estratégica para o avanço da industrialização e transformação económica da região.

- Incentivar os parlamentos a reforçarem a consciência e a vontade política, colaborando activamente com os ministérios competentes em razão

da matéria, representantes do sector privado e partes interessadas da sociedade civil, para maior consciencialização sobre os objectivos, obrigações e benefícios do protocolo, promovendo assim o consenso nacional e o compromisso político na sua ratificação.

- Incentivar o parlamento a realizar auditorias de leis e políticas antes da ratificação, solicitando avaliações das políticas e leis industriais nacionais para identificar áreas que requeiram alinhamento com o protocolo, garantindo a preparação efectiva para a implementação.

- Incentivar processos consultivos inclusivos com os parlamentos a promoverem consultas alargadas com as principais partes interessadas, incluindo associações industriais, pequenas e médias empresas e empresas lideradas por mulheres e jovens, para efeitos de apropriação e apoio à ratificação do protocolo.

- Incentivar ainda uma maior fiscalização parlamentar sobre o Executivo, com as Comissões do Comércio, da Indústria e da Integração Regional, a fazê-lo de forma sustentada para garantir que o Executivo avance com celeridade no processo de ratificação e submeta a aprovação parlamentar aos instrumentos necessários.

Sobre a facilitação da circulação de pessoas.

- Reafirmar a importância da salvaguarda da soberania nacional e das condições de segurança, reconhecendo que alguns Estados-membros receiam que a plena aplicação do protocolo possa desencadear uma migração descontrolada, vulnerabilidades de segurança, desequilíbrios no mercado de trabalho ou maior pressão sobre os sistemas de serviços sociais.

- Exortar o Fórum Parlamentar da SADC a trabalhar em concertação com o Secretariado da SADC e os parceiros de desenvolvimento na capacitação dos parlamentos para pugnarem pela harmonização das políticas de migração e de gestão de fronteiras que actualmente variam muito entre os Estados-membros visando remover as barreiras administrativas e acelerar a prossecução da livre circulação de pessoas na região.

- Incentivar os parlamentos e os Estados-membros a afectar verbas orçamentais para colmatar as lacunas administrativas e infra-estruturais, incluindo sistemas de verificação de identidade, gestão fronteiriça integrada, postos fronteiriços de paragem única e melhor gestão dos dados migratórios.

- Incentivar os Estados-membros a implementar a alínea *c),* do artigo 3.º do protocolo, que recomenda a criação de um balcão específico da SADC em cada um dos principais pontos de entrada dos Estados-partes, a fim de facilitar o tratamento coordenado e melhorar a circulação de pessoas.

- Exortar os parlamentos a realizarem consultas nacionais e campanhas de sensibilização para clarificar os benefícios económicos e sociais e de direitos humanos que advém do protocolo, promovendo assim um discurso público com conhecimento de causa e reforçando o apoio nacional à sua ratificação e transposição,

Sobre o protocolo da SADC sobre finanças e investimento.

- Incentivar os parlamentos a harmonizarem as políticas e leis ao objectivo do protocolo, com realce para o artigo 19.º que visa transformar a região numa zona de investimento coerente, promotora de competitividade, estabilidade e confiança do investidor.

- Apelar aos parlamentos dos Estados-membros para que defendam a harmonização das políticas fiscais, para reforçar a cooperação em matéria de tributação, incluindo a elaboração de directrizes, de incentivos fiscais e a criação de uma base de dados tributária regional, a fim de evitar a concorrência tributária prejudicial e garantir oportunidades de investimento equitativos em toda a região.

Quinto e último ponto, conclusão.

A ratificação e transposição de protocolos da SADC e suas alterações são essenciais para o desenvolvimento de uma economia regional integrada, inclusiva e competitiva.

A ratificação e a transposição integral do Protocolo da SADC sobre trocas comerciais e as suas alterações são praticamente importantes para aprofundar a integração regional, melhorar o acesso ao mercado, espoletar a agregação de valor aos minerais essenciais da região e posicionar a SADC como um centro de energia verde.

Pelo que os parlamentos têm a obrigação constitucional e de desenvolvimento de assegurar que estes instrumentos sejam efectivamente traduzidos em quadros nacionais, promotores de crescimento industrial, da criação de emprego e da transformação económica sustentável.

Através de uma supervisão sólida da harmonização legislativa e da cooperação inter-parlamentar, os parlamentos da SADC podem acelerar a realização da agenda regional de industrialização e comércio.

Senhor Presidente, proponho a devida adopção do relatório, muito obrigada.

EN.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: I call on Hon. Saleshando, to second the Motion.

HON. D. SALESHANDO (BOTSWANA): Hon. President, to make life easy for you, I want to propose that I summarise the statement for seconding the speech. Also, allow a little bit more time than we would ordinarily get for the debate. I am a Member of the Committee. We normally just abbreviate it as the Trade, Industry, Finance, and Investment (TIFI). Indeed, the Committee did meet as was presented by the Chairperson who came before me. The Committee deliberated on issues that should find consensus amongst all Members of Parliament on the need for the region to move with a quicker pace on issues of regional trade. We talked to the protocols on trade, the protocols on industry, the protocol on investment and the protocol on the movement of persons. Unfortunately, the reality is that several of our Parliaments are lagging when it comes to ratification and domestication. Even those that have indeed ratified and domesticated, implementation continues to be a big problem.

I think, colleagues, we must appreciate that without implementation, the good protocols remain nothing but a bouncing check for the people we represent. They represent what the Committee and I consider to be a lost opportunity for increasing trade amongst ourselves. The logic behind these protocols is simple: open trade, make it easy to trade amongst ourselves, help each other to move up the value chain and do not be an exporter as a region of unprocessed goods. That is really the thrust of it. If you open for trade and move up the value chain, it allows for employment creation that addresses the deep problems that we are all facing, the unemployment of our youth in particular, which is what one speaker talked about, the

demographic dividend, which threatens to become the demographic ticking time bomb.

With those few remarks, this is a report about a call to action and about putting our money where our mouth is. It urges us to match our political rhetoric with legislative commitment. It is us in this room, through our oversight function, who can get our respective governments moving on increasing trade amongst ourselves. With these few remarks, I second the motion, and I thank you, Mr. President. - [*Applause*] –

THE HON. PRESIDENT: I now open debate to the motion. I call upon Mozambique.

PT.

HON. SAIMONE MACUIANE (MOÇAMBIQUE): Muito obrigado, senhor Presidente do Fórum Parlamentar da SADC,

Excelências Presidentes dos Parlamentos aqui presentes,

Todo o protocolo observado.

Primeiro, queria começar por dizer o meu nome. Chamo-me Saimone Macuiane, membro do parlamento moçambicano. E talvez por ser membro desta comissão, primeiro começar por apoiar o relatório já apresentado, mas tenho uma, ou duas questões a apresentar

A primeira questão que queria aqui trazer é que quando se falou da paragem única nas fronteiras, o nosso país Moçambique já está a aplicar este princípio. Já tem a paragem única com o Malawi através da província de Tete e também temos a paragem única na fronteira com a África do Sul através da fronteira de Ressano Garcia.

E também queria colocar uma questão que a nossa Presidente trouxe aqui que tem que ver com o receio de alguns países de aceitar a circulação na sua íntegra. Isso tem que ser uma preocupação para o parlamento, se alguns receiam, significa que mesmo que tenham adoptado, não há avanço significativo. Então, queria que o Fórum Parlamentar encontrasse uma solução para que possa ultrapassar esta exigência que é extrema quando um dos membros receia significa que não se pode avançar.

Outra questão que também queria colocar é sobre a circulação de pessoas. A circulação de pessoas é extremamente importante. O nosso país Moçambique já avançou, acabou com os vistos, com os países da região e com alguns países da Europa oriental. Quer dizer que nós como Estado estamos a implementar estes protocolos.

E gostaria de terminar, dizendo que estes protocolos, todos eles, constituem uma fonte fundamental para a integração regional de todos os nossos países, mas é preciso que cada Estado, cada país possa fazer respeitar e fazer cumprir esses protocolos.

E para o fim mesmo, seria importante que os membros do Fórum Parlamentar tivessem condições para poder fiscalizar a implementação desses instrumentos a nível de todos os países da região.
Feito isso, muito obrigado. *Aplausos*

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Eswatini!

EN.

HON. N. M. MASILELA [ESWATINI]: Mr. President and my colleagues, may I also ride on the protocol that has been established in this House? I am Michael Masilela from Eswatini. I want to confirm that I am also a

Member of this Committee. We have discussed some issues in terms of the protocols and the treaties, which is correct. We looked at probabilities of enhancing trade also in the SADC region that will probably make an impact on our economic growth and development. Hence, we looked at improving infrastructure and we encourage countries to upgrade transport networks, borders and logistics to reduce cost and increase efficiency.

We also discussed the issues to streamline customs procedures and reduce the bureaucracy to facilitate trade. We also encourage countries to look at industries to integrate and collaborate across borders, by creating jobs and opportunities. We also say that we must invest in skills development, which will enable the UPS Store workers to meet industry demands and boost competitiveness.

We must create leveraged technology to facilitate cross-border, e-commerce and digital services. Lastly, we encourage each country by giving you a word of the day: An individual can never start living without rising above the challenges. I so submit.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Zimbabwe!

HON. M. MUGOMO [ZIMBABWE]: Mr. President, my name is Mercy Mugomo. I represent the Parliament of Zimbabwe. May I also ride on the protocol that has been observed? Zimbabwe has demonstrated commitment to regional integration through its engagement with the key SADC protocols and instruments. The country signed and ratified the SADC Protocol on Trade (EN | FR | PT) in 1996, which has been domesticated through national

trade policies and customs reforms supporting tariff liberalisation and intraregional commerce.

Zimbabwe also assented to and ratified the SADC Protocol on Finance and Investment (EN | FR | PT) 2006, aligning its financial and investment frameworks with regional standards, to attract capital and enhance economic cooperation.

In addition, Zimbabwe signed the SADC Protocol on Industry (EN | FR | PT) in 2019 and is in the process of domesticating its provisions to strengthen industrialisation and value chain development.

Regarding the SADC Protocol on the Facilitation of Movement of Persons (EN | FR | PT) 2005, Zimbabwe signed the instrument, but has not yet ratified it, reflecting ongoing national consultation on migration management and sovereignty concerns. Overall, Zimbabwe continues to implement and monitor these protocols, balancing regional commitments with the domestic priorities to advance trade, investment, industrialisation and people-to-people mobility.

Following the ratification and domestication of the SADC Protocol on Trade (EN | FR | PT) in 1996, Zimbabwe has integrated gender sensitivity provisions into international trade policies, including support for women and youth-owned enterprises through provincial access to markets, training and financing.

In line with the SADC Protocol on Finance and Investment (EN | FR | PT) of 2006, Zimbabwe has promoted inclusive investment frameworks by

encouraging youth entrepreneurship and women's participation in financial services supported by targeted credit schemes and capacity-building initiatives.

With respect to the SADC Protocol on Industry (EN | FR | PT) (2019), Zimbabwe is aligning its industrialisation strategies with gender and youth priorities, ensuring that industrial policy supports female-led manufacturing ventures and youth-driven innovation hubs. Collectively, these measures demonstrate Zimbabwe's commitment to inclusive trade and economic empowerment, ensuring that women and youth are central actors in the country's regional integration agenda.

Mr. President, it is no longer enough for us to encourage ratification; we must create binding mechanisms that ensure Member States follow through. Allow me to propose three innovations: First, every Parliament should adopt a SADC Protocol Compliance Clause in its Standing Orders, compelling Ministers to table ratification and domestication progress at legally set intervals. Second, a proposed Regional Scorecard on Protocol Implementation, published annually by SADC PF, can accelerate action where political will has been slow. Third, I propose that Parliamentarians conduct pre-ratification legislative alignment audits, so that Protocols do not gather dust after ratification. I thank you.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Thank you, we go to South Africa.

HON. D. M. SKOSANA [SOUTH AFRICA]: Mr. President, Hon. Members, today, I stand before you to support the adoption of the standing Committee report, but let me preface my statement by joining my esteemed colleagues in acknowledging the commendable strides that the SADC-PF Secretariat has made in developing a few model laws, including the SADC Model Law on Prison Oversight. The SADC Model Law on Prison Oversight

acknowledges that the independent oversight of correctional centres is essential for credible and effective monitoring. It further points out that the oversight bodies must have unrestricted access to facilities and inmates, independent funding, premises and control over their processes. They should set their priorities and reporting frameworks. Moreover, effective oversight requires regular monitoring supported by the accurate recording of observations, findings and recommendations.

Moreover, let me join my esteemed SADC-PF fellow Members in underscoring the importance of signing, accession, ratification, domestication and implementation of key SADC protocols and instruments, such as the SADC Protocol on Trade (EN | FR | PT) 1996, the 2006 SADC Protocol on Finance and Investment (EN | FR | PT) and the SADC Protocol on Industry (EN | FR | PT) 2019. Indeed, these protocols play an indispensable role in harnessing and advancing economic integration in our region.

But, having said all the above, South Africa agrees with the proposals and recommendations contained in the report, particular on the following: prioritising the ratification of outstanding instruments, amendments, annexures, including those relating to trade and services, customs co-operation, industrialisation such as one-stop border posts, to ensure full regional participation and compliance; strengthening the oversight of the Executive commitments by requiring timely submission of reports on signed but unratified protocols and annexures, thereby promoting accountability and transparency in regional processes; urging parliamentarians to align national legislation with article 3 of the protocols on the elimination of non-

tariff barriers to intra-SADC trade; calling upon Members and parliamentarians to advocate for the harmonisation of tax policies to strengthen cooperation on taxation, including the development of guidelines of tax incentives and the establishment of regional tax databases to prevent harmful tax competition and ensure equitable investment opportunities across the region.

Lastly, as South Africans, we acknowledge and support the call for enhancing the role of Parliamentarians in advocating for the signing, ratification, domestication and implementation of SADC protocols.

Let us recognise that Parliament is not a passive actor in regional integration. We are drivers of progress. We are custodians of commitments. We are the bridge between regional aspiration and national implementation.

As South Africa, we commit to reaffirm that our Parliament will actively follow the SADC protocols. We will strengthen our oversight to ensure implementation. We will demand a report from the Executive on treaty obligations. We will work with progressive civil society, not the imperialist-sponsored civil society, academia and regional bodies to promote understanding of study instruments. We will ensure that domestication processes are timely, consultative and effective. I thank you.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Namibia!

HON. N. T. KALANGULA [NAMIBIA]: Hon. President, I stand to contribute as Nelson Tuafeni Kalangula from Namibia. Hon. President, with the withdrawal of trade facilitation programmes and review of such aids

often weaponised, it is of extreme importance that Africa, starting with our region of SADC, fast-track trade amongst ourselves through Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement. Commitment is needed; not only from some but all Member States.

Inasmuch as we seek foreign direct investment from outside of Africa to boost our economies, it will be in our best interest to look internally to trade amongst ourselves as Africans. We should stand firm, hold tight to our resources, look into value addition to avoid the trending situation of raw materials or minerals exploitation under the guise of favour and employment for Africans. Africa, SADC in particular, should commit to protocol ratification, for, as it is known, commitment holds the key to economic transformation and thus a guard against exploitation and avoidance of future sanctions, withdrawal of aids and economic growth programmes that are used as neo-colonialism tools to maintain grip and control on African resources. Ratification is the key we have.

Hon. President, Hon. Members, as I come to an end, I would like to state the following: It should not sit right for Africans to be restricted on utilisation of own resources, while the non-Africans keep them in reserves and empower their economies and people at the expense of the resource owners. Let our resources work for ourselves as we promote trade amongst ourselves. I support the adoption of this report, Hon. President and Hon. Members. Thank you. - [*Applause*] –

THE HON. PRESIDENT: I call on Namibia again.

HON. S. KUUGONGELWA [NAMIBIA]: Hon. President, I am Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila, Speaker of the National Assembly, Namibia. I

support the adoption of the report as my colleague has done. I note with concern the low level of ratification and domestication of the protocol in our Member States. I wanted to establish whether there is any indication as to what the cost of that is, so that we are empowered to deal with it and achieve a higher uptake of the ratification and domestication of the protocol.

Secondly, I want to highlight the importance of ensuring that our protocols would promote shared growth and development amongst all the Member States by promoting cross-border economic cooperation, especially value chain development across the borders, in addressing the anti-competitive market conduct that would make us feel more like competitors instead of a community that can prosper together. I think that is very important. If we cannot address that, I think the competition will become negative competition to a point that we compete down instead of upwards. Thank you. - [*Applause*] –

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Zambia!

HON. M. C. MAZOKA [ZAMBIA]: Mr. President, in supporting the report on trade and industry, allow me to briefly share what Zambia has done in this regard. We have domesticated the SADC Protocol on Trade (EN | FR | PT), that was in 1996 and aligned the National Trade and Customs Legislation. In the same vein, Zambia has implemented the underlying tariff reduction rules of origin and customs procedures with the regional framework.

In the quest to ensure domestication of the SADC Protocol on Trade (EN | FR | PT), Zambia has done the following: One, integrated the provisions of the SADC Protocol on Trade (EN | FR | PT) into its domestic legal framework,

primarily through the Customs and Exercise Act and related statutory instruments.

Two, implemented first tariff reductions on goods originating from other SADC Member States in line with the protocol's schedule.

Three, applied the SADC rules on the origin to determine which goods qualify for preferential trade treatment under the Free-Trade Area.

Four, continued to harmonise customs procedures and documentation with SADC standards while facilitating smoother cross-border trade, as is the case where One-Stop Border Posts are being implemented and measures such as simplified border procedures and transit arrangements have been adopted to comply with the protocol.

Mr. President, with these few remarks, I wish to lend my full support to the motion. Thank you.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Madagascar!

FR.

MS. S. G. RATSIRAKE [MADAGASCAR]: (Merci Monsieur le Président,

Je partage l'intérêt des échanges inter-régionaux, mais un pays comme le Madagascar a besoin d'une certaine production quand même. Car nous n'exportons pas vraiment avec l'Afrique, nous ne commercialisons pas et le doute réside sur le fait que le marché soit juste à sens unique. Ce qui entraînerait pour le Madagascar de perte d'emplois et également la fermeture de plusieurs entreprises. Donc, je mets quand même un bémol sur la motion.

Merci.

EN.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. I put the question that the report of the Standing Committee on Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment be adopted.

Motion put and agreed to.

Motion with leave, adopted.

MOTION

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOOD, AGRICULTURE, NATURAL RESOURCES AND CLIMATE ACTION

THE HON. PRESIDENT: The motion for the adoption of the Report of the Standing Committee on Food, Agriculture, Natural Resources and Climate Action is being moved by Hon. Jele.

HON. S. JELE [ESWATINI]: Thank you, Mr. President. I beg to move that the 58th Plenary Assembly do adopt the Report of the Standing Committee on Food, Agriculture, Natural Resources and Climate Action laid on the table on 2 December 2025. I beg to move, Mr. President.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Who seconds?

HON. N. V. MENTE-NKUNA [SOUTH AFRICA]: Thank you very much, Mr. President. Good afternoon to all the Members. I, Ntombovuyo Mente-Nkuna, second the mover on the motion for the adoption of the report of the Standing Committee on Food, Agriculture, Natural Resources and Climate Action as moved by Hon. Member Sicelo Jele. Thank you.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: I call upon Hon. Jele to present the Report.

HON. S. JELE [ESWATINI]: Thank you Mr. President. I will first start with the composition of the Committee, which is in Annexure one, page 6. I

will not go in details on that. I will hastily go into the composition of the Standing Committee on Food and Agriculture, Natural Resources and Climate Action, which is abbreviated as FANRACA. The Standing Committee on Food and Agriculture, Natural Resource and Climate Action was composed of the Members as contained in Annexure 1. The list of officials and resource persons who attended the meeting is contained in Annexures 2 and 3, respectively.

Given that both the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson from Zambia were unavoidably absent in accordance with Rule 39(2) of the Rules of Procedure (EN | FR | PT)s, the Committee designated Hon. Sicelo Jele of Eswatini as the Chairperson. Mr. President, the specific terms of reference for the Food, Agriculture, Natural Resources and Climate Action Standing Committee are set out in Rule 42(d) of the Rules of Procedure of the Standing Committee of the SADC-PF.

The Committee convened its statutory meeting on 30 to 31 October 2025, at the Premier O R Tambo Hotel in Johannesburg, South Africa. The meeting was convened under the theme, *Enhancing the Role of Parliamentarians in Advocating for the Signing, Ratification, Accession, Domestication and Implementation of the SADC Protocol*. The meeting formed part of the Standing Committee session for the 58th Plenary Assembly, which included a joint sitting of all SADC-PF standing Committee.

May I, Mr. President, give a background. The Committee convened to deliberate on the status of the SADC Energy Protocol of 1996 as amended in 2021, focusing on strategies to strengthen parliamentary advocacy for its ratification, accession, domestication and implementation.

The discussion highlighted a critical implementation gap that, while the reversed SADC Protocol on Energy (EN | FR | PT) in 2023 has been signed by only 10 Member States, being Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, others such as Comoros, the DRC and Seychelles have yet to assent to the 1996 Protocol, and Mauritius and South Africa are yet to sign it. This is encompassed by the regional power deficit of approximately 4 200 megawatts, despite Angola having a surplus of 2 000 megawatts and countries such as Angola, Malawi and Tanzania remaining unconnected to the regional power pool.

Furthermore, the region's energy mix remains a challenge, accounting for 59% of power generation, hindering decarbonisation efforts. An estimated $250 billion is required to achieve universal energy access by 2030, emphasising the scale of investment needed to address aging infrastructure, integrate renewables and reverse the trend of growing urban-rural energy inequality that is impeding regional energy self-sufficiency.

Mr. President, in summary of the deliberations and recommendations to the Plenary Assembly, following presentation of the SADC Energy Protocol and Energy Landscape in the SADC region by the resource persons and the deliberations that followed, the Committee made the following observations and recommendations to the 58th Plenary Assembly:

The SADC Protocol on Energy (EN | FR | PT), whereas the Standing Committee on Food, Agriculture, Natural Resources and Climate Action, convened to explore the catalyst role of energy security in development under the theme, *Enhancing the Role of Parliamentarians in Advocating for*

the Signing, Ratification, Accession, Domestication and Implementation of the SADC Protocol.

In recognising the central role of energy in achieving the sustainable development goals and the critical importance of parliamentary oversight in ensuring universal energy access, we noted that the region's immense energy potential includes abundance in renewable resources and critical minerals, yet concerned that persistent challenges, including a 56% electricity access rate and a significant power deficit, hinder regional development.

Mr. President, the Committee observed with concern that: The pace of signing, ratifying and assenting the reversed SADC Protocol on Energy (EN | FR | PT) 2023 and its procedures remain slowly among several Member States; the critical regional energy projects, such as the Inga Hydro Project and the regional power pool, lack full participation from the Member States; aging infrastructure, heavy reliance on coal and lack of policy harmonisation impair the transition to a sustainable and secured energy future; and significant financial investment is required to achieve regional energy targets and address increasing energy inequality.

Acknowledging the indispensable role of Parliamentarians in providing oversight, enhancing legislation and approving resources to drive the regional energy agenda, the Committee resolved to recommend that the 58th Plenary Assembly should therefore urge national Parliaments, through relevant portfolios and select Committees, to exercise their legislative authority by prioritising the ratification of all outstanding SADC Energy Protocol and enacting domestic legislation informed by the regional model

laws to domesticate their provisions and harmonise policies for a just energy transition.

We also call upon national Parliaments, through the relevant select Committee, to intensify their oversight mandate to scrutinise the Executive implementation of the energy protocol, the monitoring process on connecting to the regional power pool and ensure accountability for achieving national and regional energy targets.

We also encourage national Parliaments, through the Select Committee on Energy and Budget Finance and other relevant Committees, to utilise their budgetary power to approve appropriate strategic investment in regional energy infrastructure, renewable energy sources and grid modernisation while creating an enabling environment for climate finance and public-private partnership.

Mr. President, we also need to engage the SADC-PF Secretariat to accelerate the development of critical model laws and a robust monitoring framework and strengthened collaboration with relevant bodies, to build parliamentarian capacity for effective advocacy and oversight of the energy sector. We also strongly encourage national Parliaments to actively engage in regional platforms such as the 2026 SADC Sustainable Energy Week, to share best practices and champion policy harmonisation for regional energy scrutiny and integration.

In conclusion, we, as the Standing Committee for Food, Agriculture, Natural Resource and Climate Action, urge strengthened collaboration between the SADC-PF Secretariat, national Parliaments and regional and international partners to advance the development of modern laws, promote

renewable energy investment and ensure the effective domestication and oversight of SADC energy-related protocols.

Considering the region's growing energy, climate and development demands, we further call upon Member States to actively engage with and implement these frameworks and to participate fully in regional platforms such as the 2026 SADC Sustainable Energy Week, to drive and harmonise sustainable and people-centred energy transition across the region.

We need to reinforce the authority of regional instruments, including the SADC Energy Protocol, to promote the implementation of sustainable energy policy regulation and standards, to promote regional integration and to foster regional trade in clean energy in the SADC region. I thank you, Mr. President. – [*Applaus*e] –

HON. N.V MENTE-NKUNA [SOUTH AFRICA]: Mr. President, allow me to stand on all the protocols established as they have been observed by this House. It would be amiss of me not to greet our Hon. SA Speaker, who is the great host of this 58th Parliamentary Forum. – [*Applause*]

Mr. President, I rise with a profound sense of duty and urgency to second the motion for the adoption of this critical report from the Standing Committee on Food, Agriculture, Natural Resources and Climate Action. I commend the interim Chairperson and his leadership, the Hon. Sicelo Jele and the entire Committee for their diligent work in producing a document that is a clarion call for decisive parliamentary action.

The theme of this report is: "*Enhancing the Role of Parliamentarians in Advocating for the Signing, Ratification and Accession as well as the*

Domestication and Implementation of Southern Africa Development Community Protocols." It is particularly instructive.

We gather not as isolated countries but as national delegates. However, as a parliamentary arm of a community bound by shared destiny, the Southern Africa Development Community Protocols, SADC, Protocol on Energy, which was under scrutiny by our Committee, is a stark statement to the gap between our collective aspirations and our collective action. A very painful reminder that we are indeed nothing without each other. We are indeed nothing without each other's support and the progressive integration as well as the sustainable development.

These facts are laid bare by the Committee, are sobering and we must not look away. While our region grapples with a crippling power deficit of 4 200 megawatts, we have Member States with surplus energy yet to be connected to the regional grid. This is not a failure of resources; it is a failure of integration, as well as making sure that we are all integrated in all aspects.

As SADC, we do agree that we need an energy mix and we also need clean generation energy means. We, however, are also of the view that responsible nations for the emissions must take full responsibility. As things stand, coal dominates energy in our region and that coal domination is also a source of employment for many of the households in our region.

Most critically, while we possess a revised robust energy protocol designed to address these challenges, its journey from paper to practice remains painfully incomplete. As we have heard, this started in 1996. *Baba* Nelson Mandela was still there at the time.

The delay in signing the ratification of an accession by several Member States, including South Africa, is a bottleneck we can no longer afford.

Mr. President, this is where our true parliamentary power must be activated. This report correctly identifies us not as bystanders but as an essential catalyst for change. I will remind you that our role transcends debate and encompasses oversight, legislation and appropriation. Therefore, I wholeheartedly echo the comments and recommendations that provide a clear roadmap for our engagement.

Further, I wish to amplify the call for adding a few critical dimensions that underscore the breadth of our responsibility. Firstly, while fast-tracking ratification is paramount, we must also champion transparent and inclusive public engagement during the domestication process of this protocol.

Our national laws must be shaped not only by regional model laws but also by the voices of local communities, civil society and the private sector to ensure they are equitable, context-specific and garner public trust. Our monitoring tool, Madam Secretary-General, comes in very handy in such instances.

Secondly, we must explicitly link energy security to human development, gender equality and youth empowerment. Lack of energy entrenches poverty, disproportionately affects women and girls and stifles the innovation of our youth. Our advocacy must frame energy access as a fundamental enabler of education, healthcare and economic opportunities for everyone.

Mr. President, thirdly, our oversight must ensure that the shift to renewable energy is a just and inclusive transition. We must legislate for

social protection, skills retraining and economic diversification for communities and workers currently dependent on fossil fuel industries. Energy security and climate resilience are two sides of the same coin.

Mr. President, fourthly, our budgetary oversight should incentivise investment not just in infrastructure but in research, development and adoption of new technologies. These include smart grids that all of us must integrate, United Energy Storage and decentralised renewable solutions, which are crucial for reaching remote rural areas and building a resilient modern energy system. Our Inga project must be a development for all.

I must also add that we must be the architects of policy coherence. The energy protocol cannot be in silos. Our work must actively create synergies with food security, true sustainable irrigation and agro-processing, which can be achieved through the provision of sustainable energy. The water management and the operationalisation of the African Continental Free Trade Area can only be realised when we have sustainable energy.

A secure energy grid is the backbone of regional trade and industrialisation for all of us to have manufacturing.

Mr. President, finally, beyond model laws, we need peer-to-peer parliamentary mechanisms for sharing implementation challenges and successes. We should champion the establishment of clear regional scorecards on protocol implementation, turning oversight into a tool for friendly competition and mutual accountability among Member States.

Mr. President, in conclusion, this report is a mirror reflecting both our challenges and our potential. It reminds us that regional integration is not an abstract concept discussed in comfortable conference rooms as we do

now. It is built through interconnected grids, shared policies, collective investment and above all through the political will that we all commit to. As parliamentarians, politicians and leaders in our respective societies, we are uniquely positioned to mobilise. It is therefore my hope that we will adopt this report as a binding commitment. Let it be the benchmark against which our people will measure our resolve to turn the lights on in every household, every manufacturing factory to power their homes, their industries, their future and their sustainable, integrated and prosperous SADC region we have all pledged to build. Imagine a school that does not have lights, imagine a school that does not have electricity? What kind of artificial intelligence, AI, that we have resolved on will ever see the life of being in that classroom? –[*Applause*] -

HON. C. CHIGWADZARA [ZIMBABWE]: Mr. President, my name is Chinhenza Chigwadzara from Zimbabwe and I am also a Member of this Committee. Zimbabwe has made noble progress towards advancing renewable energy and regional energy transition goals by adopting comprehensive policy and regulatory reforms. The country established the National Energy Policy 2012 and the National Renewable Energy Policy 2019, which together set a clear framework for expanding solar, wind, small hydro and biomass energy in line with Vision 2030. To support investment, Zimbabwe has strengthened its legal and regulatory environment through the Zimbabwe Energy Regulatory Authority and the Electricity Act, enabling independent power producers, IPPs and providing private sector participation.

Mr. President, Zimbabwe has formally committed to a regional cooperation under the SADC Energy Frameworks via the SADC Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (SACREEE), ratification. These recent reforms have also streamlined the integration of distributed and embedded generation, particularly solar, into the national grid. Additionally, the introduction of a government project to support the agreement in 2024 provides five financial guarantees that help de-risk renewable energy investments, further encouraging domestic and foreign participation in the clean energy sector.

In my conclusion, Mr. President, the gap between policy commitment and full implementation remains substantial in terms of actual renewable energy deployment, grid integration, financing mobilisation, and operationalising regional cooperation at scale. For the kind of "strengthened collaboration" and "harmonised, sustainable, people-centred energy transitions" we aspire, Zimbabwe, along with other SADC members, will need to push harder on implementing, not just ratifying, frameworks; enacting supportive laws; securing investments and building institutional capacity for regional coordination and oversight. I so submit, Mr. President. – [*Applause*] –

THE HON. PRESIDENT: I now call on Namibia.

HON. S. KUUGONGELWA [NAMIBIA]: Hon. President, I am Saara Kuugongelwa- Amadhila, a Speaker from Namibia. Namibia supports the report and we would like to highlight the importance of harnessing private sector resources and technical capacity in addressing the energy deficit, which, as has been indicated, is a constraint to sustainable growth and to food security. We would also like to highlight the importance of addressing the high cost of energy, which constrains access to energy even beyond the

deficit. Many households are unable to afford the cost of accessing energy, even when the infrastructure takes the energy to the door of their houses by promoting efficiency in generation and transmission and by promoting competitiveness of the energy sector. As was indicated by others, it is important that we ensure the mainstreaming of climate adaptation in energy generation and to ensure that the climate change-affected countries, without any discrimination based on per capita income, are assisted through climate funding to ensure climate adaptation in ensuring energy security. Thank you.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Mozambique!

PT.

HON. R. M. DIOMBA [MOZAMBIQUE]: Agradecemos Este Espaço Que Temos. Respeitadas Figuras Conforme O Que Os Antecedentes Fizeram.

Em Relação Ao Ponto, Acho Que É Muito Importante, Como Outros Pontos. Aqui Toca Mais A Barriga. Temos Que Ver A Questão Da Alimentação E Como Podemos Fazer Para Que Essa Produção Tenha Uma Continuidade Maior E Possamos Garantir A Alimentação Durante Todo O Tempo, Até A Época A Seguir.

Normalmente, Tem Havido Um Espaço, Um Tempo Muito Curto, A Comida Acaba. A Conservação Não É Suficiente, A Quantidade Não É Suficiente, E Isto Dá Espaço Para Haver Fome. Nós Queríamos, Concordando Com O Relatório, Que Haja Esforço Em Cada País Para Que Encontre Maneiras De Conservar Esses Produtos. Aqui Poderia Dar Exemplo, Das Mangas Como Fruta, Que Tem Um Curto Espaço De Vida E Desaparece, Apodrece.

É Só Imaginar, Uma Vez Fomos Convidados Para Tomar Qualquer Coisa Num Hotel De Mocímboa Da Praia Para Quem Não Conhece, É No Norte De

Moçambique, E Tivemos O Sumo De Manga Vindo Da Arábia Saudita. De Moçambique, De África, Não. Então Temos Que Encontrar Espaço, Formas De Ter Tecnologias Que Pudemos Conservar O Que Nós Produzimos.

Em Relação Aos Recursos Naturais, É Evidente Que A Conservação É Fraca, É Evidente, Temos Que Garantir Que Recursos Que Temos Possam Manter A Vida Das Pessoas, Animais E As Plantas Em Si, Evitando Ao Mesmo Tempo Calamidades Frequentes.

Queremos Ainda Terminar, Dizendo Que A Comunicação É Muito Importante. Comunicação Entre Nós, Em Todos Os Aspectos, Em Todas As Situações Que Acontecem Nos Nossos Países. Muitos Mais Cursos De Água, Temos Rios, Uns Usam, Outros Não Usam, Ou É A Mesma Água Que Mata Num Lado E O Outro Lado Está A Dar Esperança Nas Pessoas.

Queremos Que Aqui Haja Comunicação Permanente, Não Esperando O Momento Crítico Em Que Pode Haver Comunicação, Mas Tem Que Acontecer Permanentemente. Como O Tempo Não É Suficiente, Mas Dá Para Todos Falarmos, Quero Agradecer Pelo Espaço.
Muito Obrigado.

Aplausos

EN.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Namibia!

HON. J. M. LIKANDO [NAMIBIA]: Thank you very much. I think much has been said by the Speaker. As a Member of the Committee, I only want to make an emphasis on the country's commitment to renewable energy with complex initiatives that are there. Given our country, the sunlight shines with solar. Green Hydrogen has been one of our priorities in the country. It is just to encourage Member countries that the involvement of the

government financially is always overwhelmed by the private sector, who hijack the initial idea of State Members.

We urge Member countries to fast-track the processes to ensure access to energy, especially in rural areas because it affects other cross-cutting sectors such as education and other rural development. Therefore, I just made this to emphasise that I move to support the report submitted by the interim Chair. Thank you.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Madagascar!

FR.

HON. RABY SAVATSARAH (MADAGASCAR): Merci Monsieur le Président de m'avoir donné la parole, et chers membres du forum, tout protocole observé. Des études indiquent que la région SADC est de plus en plus exposée au risque de mauvaises expériences du premier cyclone de catégorie 5 en raison du réchauffement climatique.

Trois pays de la SADC sont exposés et plus vulnérables au changement climatique, notamment Malawi, le Mozambique et Madagascar. Et ce changement climatique menace notre agriculture, la sécurité alimentaire, l'accès à l'eau et ces chocs climatiques s'intensifient de plus en plus, et les femmes et les jeunes sont les plus affectés.

Notre région SADC fait face également à plusieurs défis, notamment la transition énergétique, la gouvernance climatique, la budgétisation liée au changement climatique et la résilience climatique. Ce sont des défis systémiques qui appellent donc à des réponses systémiques également. Le renforcement des capacités des parlements nationaux en matière de contrôle

de la responsabilité et de la notification de l'action climatique est donc très important.

La région SADC doit promouvoir une approche globale et équitable en matière d'action climatique afin de remédier à cette vulnérabilité. Il faut également que nous réfléchissions sur la question de la technologie, c'est-à-dire quel rôle peut jouer la technologie, notamment l'intelligence artificielle, dans la lutte contre le changement climatique et dans la mise en œuvre de toutes les mesures en faveur du climat. Nous ne pouvons pas attendre que tout le pays ou tous les districts ou les communes soient électrifiés avant de réfléchir sur cette question.

Et enfin, une politique commune doit être élaborée pour comprendre l'interaction entre les mobilités humaines et le changement climatique afin de réduire la migration et les déplacements induits par le climat. Nous devons harmoniser nos politiques énergétiques nationales et régionales pour assurer un développement énergétique équilibré et durable de la région SADC.

Monsieur le Président, chers membres du Forum, nous soutenons l'adoption d'une loi type de la SADC sur le changement climatique et nous soutenons également cette motion. Merci.

EN.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Lesotho!

SENATOR. M. MOHALE [LESOTHO]: Thank you very much Mr. President and I should take this opportunity to ride on the protocol. I am Senator Mohale and I am not part of the Committee. However, I so greatly applaud the motion that has been moved. Mr. President, I think it is high

time that the Portfolio Committees should find a way to work with our different Executives in consortium regarding the implementation of this motion.

We all gathered that, subject to our failure as a reason on implementing this motion, we are challenged as a region on the following issues. There are unpredictable weather patterns that lead to climate effects such as floods, reduced crop yields and water security, which cost our nations. The serious issues that we are faced with are poor infrastructure, limited investment in agriculture, poverty, pests, disease and conflicts, which can be internal and external.

Also, gender disparities. It should be heightened that we find ways and means that this message should resonate across everybody, across every country and the region at large, so that we can, in a way, deter a state of emergency in the region before disaster strikes. Other impacts of climate change are the degradation of land, soil erosion, housing and deforestation. So with this motion, I fully support and submit. Thank you.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Angola!

PT.

HON. RUTH MENDES (ANGOLA): Muito obrigado, Senhor Presidente. Senhor Presidente, eu também quero juntar a minha voz aos colegas que apoiam o Relatório da Comissão Permanente sobre Alimentação, Agricultura e Recursos Naturais e Acção Climática. Falando da energia na nossa região, nós devemos de facto nos congratular porque nós temos tudo para termos energia suficiente, para não termos défice na nossa região.

Foi falado aqui sobre o facto de Angola ter energia excedentária, mas entretanto, não consegue ter os "pulos" para que essa energia seja distribuída. Mas o que eu quero aqui destacar é a barragem do Inga que nós temos na RDC que se posta a funcionar, ela tem energia para toda a região da SADC e até para exportarmos energia nas outras regiões.

Parece-me que de facto é importante que nós pensemos agora em assinar este protocolo. O Protocolo é de 1996 e temos só 10 países que o assinaram e o ratificaram. Significa que tem que haver também vontade política por parte dos países para que possamos dar este salto de pormos o Protocolo em funcionamento.

A partir do momento que temos energia suficiente na região, estamos a promover o desenvolvimento, estamos a promover o bem-estar das nossas populações e é isso que de facto é importante para nós. Me parece que, de facto, analisando hoje aquilo que nós estivemos a fazer aqui toda a manhã, a situação dos protocolos da nossa região que de uma maneira geral quase não funcionam é porque nem todos os países aderiram e nem todos os países o ratificaram.

Parece-me que nós estamos a perder muito tempo com questões subjectivas, algumas delas, quando nós devíamos e temos todas as condições para darmos o salto e termos uma região desenvolvida, uma região com crescimento, uma região em que as populações, de facto, tenham o bem-estar social, muito obrigado. Portanto, apoio o relatório mais uma vez, muito obrigado. – *Aplausos*

FR.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: DRC!

HON. SEN. MUYA MUBOYAYI CLEMENT (DRC)

Merci beaucoup, Monsieur le Président, pour la parole.

Je suis Honorable Clément MUBOYAYI, je suis Sénateur de la République Démocratique du Congo.

Je viens ici pour soutenir la motion. Mais, d'entrée de jeu, je signale que mon intervention pour soutenir cette motion va s'appesantir sur le projet INGA.

En ce qui concerne l'électricité, je crois que notre région en a suffisamment besoin. Dans ce sens que si le projet INGA s'achevait, toute la région serait vraiment servie et nous serions même en mesure de servir ceux qui ne sont pas de la SADC.

Pour ce projet INGA, nous disons, comme nous l'avions rappelé lors de la 57ème Assemblée plénière à Victoria Falls, que la RDC reste ouverte à tous les partenaires sérieux dans le cadre du partenariat public-privé qui puisse permettre à ce que ce projet d'INGA puisse s'achever.

Et c'est un projet dont le coût total et global est d'une dizaine de milliards de dollars, et qu'à ce jour, seulement on a déjà approuvé 250 millions de dollars pour les études de la première phase, tel qu'initialement prévu.

Mais à ce sujet, moi je viens ici pour manifester une fois de plus la disponibilité de mon pays pour que tous les partenaires privés qui puissent venir investir dans ce secteur puissent le faire, afin que la région de la SADC soit suffisamment éclairée et puisse avoir l'électricité qu'il faut.

Voilà, je vous remercie, Honorable Président pour cette parole.

EN.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: I call on the mover to respond to the debate.

HON. S. JELE [ESWATINI]: Thank you Mr. President. Due to the technicality of this motion, as you can see and attest, it has several MPs who debated it, eight in total. So, with the leave of the House, may I request that my seconder also assists in responding to some of the questions? But I will just make a summary of what has been said and what the Committee probably came up with.

I will start with Zimbabwe, probably he was in support of the motion, which we appreciate and Zimbabwe is aligning itself in terms of the Regulatory Authority on Clean Energy. That, as a region, we appreciate and applaud. That is the direction that we should move forward.

The Speaker from Namibia lamented about the high cost of energy across the region, which is a hindrance to many of our States, especially our developing States. We, as a Committee, discussed the issue of the high cost of electricity.

As the Member from the DRC says, the DRC is open to development, especially the Public-Private Partnership (PPP). We looked at that and it can be a good idea, it can be a solution.

I will also go to the Member from Mozambique. I may leave it because I could not capture it quite correctly. I will leave it to my colleague, as I requested. But over and above, most Members who made their submissions are in support of this motion.

So, Mr. President, may I move that this motion be adopted? Maybe my colleague can add something to what has already been said by Members. I thank you.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. I put the question that the report of the Standing Committee on Food, Agriculture, Natural Resources and Climate Action be adopted.

Motion put and agreed to.

Motion with leave, adopted.

MOTION

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE REGIONAL PARLIAMENTARY MODEL LAWS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

THE HON.PRESIDENT: The motion for the adoption of the Report of the Regional Parliamentary Model Laws Oversight Committee is being moved by Hon. Kasanda. Please present the motion.

HON. C. KASANDA [ZAMBIA]: I hereby move on behalf of the Parliament of Zambia: That the Report of the Regional Parliamentary Model Laws Oversight Committee to the 58th Plenary Assembly of the SADC Parliamentary Forum laid on the table of the House on 2 December 2025 be adopted.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Do we have any seconder?

HON. M. KHATI [LESOTHO]: Mr. President, I rise to second the Motion as moved by the Chairperson.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Hon. Kasanda, you may go ahead and present your report.

HON. C. KASANDA [ZAMBIA]: Mr. President, I will present the Report of the Regional Parliamentary Model Laws Oversight Committee, whose theme is *"Benchmarking for the Impact: Domestication of the Model Laws for Transformative Change*. I will not go through the table of contents as I

believe this was shared earlier with the Members. I will go directly into the report.

Mr. President, the Regional Parliamentary Model Laws Oversight Committee was composed of the Members as contained in Appendix 1. The list of officials and resource persons who attended the meeting is listed in Appendices 2 and 3, respectively. Therefore, I will not delve into that as well.

Mr. President, pursuant to the Terms of Reference of the Committee as articulated in Article 17(4) of the Constitution of the Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum, which charges the Regional Parliamentary Model Laws Oversight Committee with the responsibility of monitoring and evaluating progress made by Member States towards domesticating SADC Model Laws and implementing related laws and policies. The RPMLOC, held its Statutory Meeting and Inaugural Benchmarking Visit to the Kingdom of Lesotho under the theme: *"Benchmarking for Impact: Domestication of Model Laws for Transformative Change*" during the period 8th to 9th October 2025.

Based on Lesotho's Country Reports to the 56th and 57th Plenary Assemblies, Lesotho has recorded commendable strides towards domestication of two key SADC Model Laws: The Model Law on Eradicating Child Marriage and Protecting Children Already in Marriage (EN | FR | PT), 2016 and the Model Law on Gender Based Violence, 2021. Specifically, this has been done through the enactment of the Children's Protection and Welfare Amendment Bill, 2022 and the Counter Domestic Violence Act, 2022. These legislative reforms reflect the country's commitment to domestication of

regional human rights standards and to the attainment of the objectives of the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, SADC-PF SRHR, Project.

In line with its mandate to promote the domestication of SADC Model Laws, the RPMLOC undertook an inaugural Benchmarking Visit to the Kingdom of Lesotho from 8th to 9th October 2025. This initiative was aimed at assessing the progress made by Lesotho in aligning national legislation with the said Model Laws.

Further, through this Benchmarking Visit, the Members of RPMLOC sought to deepen their understanding of Lesotho's domestication processes, identifying opportunities and challenges and fostering cross-learning for the benefit of other SADC Member States by exploring institutional mechanisms, financial challenges, political dynamics, citizen feedback and regional learning. The Benchmarking Visit also constituted the Statutory Meeting of the Committee.

The RPMLOC engaged various State and non-State actors regarding the domestication of SADC Model Laws and related regional policy; and

WHEREAS the Benchmarking Visit was intended to explore the broader domestication process within the host country and was designed to highlight institutional arrangements that facilitate domestication of Model Laws;

WHEREAS the Benchmarking Visit was also intended to enable the RPMLOC to appreciate the level of collaboration among various actors, including the Legislature, the Executive, political leaders, relevant Parliamentary Committees, line ministries, the SRHR Project National Working Group, UN agencies and civil society organisations in the domestication process;

WHEREAS the Benchmarking Visit was intended to serve as a platform for peer learning in terms of procedures and processes necessary to foster domestication of SADC Model Laws for the Members of RPMLOC, Lesotho Parliamentarians, the Parliament of Lesotho and other SADC Member Parliaments;

WHEREAS seven key focus areas were identified, including the legislative processes triggered at the domestic level in the wake of the adoption of SADC Model Laws; institutional coordination between the Executive and Legislature; stakeholder involvement in advocacy and implementation, and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation and were supported by tailored guiding questions to facilitate targeted stakeholder engagement;

WHEREAS the guiding questions developed were tailored to enable Members to have an appreciation of how Lesotho identifies legislative gaps, benchmarks domestic laws against SADC standards, engages non-State actors, and ensures that enacted laws translate into tangible benefits for citizens;

WHEREAS the RPMLOC was briefed on the roles played by both State and non-State stakeholders in the process of domestication of Model Laws in Lesotho;

WHEREAS the Benchmarking Visit served not only as a monitoring exercise but also as a platform for peer learning, regional integration and the advancement of transformative legislative change across the SADC region.

Arising from the deliberations during the Benchmarking Visit, the RPMLOC makes observations and recommendations as set out below:

ON ADMINISTRATIVE READINESS AND STRUCTURAL ALIGNMENT, EXAMINING INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS, COORDINATION MECHANISMS AND LEGAL HARMONISATION EFFORTS

Acknowledging that the Parliament of Lesotho is clothed with authority to make laws, pursuant to Sections 54 and 70 of the Constitution, which provisions also establish the institution's autonomy. This law-making mandate is exercised through a structured legislative process governed by the Standing Orders and supported by Committee scrutiny, enabling Parliament to play a central role in domesticating regional instruments, including the SADC Model Laws;

Noting that there was no stipulated procedure in place to govern the domestication of Model Laws specifically but that the process followed the general legislative enactment process, guided by the Constitution, specifically sections 78 and 153(a), the Interpretation Act and the Legislative Handbook, which was currently undergoing review;

Further noting that the legislative process in Lesotho unfolded in four stages, these being policy formulation, drafting, parliamentary debate and publication and was founded on the firm commitment of the leadership of the Parliament of Lesotho to domesticate SADC Model Laws, which were tools for legislative and social reform, through a fully consultative process;

Appreciating that, as an essential component of the policy formulation process, feasibility studies and needs assessments were conducted to identify legislative gaps and prioritise issues requiring government attention. Such issues were selected based on political manifestos and coalition agreements, while potential solutions were analysed through evidence-based

research and extensive stakeholder consultations. Once the policy was approved by Cabinet, drafting instructions were developed, often incorporating Regulatory Impact Assessments and cost-benefit analyses;

Further appreciating that policy formulation was followed by drafting of the legislation, beginning with the receipt and review of the drafting instructions, reflecting Cabinet approval. During this stage, Model Laws served as adaptable templates and they were analysed alongside existing national laws to ensure consistency. In drafting the Bill, the drafters ensured that its substance was articulated with precision and that the spirit of the model law was preserved without compromising local applicability;

Emphasising that, in shaping the draft Bill, the legal drafters remained alive to international and regional laws, including treaties, conventions and model laws to avoid legislative embarrassment, although these instruments were, admittedly, not consistently and effectively incorporated into legislative proposals;

Realising the timeliness of the Benchmarking Visit of the RPMLOC, coinciding as it did with the implementation of the Tenth Amendment to the Constitution Act of 2025, which presented an opportunity to enact laws that addressed existing gaps, particularly in the domestication process;

Highlighting that structured procedures were essential to enhancing the country's legal order, promoting good governance and meeting societal needs, and maintaining uniformity within the global legal landscape; and

Noting that legal certainty was the cornerstone of the rule of law and that the smooth integration of regional and international best practices through model laws required skill and precision;

Mr. President, the RPMLOC recommends to the 58th Plenary Assembly to:

Urge all SADC Member Parliaments to strengthen technical support and capacity-building on the SADC Model Laws for parliamentarians, parliamentary Committees, line ministries, traditional and religious leaders, civil society organisations, CSOs and other stakeholders in their respective countries.

Advise that SADC Member Parliaments institutionalise the domestication of SADC Model Laws through the involvement of legal and research offices of Parliament in the process.

Call upon SADC Member Parliaments to spearhead engagements with traditional and religious leaders in legal education campaigns to foster grassroots support and normative change.

Appeal to SADC Member Parliaments to take deliberate measures to capacitate the Office of Parliamentary Counsel, line ministries, as well as Parliament structures regarding both procedural and subject aspects of the domestication process.

Implore SADC Member Parliaments to institutionalise benchmarking with respect to the domestication of SADC Model Laws to ensure systematic alignment of domestication processes and foster regional learning and harmonisation.

Encourage SADC Member Parliaments to advocate for strengthening the monitoring and evaluation framework for domestication through the establishment of multi-stakeholder task forces at the national level to monitor the domestication of SADC Model Laws and other regional

commitments against relevant indicators to track the prevalence of gender-based violence and child marriage, law enforcement outcomes and institutional performance on an ongoing basis.

Recommend that SADC Member States should establish predictable, sustainable and dedicated financing mechanisms to support regional initiatives by integrating regional priorities into national budgets for effective implementation.

Encourage SADC Member Parliaments to advocate for increased coordination between government ministries and civil society to sustain the advocacy momentum for domestication of SADC Model Laws and other regional policy instruments.

Resolve that the RPMLOC actively participate in capacity enhancement activities for parliamentarians, as well as in the identification and support of champions to lead the advocacy efforts for domestication of SADC Model Laws.

Direct the Secretariat to continue to mobilise resources, including through regional partnerships, to support capacity building and foster domestication efforts.

Mr. President, as I conclude, the Benchmarking Visit to Lesotho reaffirmed the importance of monitoring and supporting the domestication efforts of SADC Model Laws. The Benchmarking Visit was also an opportunity for mutual learning and reflection as RPMLOC assessed the real-life impact of Model Laws with a view to strengthening domestication, enforcement and accountability across the region. Mr. President, I beg to move. - [*Applause*]-

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Hon. Members, I will now adjourn the House for lunch. We will be back at 14:30. The Committee has taken up 20 minutes of their time. The Seconder will start after lunch.

[*LUNCH BREAK 1335 HOURS*]

Business resumed at 1435 Hours

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Welcome back. We will now hear from the seconder of the motion.

HON. M. KHATI [LESOTHO]: Mr. President, yet again, my name is Mope Khati, a Member of Parliament from the National Assembly of Lesotho. Mr. President, I rise to second the motion, which has so eloquently been presented by our Chairperson, Hon. Kasanda, on the oversight Committee that went to do a benchmarking exercise in Lesotho.

Mr. President, I wish to underscore that the benchmarking visit to Lesotho marked a pioneering step in advancing regional oversight and peer learning. It demonstrated the value of collaboration in tracking domestication of the SADC model laws and highlighted the importance of context-sensitive approaches to legislative reform. The report demonstrates that domestication is not a linear process and indeed, domestication is not an event; it is a process. It requires political will, institutional coordination, stakeholder engagement and sustained advocacy.

Lesotho's experience, marked by the passage of two progressive laws, offers a valuable lesson for other Member States. In this regard, it is notable that although not backed by laws, Lesotho has adopted a commendable

procedure where any legislative proposals are reviewed against the proficiency of the SADC model laws, if applicable.

In this regard, allow me to highlight and emphasise the key role played by the leadership of the Parliament of Lesotho, specifically the Office of the Hon. Speaker and the Office of the Clerk, in ensuring that necessary action is taken towards domestication of SADC model laws. I therefore take this opportunity to enjoin all Hon. Speakers to take personal interest and use their influential leadership positions to promote the domestication of the SADC model laws in their respective parliaments.

Mr. President, the recommendations contained in the report are both practical and visionary. They call for institutionalisation of benchmarking as a standard practise, strengthening capacity-building for all actors, enhancing monitoring and evaluation frameworks, promoting intersectoral coordination and mobilising resources to sustain the momentum. These are not mere aspirations. They are imperatives if we are to realise the transformative potential of our model laws. I must also acknowledge the support that was given by the Parliament of Lesotho under the Sexual, Reproductive Health Rights, HIV/AIDS and Governance and climate change project, which has been pivotal in facilitating the work that the Parliament of Lesotho has done in advocating and actualising the domestication of the SADC model laws and the related policy instruments.

Finally, but not least, allow me to thank all the stakeholders, including individual Parliamentarians, parliamentary Committees, ministries and other government entities, CSOs and UN agencies who were engaged with the Committee during the visit to Lesotho, for their generous sharing of their

expertise, knowledge and experience, which has greatly enriched our report. I further call upon all Parliamentarians to take an interest and consider adopting some of the progressive steps that Lesotho has taken in the domestication of the model laws.

As I mentioned, Hon. Members, we did realise during the benchmarking process that domestication by itself is a process. It is not an event that happens all at once and say the law has been domesticated. What Lesotho has been doing is that every time they enact any form of legislative instrument in Parliament, they use the model law as a guideline. They use it as a reference all the time, referring to the model law to say if we are dealing with a law on any social issue, what does the model law say about this? So, every time you find that some provisions will be borrowed from the model law into new legislative instruments that are being enacted in Lesotho. So, that by itself is still taken as domestication. It does not happen that all at once the model law is domesticated with all the provisions within the model law. So, this was a very good lesson to understand. So, it will inform how we monitor the process of domestication now that we have learned it is something that can happen over a period, not necessarily at one instance. By so saying, Mr. President, I second the motion. Thank you. – [*Applause*]

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Now, we move. I shall now allow debate on the motion. Members who wish to debate shall indicate by showing of hands. Namibia, Madagascar, Zambia, Lesotho, Botswana. May you move to the front, please. Namibia, the floor is yours.

HON. P. KOOPER [NAMIBIA]: Hon. President, Hon. Members, allow me to share with the Assembly the progress and the challenges met by Namibia to eradicate child marriages and gender-based violence.

In terms of child marriages, the Child Care and Protection Act of 2015 prohibits child marriages and agreements to get married in all forms, whether it is civil, customary or religious. The minimum age of marriage is 18, with criminal penalties for those who arrange or participate in child marriages.

In terms of gender-based violence, Hon. President, Hon. Members, the Combating Domestic Violence Act of 2003 provides broad protection against physical, sexual, emotional, economic and psychological abuse. The Act enables survivors to obtain protection orders, restrict abusers and covers both formal and informal domestic relationships. Allow me to gather the progress and challenges. Legally, Namibia is largely aligned with the SADC model laws.

As I am moving to conclude, Hon. Members, issues such as under-reporting, persistent gender-based violence and isolated cases of child marriage, particularly influenced by harmful cultural practises, still pose challenges. The implementation gaps remain in areas such as enforcement, community-level awareness and data monitoring. With these contributions, I support the report in its totality and I submit. – [*Applause*]

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Zambia!

HON. J. M. NYEMBA [ZAMBIA]: Thank you Mr. President. Nyemba Julian from the Parliament of Zambia. In supporting the motion to adopt the report of the Regional Parliamentary Model Laws Oversight Committee, I

wish to share with this Plenary Assembly how Zambia has applied one of the Committee's recommendations, particularly the call for SADC Member Parliaments to institutionalise the domestication of modern laws. In line with the recommendation, Zambia has actively engaged with the SADC Parliamentary Forum to align national registration with the SADC Model Law on eradicating child marriage (EN | FR | PT).

Our Legal Services department played a crucial role in this process. It is important to clarify that the Legal Services department analyses international instruments when brought to Parliament for ratification. This analysis is intended for use by the Committee assigned to consider the international agreement.

In this instance, their analysis helped identify gaps between model laws and our domestic registration and guided the reform process. As a result, Zambia undertook significant legislative reforms, bringing the Marriage Act into conformity with the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development (EN | FR | PT), particularly the provision prohibiting marriage under the age of 18. This effort culminated in the enactment of the Landmark Marriage Amendment Act of 2023, which explicitly declares that any marriage involving a child is void, whether entered under statutory or customary law.

Before these reforms, Mr. President, inconsistency between the Marriage Act and customary practices had allowed child marriages to persist in some communities. The 2023 amendment has closed this gap entirely, ensuring that all child marriages are unequivocally invalid. With these few remarks, Mr. President, I wish to reaffirm my full support for the motion. Thank you.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Botswana!

HON. D. SALESHANDO [BOTSWANA]: Thank you, Mr. President. I also support that the motion be accepted. My name is Dumelang Saleshando from Botswana. I think the value addition of the model laws is there for everyone to see. They are a template against which we can measure ourselves. In the case of Botswana, it was only when we were looking at the model law or rather dealing with abolishing child marriages, that we were able to establish that even though in the case of Botswana we forbid child marriages but there are exceptions.

For example, cultural marriages as well as religious marriages. We are in the process of trying to make sure that we eliminate those. Because the moment we have exceptions, they take you exactly back to the space you wanted to exit. I wanted to just make one critical point that applies not only to Botswana. You see, the ability with which we can amend our domestic laws, to align them with the model laws, also depends on the progress that individual Parliaments have made to attain their independence. In the case of Botswana, it is very difficult to get a Private Member's Bill on the floor of Parliament.

It is complex, you are on your own, the government, relevant departments with legal expertise on drafting will drag their feet because the Executive simply wants to dominate the space. As SADC-PF, I think we possibly also need to look at institutions that would support Parliaments with the skills required. I had the benefit at one point of bringing forward a law on freedom of information and was primarily assisted by regional players to formulate a draft of the law. So, I think we may need to, as a

collective, look into ways in which we are able to create capacity within individual Parliaments on how you can bring your ideas of bridging the gap between our domestic laws and the model law. I think that is the point I wanted to make. I support the motion.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Madagascar!

FR.

HON. SOPHIE RATSIRAKA (MADAGASCAR): Merci, Honorable assistance.

Concernant l'application et la surveillance des lois types de la SADC, serait-il possible de réfléchir et d'intégrer différents plans d'action concrets qui devront tenir compte des réalités pays et des défis afin de trouver des solutions adéquates?

Je pointe du doigt particulièrement le cas du mariage précoce également, dont nous connaissons les tenants et les aboutissants. Compte tenu des us et coutumes locales bien évidemment, mais en établissant des objectifs réalistes qui partent des constats locaux, nous pourrions mieux avancer progressivement. Car nous sommes conscients que nous avons encore beaucoup d'efforts à faire. Mais malgré tout cela, je soutiens cette motion qui fait office de repère et du cadrage pour nos pays. Merci.

EN.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Angola, you wish to debate.

PT.

HON. RUTH MENDES (ANGOLA): Pedi a palavra, Senhor Presidente.

EN.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Please go ahead.

PT.

HON. RUTH MENDES (ANGOLA): Muito obrigada.

Senhor Presidente, eu também quero juntar a minha voz aos colegas que se pronunciaram sobre o Relatório da Comissão de Fiscalização das Leis Modelo. E, sobretudo, porque eu fui uma das pessoas que integrou a delegação que visitou o Lesotho. E considero que, de facto, foi um exercício muito positivo, onde nós podemos ouvir na primeira pessoa todas as partes interessadas no Lesotho que trabalham na implementação da domesticação das Leis Modelo.

Sei que para esta domesticação, não é um processo simples, não é um processo que acontece num momento só, como disse e bem o colega do Lesotho, estou completamente de acordo com ele, é um processo onde estão várias pessoas envolvidas.

Mas o que quero, eu quero deixar aqui, é que o Secretariado da SADC promova e como já referiu a colega do Madagáscar, mais ou menos nos mesmos termos. Este tipo de acções para os outros parlamentos, para os outros países porque uns podem estar mais avançados que os outros, mas as vezes há desafios, as vezes há alguns problemas pelo percurso de implementação das leis que nem sempre é fácil. E talvez as visitas da Comissão de Fiscalização das Leis Modelo aos países pode ajudar na domesticação das Leis Modelo.

Portanto, eu considerei esta visita muito importante, uma experiência, um estudo de caso, do Lesotho, muito importante e por isso, me parece que devemos generalizar esta acção. Portanto, apoio o relatório da comissão de

fiscalização, apesar de ser também membro da Comissão de Fiscalização das Leis Modelo. Muito obrigada. – *Aplausos*

EN.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Hon. Kasanda, you may close the debate.

HON. C. KASANDA [ZAMBIA]: Thank you very much, Mr. President. Mr. President, clearly from the debates, we are all drivers of progress and it would be important for all Member States to domesticate the Model Laws on eradicating child marriages, protecting children already in marriage and the Model Law on Gender-Based Violence (EN | FR | PT): because I think all of us in our Member States, we are all experiencing the same thing and it is a serious concern for all of us. Mr. President, I would like to sincerely thank all the Members who debated in support of the report and those who did not debate but I know they supported in their hearts. – [

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Speaker Mutti, go ahead and make your presentation.

HON. N. B. K. K. MUTTI [ZAMBIA]: All protocols observed. Mr. President, I am honoured to present a statement on the key outcomes of the 151st Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly and its related meetings held in Geneva, Switzerland, from the 19th to the 23rd of October 2025. The 151st Assembly was held under the theme: *Upholding Humanitarian Norms and Supporting Humanitarian Action*. In terms of participation, Mr. President, 1 103 delegates attended the Assembly and these were drawn from 129 Member Parliaments. Five Associate Members and 36 observers also took part in the Assembly.

Of the 1 103 delegates who attended the Assembly, 594 were from Member Parliaments and 581 were from Member Parliaments and 13 were from Associate Member Delegations. This included 42 Presiding Officers and 40 Deputy Presiding Officers. The delegations included 216 Women MPs which represented 37,1% and 8 Young MPs, representing 13,7%. In terms of outcomes of the 151st Inter-Parliamentary Union, we start with the Activity Report by the President.

The General Assembly was briefed on the report by the President of the IPU on the activities she undertook since the last meeting. This included a meeting with the East African Community Bureau of Speakers of national legislatures in the East African Legislative Assembly. She then chaired a meeting of the Preparatory Committee held in Geneva 28th July 2025 for the 60th World Conference of Speakers of Parliament.

She also attended an interactive multi-stakeholder hearing on 24th July 2025 at the UN Headquarters in New York, marking the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. She also chaired ongoing consultative meetings for the upcoming elections of the IPU Secretary-General and also chaired virtual meetings of the 2025 Crema Percy Prize selection board, then the Activity Report by the Secretary-General on the activities for 2025.

The Secretary General presented the impact report for 2025 to the Assembly. In his report, he highlighted some of the major activities undertaken in 2025 in line with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) strategic objectives. The major highlights during the period under review included the following strategic objectives. Strategic Objectives 1: Building

effective and empowered Parliaments. The Secretary General stated that capacity building was conducted for Members of Parliament and staff on strengthening Committee work, counterterrorism, gender equality, security, health and climate. The training was conducted in Benin, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea and from our region in Lesotho, Namibia and Zimbabwe.

Under Strategic Objective 2: promoting inclusive and representative Parliaments, the Secretary General reported that the IPU has conducted the national events on inclusive parliaments in Benin, Chad, Niger, Ecuador, Thailand, themed around "*Support for enhanced political participation, women and youth, skills building of women and youth Members of Parliaments and support to gender-sensitive self-assessments*." Further, he reported that as of October 2025, the percentage of women in Parliament had risen to 27,2% from 26,9% in October 2024, while that of young MPs under 30 had reduced to 2,77% in October 2025 from 2,87% in October 2024.

Strategic Objective 3: Supporting resilient and innovative Parliaments. It was reported that the 3rd summit of the Committees of the Future was conducted in Chile in January 2025.

Strategic Objective 4: Catalysing collective parliamentary action, several activities were reported to have been conducted under this strategic objective, including the 150th IPU Assembly in April 2025 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

The 60th World Conference of Speakers in July 2025 held engagements with various stakeholders, including the World Health Organisation and World Tourism Organisation, among others.

Annual Members' reporting exercise: The IPU statutes state that all Member Parliaments and associate Members shall send an annual report of actions taken to follow up on IPU resolutions and decisions and this is under Article 6 of the statutes. The reporting exercise presented both qualitative and quantitative data provided by national Parliaments in 2025. When 38 IPU Member Parliaments scheduled to report were invited to complete a survey and all Member Parliaments were encouraged to take part voluntarily.

As in previous years, the 2025 edition of the survey was organised and focused on tangible parameterised measures in the IPU's priority areas as set out in the IPU 2022 to 2026 strategy. As well as the interaction between Parliaments and the United Nations. Of the 38 Parliaments scheduled to report, 29 returned complete questionnaires, giving a response rate of 76%.

On the IPU financial report, it was gratifying to note that, according to the report submitted by the Secretary-General, the financial situation of the IPU was healthy. In terms of income, it was reported that the sub-Committee assessed a contribution amounting to Swiss francs 11,9 million, which were invoiced in full at the beginning of the year and attributed as revenue. It was further reported that the integrated assessment on staff salaries was targeted at 104% of the budget. The net budgeted amount was estimated at 1 million, 1,2 million Swiss francs for 2025.

For 2025, the Secretary General had prepared a voluntary funding budget totalling 4,5 million Swiss francs. An opening balance of 5,4 million Swiss francs was available at the start of the year for programmes in 2025 and beyond.

New resources were received in net 1,1 million Swiss francs. He informed the Committee that the amount was added to the opening balance, resulting in a sum of 6,5 million Swiss francs. Further voluntary funding was due before the end of the year and the new funding sources were being developed for the coming years. The sub-Committee emphasised the need for geopolitical groups to assist in identifying partners for resource mobilisation in voluntary funding of the IPU activities.

I think this is where we need to draw a lesson from as a regional body, that even organisations like the IPU do not depend on Membership subscriptions only. They are looking outward for voluntary contributions. I remember when we met as an Executive Committee in Namibia, we did talk about each one of us identifying these international corporations that are operating in our regions or in our countries. If we can approach them and ask for funding. I think all we need is the secretariat to come up with a concept note on what should be presented to these multi-international corporations, so that when we talk to them, we speak with one voice and then we can be able to raise some funds. Because, for now, as the report by the chair of finance states, we are not doing so well in terms of resources. So, we need to do something.

I believe that as leaders, we need to start looking for solutions because complaining alone will not put money on the table. So, we should all go out

there as Speakers. I think we speak with a lot of authority. If we can approach even five corporations in each of our countries, we can even get one, get two. If they can contribute, at least we will be able to fund the organisation. That will go towards supporting the Members of staff.

I can give an example of Zambia, where we identified a Member of staff who was willing to join the Secretariat in Namibia. But after everything was settled, when he looked at the salary, there was nothing else apart from maintaining the same salary that he was going to keep. So, he was discouraged because when you look at accommodation, I am sure accommodation is expensive. He has a family and education is expensive. So, we need to find solutions. There must be some incentive to encourage our members of staff to look forward to being attached to the secretariat. Otherwise, we will have no other option but to increase the subscription. I know Members are not very keen on increasing subscriptions, so it remains for all of us to do something.

If we can commit that the next Assembly will be able to talk about one or two people who have come on board to support, I think it will be better. So, I think that is one issue that we need to address.

Then when it came to amendment of the IPU statutes and rules, the Assembly was informed that since its establishment in March 2024, the working group on amendments to the IPU statutes and rules had examined proposals received from IPU Member Parliaments, geopolitical groups, bureaus of women Parliamentarians and the Bureau of Young Parliamentarians and prepared two rounds of amendment proposals which

were adopted by the IPU governing bodies in October 2024 and April 2025, respectively.

The Assembly heard that a series of outstanding issues were presented to the Executive Committee in Olympia, Greece, in June 2025 and that EXCO endorsed the submissions of further amendments, where A was an amendment to formalise the status of non-voting observers for Parliaments no longer functioning on the territory of the country concerned and two, a series of amendments to the Committee on Human Rights of Parliamentarians to improve the Committee's geopolitical composition.

Elections and appointments, several elections were circulated and Members were appointed to various positions and these were circulated to geopolitical groups.

Future meetings of the IPU, the next IPU, which is the 152nd IPU Assembly and related meetings, is scheduled to be held in Istanbul, Turkey, from the 15th to the 19th of April 2026.

The 157th IPU Assembly and related meetings is scheduled to be held in the United Republic of Tanzania, but this is still to be confirmed. Parliamentary meetings of COP, of course, were held in Brazil. This is now water under the breach. It did happen.

Then the Global Conference of Women Parliamentarians is scheduled to be held in Serbia from the 2nd to the 4th of June 2025. In terms of the Inter-Parliament Union, IPU, resolutions, the adoption of the Geneva Declaration upholding humanitarian norms and supporting humanitarian action in terms of crisis was endorsed by the 151st IPU Assembly.

The General Assembly at the 151st IPU Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland, reaffirmed its commitment to upholding and promoting respect for international humanitarian law and supporting humanitarian action. In terms of recognising and supporting the victims of illegal international adoption and taking measures to prevent this practice, the General Assembly of the IPU adopted, by consensus, the resolution on recognising and supporting the victims of illegal international adoption and taking measures to present the practice.

Among others, the Assembly, age all States, regardless of whether they are parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child or the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Inter-Country Adoption, to formally acknowledge the existence of illegal inter-country adoptions and their impact on children and their families and to implement the next side legal, administrative and investigative measures to bring to account those responsible and to prevent their occurrence and recurrence in accordance with relevant international agreements while maintaining confidence in legal adoptions carried out in accordance with international standards.

In terms of a recommendation to elect the first woman to the post of the United Nations Secretary General, a motion was adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs. The IPU Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs affirmed the position that, in the context of the current process for selecting the next United Nations Secretary-General in 2026, the historic moment has come to elect a woman as United Nations Secretary-General, both as a matter of principle

and as a demonstration of the United Nations' commitment to ensuring equality for all.

To this end, Member countries were encouraged to engage with their government's leadership to initiate a search for women candidates as soon as possible, with a view to ensuring a large pool of highly qualified women candidates for election by the Security Council. I do not know if we have thought of any woman candidate yet but if we have not, please let us do something. It allows us to participate in all these events.

On an emergency item, pursuant to Rule 11 of the IPU statutes and rules, the following two requests for inclusion as an emergency item were submitted. The first one was Global Call for Parliamentary Solidarity and Coordinated Action on Madagascar. The request was submitted by South Africa on behalf of Africa Geopolitical Group. The second one was a parameter action against transitional organised crime, cybercrime and hybrid threats to democracy and human security. The request was submitted by Thailand, Argentina, Chile, Poland and Sweden with the support of a group of Latin America and Caribbean and the 12 plus.

From the names, you can see that Africa, we did not have so much support. But anyway, we tried. We tried our best. At least we reached two-thirds, although we did not win. The other topic got more votes but we managed to raise it. If we had all voted together as a unit and we had the support of the Middle East, we would have carried the day. But anyway, it was not lost in vain because after we lost that inclusion of that item as an emergency item, we made representations to the Secretary General and to the Executive Committee and eventually the Assembly proceeded with a

statement on the situation in Madagascar. So that at least was a consolation. But if we all vote together, if we resolve and, we always say that before we go for IPU, let us start looking for these items, emergency items that we want to be included. Because if we just go there and, as an afterthought, we are just now trying to hunt for a topic, for an item to be included, we will not garner the necessary support. But always to be prepared is to be safe and to win. But if we go there thinking that it is a walk in the park, then you will not be able to make it.

Then the next is the selection and recruitment of the new Secretary General. This is another item. The Secretary-General was briefed on the recruitment process of the new Secretary-General for the organisation following the successful completion of the two terms mandated by the current Secretary-General pursuant to Article 27 of the statutes. A total of 58 applications were received and have so far been shortlisted.

Allow me to give you a summary of the selection process and timeframes for the Members to appreciate the process. In terms of the activities of selection, publication and candidates submitting their applications and examinations of candidates, we have all gone through that. Now we have reached a point where each Member of the Executive Committee will draw up a shortlist of five candidates and inform the registrar about their choices. So, each Executive Committee Member is supposed to vote for or identify 5 candidates and then submit those names to the registrar. Then they will add up and see which Members have gotten more votes and what they have. So, the process will then continue.

Five candidates who receive the largest number of votes will be invited to an interview and this will take place in Turkey in the 152nd Assembly. Then, after the interview, the final candidates will be announced and two or more candidates retained by the Executive will be able to present their manifestos to the geopolitical groups at the Forum of Women Parliamentarians and to the Forum of Young Parliamentarians.

Then in March 20, the Governing Council at the same Assembly will now elect the new Secretary General by secret ballot following a five-minute presentation to the Governing Council. So, then they will be given three months' notice to allow them to take up their position. Then the position is to be taken beginning 1st July 2026.

Again, we need to find out which candidate has a Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum. I mean, let me just say SADC Parliament, because I think we now need to graduate from the Forum. Which candidate are we supporting? I know that Rwanda has a candidate, but apart from receiving individual letters from people who are soliciting support, I think as a regional Parliament, we need to start identifying which candidate we are going to support. So, it is important.

I think the secretariat should lead us in that so that we work together, we can be able to vote for a candidate that is going to represent us or somebody we are going to support. I do not know in terms of Africa because the previous SG is an African, whether they will say now we need another region or what, I do not know. But let us push our candidate and see what goes on because the rules do not say they should be rotated. It is just people who qualify that are presented.

There are women, there are men, but I think as the UN Secretary General, they are now looking for a woman. Please, men, do not feel like we are trying to overshadow you. It is just the time for women. It is our time, so please just support us.

Let me conclude by once again placing on record my gratitude for being privileged to represent the SADC group on the EXCO for the IPU. I believe that these highlights will help Member Parliaments to take stock of emerging issues at the IPU. Thank you for your attention.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Hon. Nelly. I agree that the time for women is now and all the men support African women. Okay, the second Hon. Speaker, Thoko Didiza, Chairperson of the Inter-Parliamentary Union Africa Geopolitical Group, to present her seconding speech. – [*Applause*] **-** More women, hey?

MS. A. T. DIDIZA [SOUTH AFRICA]: Thank you very much, Mr. President, Vice-President, Executive Members of the SADC Parliamentary Forum, Speakers of SADC and those of the South African legislative sector, and Hon. Members, good afternoon.

South Africa rises with great honour to second the motion so ably moved by the Speaker of the National Assembly of Zambia, Speaker Mutti, that this Plenary Assembly adopts the report of the 151st Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assembly and related meetings held in Geneva, Switzerland, from the 19th to 23rd October 2025. I can attest to the report as presented, having been the Chairperson of the Africa Geopolitical Group that ensured that our Members' participation is to the maximum.

Allow me to begin by thanking the mover of the motion, Speaker Nelly. B.K. Mutti, SC, for the eloquent manner in which she has moved the motion but also for the eloquent manner in which she has represented our region in the IPU structures. I wish to state from the outset that South Africa fully supports the motion to adopt the report of the 151st IPU Assembly and related meetings held in Geneva, Switzerland from the 19th to 23rd October 2025, as it reflects not only the deliberations held in Geneva but also the collective commitment of our Parliaments to safeguard humanitarian norms, strengthen international cooperation and advance the values that define the IPU.

We particularly welcome the comprehensive overview of the Assembly's outcome, including the reaffirmation of international humanitarian law through the Geneva Declaration, the decisive stance taken to support victims of illegal international adoption, the strong call to ensure that the global leadership of the United Nations, UN, reflects gender equality, including at the level of the Secretary-General, SG and the important work undertaken on Membership, governance reforms, financial stewardship and preparations for future assemblies.

Mr. President, Hon. Members, indeed, I also wish to affirm the commitment that we made and will continue to advocate for as women in the IPU that this time the SG must be a woman. –[*Applause*] –

We are also pleased that the emergency item, which we sponsored on the situation in Madagascar was brought to the fore, reflecting our region's shared concern for peace, constitutional order and democratic stability. We

are encouraged by the unity displayed by the assembly in speaking out against unconstitutional changes of government.

We further commend the transparency outlined in the recruitment process of the new SG, which underscores the IPU's commitment to accountability and procedural integrity.

Mr. President, I want to commend the SADC region for the way in which its delegates really participated in all the relevant Committees of the IPU and represented our region ably, even within the Africa geo-parliamentary Group.

This report, Hon. Members, captures the essence of the IPU's work, collaboration, solidarity and the strengthening of parliamentary diplomacy. It is therefore fitting that this Plenary Assembly of SADC adopts the report and continues to draw guidance from its resolution and recommendations therein.

Mr. President, Hon. Members, as I conclude, allow me to once again thank Hon. Mutti for bringing the decisions of the 151st IPU Assembly and related meetings to the fore. We wish to second this motion. I thank you. – [*Applause*]

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Thank you Hon. Speaker. I will now allow debate on this motion. Eswatini!

HON. SEN. DR. L. NXUMALO [ESWATINI]: Thank you, Mr. President. My name is Senator Dr. Linda Nxumalo from the Kingdom of Eswatini and I rise to support the motion ably moved by my two respective Hon. Speakers.

Mr. President, I am particularly intrigued by the notion of wanting to have the next SG of the UN as a woman and I was just thinking of the

benefits of that for SADC. First of all, I think it will help us as the SADC community to have increased representation and the inclusion of women. A female SG would symbolise a significant step towards gender parity and international leadership and aspiring women and girls in SADC would be influenced positively in the leadership space.

Secondly, the prioritisation of women's issues will be key and core in the discourse of addressing issues of gender parity at the UN platform. A woman SG would likely prioritise issues like women's empowerment, gender-based violence and women's participation in peace processes, aligning with SADC goals.

Mr. President, I also believe that women leaders often bring unique perspectives and skills to conflict resolutions, which would lead to more effective mediation and diplomacy in SADC conflict-prone regions.

The other one, as well, Mr. President, is the issue of role modelling and empowerment. A female SG would serve as a powerful role model, encouraging women and girls to take up leadership roles in SADC and beyond. A woman SG would also bring diverse perspectives and experiences, enhancing the UN's ability to address global challenges like climate change, poverty and inequality, just to name a few.

As I conclude my submission, Mr. President, I also want to highlight that SADC has already made significant strides in promoting the participation of women in politics, with countries like Mozambique and South Africa achieving gender parity in their Cabinets, as well as Namibia, of course. A female UN-SG would reinforce these efforts and inspire further

progress. With those words, Mr. President, I support the motion. I so submit. Thank you.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: South Africa!

HON. B. S. MADIKIZELA [SOUTH AFRICA)] Thank you, Mr. President. I also want to support the motion but in supporting this motion, I do want to make a few remarks which might be controversial. I do support the call for inclusive leadership and I think it is important that when we talk about inclusive leadership, we contextualise. I think my previous colleague really went to great lengths in contextualising the reasons why we need to have an SG who is a woman. However, I think there is a serious conversation that we need to have as well, where we have seen in some instances that women have just become dead quiet in instances where a woman leader is doing a huge disservice. One would have really hoped that with the situation that is happening, for example in Tanzania, these are some of the issues that we as this body need to pay attention to.

I also welcome the readmission of Niger as a Member body of the IPU, but at the same time I think we as SADC need to have a serious conversation. I am looking at some of the developments in our own region, as to whether we are doing enough as this body to discuss the behaviour of some of the countries that are part of it, whether they are indeed meeting the requirements in terms of the values and the principles of this body and what we want to achieve as this body, so that we can be open and honest about what it is that we can contribute in ensuring that the behaviour of those Member States who are part of our region is really, I mean, whether they are assisting this region to meet its objectives.

So, with those few comments, Chair, I think I want to support this report but with those remarks, I hope that we can really have a serious discussion around those issues. Thank you.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: South Africa again.

HON. N. V. MENTE-NKUNA [SOUTH AFRICA]: Thank you very much, President. Good afternoon once more, President, secretary-general, and everyone. It is very much in line with my colleague, where women leaders are ruling. It is always welcome seeing women leaders climbing up the ladder of power and having to groom and motivate young women leaders to take up space and cement themselves as leaders who should rule society. We all know that women are mostly primary givers and they are primary givers in every space that they occupy.

However, Mr. President, the report looks very beautiful and we do not expect this report to have dealt with the issues that have befallen the SADC in recent activities. The latest activity, being that of Tanzania's elections, is very worrisome and it will be amiss of all of us to not have a resolution in the report, as it was produced by a team that went to oversee and supervise elections in SADC. In terms of all that has taken place in Tanzania, it is very clear that it is not in line with the rules that govern SADC elections in terms of fairness. We have seen the blocking of opposition where it could not participate, the arrest of political leaders, especially those of the opposition, and the deployment of State machinery, which is supposed to be utilised to protect the citizens but which was utilised to suppress protests. This is uncalled for as it represents a deep moral and political failure. As SADC, we should also look into that, as well as escalate it through our team that is in

the IPU, to see if there could be an intervention. Thank you very much, President.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: We have South Africa again.

HON. D. M. SKOSANA (SOUTH AFRICA): Thank you, Mr. President. My name is Skosana David, a Member of Parliament and a Member of SADC PF. You know, my colleagues almost said a mouthful in terms of what I wanted to say here. I want to agree with them that perhaps women should also be vocal when it comes to the issue of war, especially in some of our SADC countries as well. They must raise their voices and hopefully the SG, if we succeed to be elected as well, will raise those issues as well because sometimes women are quiet when it comes to these war-zone countries. We have been seeing for many years that when there's war, they mostly keep quiet. They submit. We need to support them as well to make sure that we at least are not like other countries, you know, like in Asia, where in countries like China, North Korea and others, women are not recognised at all. We are trying to make sure that we balance. In South Africa especially, we are trying our best and some other countries have followed suit as well. We hope that all they get all the support and women will support the SG, if she, as a woman, is elected as well.

However, suffice to say, Mr. President, we are evolving as SADC as well. We should not be a talk shop. You know, our actions must speak louder than words. You know, it should not be about optics. We must make sure that we follow what we agreed upon when we go to the next meeting in the Seychelles**,** maybe in your country, not necessarily in it but maybe in your

country, all that we agreed upon here will have been followed through. Thank you, Mr. President.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Zambia!

HON. MEMBER [ZAMBIA]: Thank you, Mr. President, for giving me this chance to contribute to this very important motion. Mr. President, allow me to join the seconder in thanking the mover of the motion, the Right Hon. Ms Nelly B.K. Mutti, Speaker of the National Assembly of Zambia, for the eloquent way she has moved the motion. I also join the seconder, Mr. President, in supporting the motion to adopt the report of the 151st Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly and related meetings held in Geneva, Switzerland, from 19 to 23 October 2025.

Mr. President, Zambia fully supports the report, particularly the issue that the seconder hinged on, which is the IPU's firm stance on defending democracy and constitutional order. The report rightly reminds us that unconstitutional changes of governments undermine the very tenets of democracy that SADC Member States strongly stand for. Unconstitutional changes of governments, Mr. President, undermine stability, thereby weakening institutions and endangering the rights and safety of our citizens. Mr. President, we as SADC, need to stand firm against unconstitutional changes of governments, as this brings about instability. Instability in any country is instability in the entire SADC region. Our countries are interconnected, and therefore, instability anywhere, Mr. President, is instability everywhere. By speaking with one voice, we strengthen our collective resolve to uphold democratic principles and protect the will of the

people. With these few remarks, Mr. President, I support the motion. I thank you. – [*Applause*] –

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Botswana!

HON. D. KEORAPETSE [BOTSWANA]: Mr. President, Botswana also rises to support the motion, the report by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, as presented by the Right Hon. Speaker of the Parliament of Zambia, seconded by the Speaker of the Parliament of South Africa.

Botswana takes a considered view that the Southern African Development Community geopolitical group has been well represented in the IPU by strong, competent and able women right from the top. The IPU has the President Tulia Ackson, former Speaker of the Parliament of the United Republic of Tanzania. We have the Africa geopolitical group representative, Speaker of South Africa, Mama Thoko Didiza. We also have the Speaker of the National Assembly of Zambia in the EXCO, State Counsel, Nelly Kashumba Mutti. I think we need to give ourselves a pat on the back and say, we have done really well and we should not regress as a SADC geopolitical group. Of course, the abled Secretariat led by Her Excellency, Boemo Sekgoma. We have made inroads. These are important milestones that Botswana does not take lightly.

It is also important that we discuss and try our best to minimise differences by not insisting on the right to be elected, such that it obscures the bigger picture. What happened in Rwanda where four African countries, especially the SADC geopolitical group, when we had a resolution from the Arusha Accords and agreed as a Forum that we will support the former Speaker of the United Republic of Tanzania but we could have easily shot

ourselves in the foot if we were competing with other continents, by having two competitors from one geopolitical group; two from the SADC region. I think we need to reflect on what happened there and, going forward, see to it that it does not ever happen again.

We have Mama Thoko Didiza, I think, representing us in the Africa geopolitical group. I think it is coming to an end. I think it is being given to Ghana. So, as a region, we need to be on the lookout for our representation not being watered down, such that there are many Committees where we can serve. We need to support each other. We need to encourage each other. We need to see that we are still represented in the IPU so that our geopolitical group's agenda or items are on the agenda of the IPU. Is it in order? I think that is very important. …

HON. D. M. SKOSANA [SOUTH AFRICA]: On a point of order. Thank you, Mr. President. My thousand apologies. I just wanted to find out, the Hon. Member, are we allowed to wear caps in the House? I am just asking. Thank you. - [*Laughter*]

HON. D. KEORAPETSE [BOTSWANA]: Oh, the cap is a political statement. I am sure if you ask the South Africans, they will probably help you with what my cap is all about. I can remove it if you want – [*Laughter*] – if it helps you. Yes.

The other thing that we also need to focus on, Mr. President, is putting African issues on the agenda of the IPU because sometimes we are drowned by what is happening in other parts of the world. We have had the Israeli-Palestine issue dominating the discussion and I am not in any way trying to detract from the importance of the issue. It is a very, very important issue,

but sometimes, as Africans, it looks like we do not have issues in Sudan, we do not have issues in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we do not have issues in Mozambique and other parts of Africa. We need to be on the lookout for that, Mr. President.

I fully support the change or the amendments to the IPU statute that will move Africa forward. The emergency item issue, we have failed many times to agree on an emergency item. I think it is imperative, it is important that moving forward, we amend the statute to allow for more emergency items, especially with emphasis on African issues. I thank you Mr. President.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Namibia!

HON. S. KUUGONGELWA [NAMIBIA]: Yes, thank you very much, Hon. President. I would also like to join others who have spoken in support of the report tabled by the Right Hon. Speaker of the Parliament of Zambia, seconded by the Hon. Speaker of the Assembly of the Republic of South Africa.

I would like to specifically talk about the issue of the proposal to advocate for a female Secretary-General of the United Nations. I think it is time that women are allowed to serve in that capacity; in fact, that their skills and capabilities to serve in that position are recognised because women have demonstrated their capabilities to serve as leaders in their families, communities and countries. In our countries, including both South Africa and Namibia, where there were injustices during the colonial and apartheid periods, women stood up to be counted, putting their very lives on the line to fight for freedom.

I have full confidence that women have the motivation, courage and capability to advocate for what is important in our global community and to help in finding solutions to complex issues that are facing our world today by being allowed to serve in that capacity. Yes, of course, the concerning issues that are experienced in several countries within our region and on the continent are noted and it is agreed that we should make sure that they are addressed and that going forward, we minimise incidences of their recurrence. I think this issue of a female future Secretary-General of the United Nations should continue to enjoy the limelight that it deserves. Thank you.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Hon. Speaker Mutti, you may respond to issues raised.

HON. N. B. K. K MUTTI [ZAMBIA]: Thank you very much Mr. President. Thank you very much to the Hon. Members who have supported the motion. Just by way of comment, this report consists of what happened at the 151st IPU meeting.

The issue of Tanzania was never reported, so I cannot report it in my report because I will be doing something that is not correct. Of course, there are concerns about what happened in Tanzania or what is happening in Tanzania. I believe our Executive Committee (EXCO) for the SADC Parliamentary Forum has discussed this issue. I think when the report was being presented by the EXCO, that issue should have been discussed. Otherwise, if we need to address the issue of Tanzania, it should come in as another item or any other business. But of course, we need to talk about it. Of course, we do not have the facts on the ground. It is very difficult to make

assumptions. The Tanzanian delegation is not here, so we have to approach these things with caution.

Then, on SADC, I do not believe that the SADC-PF observed elections in Tanzania. I know that the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region did observe the elections in Tanzania, but definitely not SADC. There is no report on how the elections went but I am sure the Secretariat will be able to clarify on that issue.

Then on the need to work together, of course, the emphasis for us to work together as a region is very, very important, if our issues have to find themselves on the agenda of the IPU. I am sure, as I discussed earlier or as I stated earlier, the issue of Madagascar was worrying at that time for us and we did not have any information. We kept on calling and calling. When the emergency item was defeated, we still put pressure that we needed to say something about Madagascar and that is how the statement on Madagascar was issued after we made appeals to the Acting President and the Secretary General of the IPU. Otherwise, thank you very much, Hon. Members, Hon. speakers, for the support.

The issue of ensuring that we have women. We are not saying that any woman should be able to take a position. There are women all over, not only from Africa but all over the world. Some women are vying for these positions. When a woman vies for the position, it is up to us to support that particular woman. So, as I said, it is time for women but of course, we need to identify which candidates we are supporting. We have to make a deliberate effort ourselves, as an organisation, to identify those women and support them. If the women are not there, of course, we will support the

men. But as I said, it is time for women. Thank you very much, Mr. President. Thank you. - [*Applause*] -

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Thank you, Hon. Nelly. I put the question that the Report on the 151st IPU Assembly and other related meetings held from 19 to 23 October 2025 in Geneva, Switzerland, be adopted.

Motion put and agreed to.

Motion with leave, adopted.

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Okay, to return to the question that the Hon. Member of South Africa raised about the cap. To clarify on the point of order, SADC-PF does not have a formal dress code – [*Laughter*]. I am mindful that in South Africa, a cap is considered informal. But I will grant an exemption to the Hon. Speaker; he is decently dressed. Thank you very much.

Thank you very much Hon. Members. We have reached the end of our business today. The Plenary Assembly will adjourn until Thursday, 4 December at 9 local time. Thank you very much.

The Plenary Session adjourned at 1601 hours.

4 December 2025

MOMENT OF SILENT PRAYER OR MEDITATION

(THE HON. PRESIDENT OF SADC PF in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE HON. PRESIDENT OF SADC-PF

SADC PF LANGUAGES

EN.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: I wish to remind the Hon. Members that our meeting is in all three official languages.

PROOF OF PAYMENT

THE HON. PRESIDENT: I am pleased to notify the Plenary Assembly that the Parliament of Mozambique has provided proof that they have now settled their outstanding total contribution of $3,900 000 – [*Applause*] – of the 2024-25 and 2025-26 financial years. The fund, however, has not yet reflected in the bank account of the SADC-PF. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mozambique, for your timely response to the plea made by the Treasurer in her report tabled on 2 December 2025.

PROCEDURE FOR DEBATE

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Hon. Members, let me remind the House that the procedures to follow wherever you want to speak on any matter are as follows. A Member who wishes to speak should raise the country's tag. I will then recognise the Hon. Member by country. The Member will then switch on the microphone to introduce himself or herself before speaking. No Member should switch on the microphone before they are given the floor to speak.

Hon. Members, for the sake of precise verbatim recording, you are reminded to always introduce yourself with your name and the country whenever you are granted the floor to speak. Members are reminded to adhere to the five-minute allotted time when speaking.

First order, one hour. The Secretary-General will read the First Order of the day.

MOTION

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE REGIONAL WOMEN'S PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUS

PT.

HON. PEDRO SEBASTIÃO (ANGOLA): Eu peço desculpas Senhor Presidente por este ponto prévio. Dizia, que eu peço desculpas, Senhor Presidente, por este ponto prévio.

Tratando-se praticamente do nosso último dia de trabalho, julgo que devo colocar aqui uma preocupação que nós temos, que interessará a todos os nossos colegas e companheiros de jornada. E temos que fazer um bocado de história para que aqueles que agora vão chegando ao nosso Fórum saibam ou tenham conhecimento do percurso que tivemos.

Num dado momento, quando iniciamos os trabalhos do Fórum Parlamentar da SADC, nós fazíamos uma oração, e naquela altura nós levantamos o problema da oração porque estão aqui católicos, protestantes, metodistas, muçulmanos e aqueles que não são de religião nenhuma e acabou-se com a oração, passou para meditação.

Ontem, aqui, alguém levantou um problema de um Presidente por ter vindo de boné para aqui para a Sala, chapéu.

Eu hoje quero levantar um outro problema que me parece, em minha opinião, que devíamos prestar a devida atenção.

Inicialmente aos nossos trabalhos, a Secretária-Geral não se sentava ao lado do Presidente, sentava-se aqui junto ao Secretariado e víamos a Secretária-Geral volta e meia a levantar-se para ir ter com Presidente para elucidar determinadas matérias e naquela altura nós levantamos esse problema de que a Secretária-Geral estava mal sentada, que devia estar onde está agora e, felizmente, vamos assistindo a Secretária-Geral ao lado do Presidente.

Há dias, o Senhor Presidente teve de ausentar-se e foi chamada a Vice-Presidente para tomar o seu assento, não foi chamado um Presidente do Parlamento para substituir o Presidente em funções. Tudo isso porque está regulamentado.

Eu creio que a nossa Vice-Presidente está mal sentada onde está, que é preciso repormos esse aspecto porque ela foi eleita, tal como a Secretária-Geral tem a memória administrativa dos nossos trabalhos, a Vice-Presidente responde por nós na ausência do Presidente, logo ela está mal sentada onde está.

E eu peço a vossa indulgência, no sentido de corrigirmos isso, porque ela não pode estar tal como nós, onde nós estamos. Ela deve mudar, efectivamente, de assento. Muito obrigado. – *Aplausos*

EN.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Thank you, Hon. Member. I will respond accordingly. Thank you for your wisdom. Let us move on.

Motion for the adoption of the Report of the Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus. Hon Senator Linda.

SENATOR DR. LINDA NXUMALO [ESWATINI]: Thank you, Mr. President. I beg to move the report of the SADC-PF Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus to the 58th Plenary Assembly, hosted by the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa in the eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality, Durban, from 28 November to 5 December. I so move, Mr. President.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Any seconder?

HON. J. NYEMBA (ZAMBIA): Yes, Mr. President, it is seconded. Thank you.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Proceed to present your report.

SENATOR DR. LINDA NXUMALO: Mr. President, I wish to thank you for the opportunity to present the Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus (RWPC) Report. I beg to move that this Plenary Assembly do adopt the Report of the Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus to the 58th Plenary Assembly Session of the SADC Parliamentary Forum, laid on the Table on 2 December 2025.

The Caucus was composed of the Members as contained in Appendix I. The lists of officials and resource persons who attended the meeting are mentioned in Appendices II and III, respectively.

The Terms of Reference of the Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus are articulated in Article 16(5) of the Constitution of the SADC PF and Rule 19 of the SADC PF's Rules of Procedure (EN | FR | PT). The meeting of the Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus convened virtually on Wednesday, 15 October 2025, under the theme: *Strengthening SADC women Parliamentarians 'leadership on climate change*. The statutory meeting of the RWPC was also a capacity-building engagement whose main focus was to empower the women Parliamentarians with the skills, knowledge, data and evidence needed for them to effectively advocate for a gender-responsive approach to climate action, to ensure that the voice of the women of the SADC region is heard and that their views contribute to a significant way to shape the global, continental and regional climate agenda. The meeting also

resonated with the aspirations and ongoing initiatives of the SADC PF on climate action, women empowerment and inclusivity, as contained in its Constitution and Strategic Plan for 2024 to 2028.

Mr. President, please allow me to present the summary of the presentations and recommendations to this Plenary Assembly.

Now, therefore, the RWPC resolved to recommend the 58th Plenary Assembly to do the following:

- To encourage national Parliaments, through their relevant committees, to amplify the advocacy calls by the RWPC for increased accountability for Member States' commitments at global, regional and continental levels on climate change, and to advance gender-responsive legislation, oversight and budgeting that address the challenges hindering women from participating and leading on climate action at various levels.
- We recommend that national Parliaments advocate and oversee the strengthening of the capacities of their national gender machineries, ensuring that they are adequately empowered with technical and financial capacity on climate governance and response.
- We call upon national Parliaments, through their oversight and legislative functions, to ensure that climate policies, projects and funding mechanisms are informed by sound gender analysis through an institutionalised mechanism, to promote gender-responsive climate policies and programmes in the Southern African region.

- We further urge SADC National Parliaments to strengthen their oversight by holding implementing agencies and carbon project developers accountable for meeting gender inclusion and social safeguarding standards and mandating the use of gender-disaggregated data in carbon market project baselines and monitoring.
- Mr. President, we further urge SADC PF Member Parliaments to advocate for gender-responsive legal frameworks and insert clear provisions to ensure fair benefit sharing from carbon trading, access to financial services for women-led projects, protection of women's land and resource rights in carbon projects. In this regard, Parliaments must ensure a robust legal framework for climate mitigation, adaptation and a just transition and one which mandates that carbon market revenues are invested in programmes that explicitly benefit women, such as women's climate resilience funds and training in green jobs.
- Mr. President, we call upon SADC Member Parliaments to amplify the voices of constituents, especially those in vulnerable and marginalised communities, in climate policy platforms and to build cross-party coalitions on climate action to strengthen collective advocacy beyond political divisions. In this regard, Parliamentarians are strongly encouraged to host formal hearings and town hall meetings featuring testimonies from women farmers, entrepreneurs, indigenous groups and any other groups directly affected by the impact of climate change.

- We enjoin all SADC Member Parliaments to critically scrutinise their national budgets to ensure that adequate financing is directed towards gender-responsive climate initiatives and to track gender-responsive climate expenditures, as well as leverage parliamentary influence on mandate that the government procurement supports sustainable climate and development services.
- Mr. President, we also implore this hon. House to approve that, subject to the availability of funds, the RWPC undertake advocacy missions in SADC Member States to advocate for strengthened women parliamentarians' leadership on climate change for enhanced oversight on the domestication and implementation of the relevant global, continental and regional commitments to promote gender-responsive climate action.
- We further recommend that the SADC PF, through the RWPC, collaborates with relevant partners to undertake a mapping exercise to identify discriminatory laws and administrative challenges that affect women's participation and leadership on climate change in SADC Member States.
- Mr. President, we implore SADC Parliamentarians to step up monitoring of government implementation of climate action and ensure accountability for results through thematic reviews into the effectiveness of national climate programmes, including progress towards Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)

and other national and regional commitments, with a specific focus on gender-differentiated outcomes and impacts.

- We also recommend the support of the advocacy work by the RWPC to push for dedicated financing mechanisms for women-led enterprises, as well as for meaningful support to be provided to women's economic empowerment in both green and blue economies.
- We further encourage the RWPC to leverage its collective power as women parliamentarians to address climate change impacts in the region, including through participation in global Forums and advocacy for gender-responsive approaches in international negotiations, for example, under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement (EN | FR | PT).
- We also recommend that we facilitate the RWPC, in collaboration with various partners, to build the capacity of women Parliamentarians and relevant parliamentary staff on climate change issues and climate action monitoring tools.
- Lastly, we recommend for the approval that a Women's Parliament be convened on the sidelines of the 60th Plenary Assembly of the SADC Parliamentary Forum with a focus on women's participation and leadership on climate change.

Mr. President, in conclusion, it is trite that, just as countries of the Global South are disproportionately affected by the impact of climate change, women are also disproportionately affected by the impact of climate change in their respective countries. It is, therefore, indisputable that the

impact of climate change has the potential to reverse the region's efforts towards poverty reduction and to deepen inequality.

Therefore, women parliamentarians have an inherent interest to ensure that climate policy and legislation, which deeply affect the lives of women, youth, children and other vulnerable groups, are responsive to the needs of these populations. It is also critical for the women Parliamentarians to remain engaged with and learn from various stakeholders and experts, including the private sector, academia, institutional investors, civil society, as well as other political leaders, to build their capacity and add impetus to leadership on climate action, as well as to strengthen the SADC regional voice on the global climate agenda. With this, Mr. President, I beg to move. Thank you.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Thank you, Hon. Senator. Can we have the seconder?

HON. JULIEN NYEMBA [ZAMBIA]: Hon. President, I am Julian Nyemba from the Parliament of Zambia. Hon. Members, you have to forgive me, I had a cough. My voice might be bumpy as I speak. Thank you very much.

Mr. President, I rise to second and express support for the Motion on the adoption of the Report of the Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus, which has so eloquently been presented before this august House.

Mr. President, one contemporary issue that sharply spotlights the need for gender equality is that of climate change. An important global dimension is that countries in the global south are disproportionately affected by climate change in comparison with countries of the global north.

Africa is and remains the most vulnerable region to climate change despite being the least contributor to it. In fact, climate change is a major threat to African development, including the attainment of the SDGs. It is projected that current and anticipated changes in climate will worsen, affecting education, inequality, access to resources and services among different social groups. The socioeconomic impact of climate change will be devastating.

Moreover, the lack of women's voice and leadership on the issue of climate change is undemocratic and must be rectified. Mr. President, the capacity enhancement session and deliberations of the RWPC on the issue of climate change provided an opportunity for the women Parliamentarians to gain knowledge and skills to facilitate their increased engagement on the theme of climate change so that, through various legislative processes, at both national and regional levels, the women Parliamentarians can participate in developing viable solutions to issues of climate change. In this way, the SADC region can move towards amplifying the parliamentary voice and especially the voice of women Parliamentarians, on issues of climate change, for the benefit of the region's citizens.

As women parliamentarians, we greatly appreciate the efforts made by the Secretary General and her team to organise this capacity-building engagement, while recognising the need for increased and deeper engagement on the subject. This needs to be done if women Parliamentarians are to take their rightful place at the decision-making table as far as climate action is concerned.

We are grateful to all the resource persons who generously shared their expertise with us and enabled us to make the cogent recommendations contained in our report.

Mr. President, with these few remarks, I wish to second the Motion and I thank you.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: I now open the floor for debate.

MS. MAKATLEHO MOTSOASELE [LESOTHO]: My name is Makatleho Motsoasele from Lesotho. May I rise on the protocol already observed. Hon. Members, I could not agree more on the befitting theme of the 58th Plenary Assembly: *The Impact of Climate Change on Women and Youth in the SADC Region and the Role of Parliaments in Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation*. Women Parliamentarians indeed have a crucial role to play in raising awareness and advocating for gender responsive actions that should be taken to mitigate and adapt to climate change. It is high time that the representation of women is significantly realised in the discussions on policies and laws addressing climate change to shape a more inclusive, sustainable future.

Mainstreaming gender responsive policies is of importance in our region mainly because women are disproportionately affected by climate change and their inclusion is crucial, effective and a solution. Policies that consider gender can be more effectively tackled to address existing inequalities and tap into women's community leadership and economic contributions.

By adopting a genderless society, we would be significantly contributing towards strengthening the effectiveness, fairness and sustainability of climate policies and actions. Strengthening women Parliamentarians on

issues of climate change is imperative, not only to ensure that the voices of women and girls are heard but also to shape policies and effectively hold governments accountable on the gender and climate change issues.

In Lesotho, we have a saying: *Mosadi o tshwara thipa ka bohaleng*. Which, when translated, means, 'a woman's work reigns', highlighting the importance of women in society. In this context, the importance of women in the fight against climate change. Mr. President, I support the motion. Thank you.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: South Africa!

MS. N. V. MENTE-NKUNA [SOUTH AFRICA]: Hon. President, allow me to also ride on all the protocols that have been established by the House. Let us welcome the report of the Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus (RWPC) and once more record a concern that the Southern African Development Community Protocol on Gender and Development (EN | FR | PT) and the accompanying SADC Guidelines on Gender-responsive budgeting were amended in 2016 on an existing protocol.

However, the response in terms of Gender-responsive budgeting by the Member States is not satisfactory. We would like to implore our next Assembly sitting that we get reports which are effectively showing us an adherence or compliance to Gender-Sensitive Budgeting, which will seek to elevate women and their businesses, as well as supporting gender responsive climate expenditure, especially with regards to agroecology.

In the past two months, we attended the High-Level Round Discussion with all the economic development communities of Africa. In East Africa, there was a very progressive resolution pertaining to agroecology and gender

sensitive budgets because there is an acknowledgement and the confirmation that women lead in the agriculture sector, yet suffer the consequences of climate change and there is no support from their respective governments.

Therefore, we would like to know if SADC is indeed heeding the call of 2016 that all Parliaments must adhere to Gender-Sensitive Budgeting. Over and above that, in welcoming the report, we need to look into the procurement of our Member States governments, if procurements of government are being done on a gender basis. We all have prisons, which are correctional services in other countries. We have hospitals, schools and all these other sectors that the government has taken charge of feeding the inmates, patients and the school children, yet where we procure that food is not within the space of locals. We are procuring from outside the government or outside the State.

Therefore, we urge that our procurement systems, as Member States, should prioritise individuals with experience in agroecology or any relevant business sector. Especially women so that we can uplift their businesses and uplift their contribution in society.

Mr. President, lastly, in welcoming this report, we would like to welcome the proposal that women must find a way of going around and ensuring that all governments are compliant and are adhering to the call. Thank you very much. –[*Applause*] –

FR.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: DRC!

HON. MEMBER [DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO]:

Honorable Président;

Honorable Secrétaire Générale;

Honorables Présidents de Parlements de la SADC ;

Honorables Parlementaires et chers collègues ;

Distingués invités,

Tout protocole observé ;

Mesdames et Messieurs ;

C'est avec un profond honneur que je m'adresse à vous aujourd'hui, en tant que représentante du peuple congolais et porte-voix de milliers de femmes de notre région qui subissent quotidiennement les conséquences dramatiques du changement climatique.

L'Afrique australe, bien qu'elle ne contribue qu'à 4% des émissions mondiales de gaz à effet de serre, subit de plein fouet les impacts les plus dévastateurs du dérèglement climatique. Et au cœur de ces tragédies, ce sont les femmes et les filles qui paient le plus de tribut.

Chers collègues, en 2024, 60 millions de citoyens de la SADC ont connu l'insécurité alimentaire. La sécheresse de 2023-2024 a affecté 56,8 millions de personnes dans notre région. Les femmes qui représentent 70% de la main d'œuvre agricole en Afrique australe sont les premières victimes.

De cette crise, en Zambie, les taux d'abandon scolaire se sont élevés dans les districts touchés par la sécheresse et de dizaines d'école primaire

ont fermé leur porte. Les filles quittent l'école et ne le font pas par choix, mais par nécessité pour aider leurs familles à survivre.

Dans les zones rurales du Malawi, du Zimbabwe et du Madagascar, j'ai rencontré des femmes qui parcourent désormais plus de 15 kilomètres par jour pour trouver de l'eau. Ces mêmes femmes qui, jadis nourrissaient leurs communautés grâce à leur récolte, voient aujourd'hui leurs champs transformés en terre aride, leurs semences détruites et les inondations imprévisibles, consumées par de sécheresse interminable, leurs semences détruites par les inondations imprévisibles ou consumées par de sécheresse interminable.

Le changement climatique ne détruit pas seulement les cultures, mais aussi la santé de nos femmes et de nos filles. La malnutrition chronique touche de manière disproportionnée les femmes enceintes et allaitantes.

Au Mozambique, après le cyclone Idai et Kenneth, nous avons observé une augmentation alarmante de complications pendant l'accouchement directement liée à la malnutrition et au stress.

Plus tragique encore la crise climatique compromet la lutte contre la VIH/SIDA. Les femmes séropotives, contraintes par la faim, interrompent leurs traitements antirétroviraux. Contrainte par la faim, Floridane, survivante de cyclone Idai en Mozambique, témoignait : « Parfois quand je n'avais rien à manger, je ne prends pas mes médicaments, parce que le lendemain, j'ai l'impression que je vais m'évanouir. »

L'éducation, cette clé de voute pour le développement dévient un luxe inaccessible pour de million de filles de notre région. Quand les récoltes échouent, les familles n'ont plus rien à manger et ce sont systématiquement

les filles qui deviennent pourvoyeuses d'eau, gardiennes des plus petits ou pire encore elles sont contraintes au mariage précoce.

En Angola dans la province de Punene, il y a des villages où aucune fille de 14 ans n'est scolarisée. Toutes ont abandonné leurs études pour aider leurs familles à faire face à la pire sécheresse que cette région ait connue depuis des décennies.

Mes chers collègues, je dois aborder avec vous une autre réalité particulièrement douloureuse. Le changement climatique exacerbe les violences entre la femme et la fille de manière dramatique. Le mariage précoce augmente de façon exponentielle pendant les crises alimentaires. Comme l'expliquait Sitengina Mushi, officier de police en Zambie : les parents reçoivent de vaches, de la farine de maïs contre leurs filles.

EN.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Merci beaucoup Honorable. Thank you very much. Zambia!

HON. MEMBER [ZAMBIA]: Mr. President, the report by the Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus has rightly highlighted that while climate change is a global crisis, its impacts are felt most accurately in our region and most disproportionately by women.

We are reminded that unless gender-responsive climate action becomes the norm, not the exception, our progress on equality, development and resilience will be severely undermined.

Mr. President, what stands out in this report is the clear recognition that women are not just victims of climate change, they are essential actors in confronting it. Yet, their leadership remains underrepresented, their

access to climate finance limited and their voices, too often, absent from key decision-making platforms. This is a gap we as Parliamentarians have the responsibility to close.

Mr. President, the recommendations before us are both practical and necessary. Strengthening national gender machineries, mandating gender disaggregated data, ensuring fair benefit sharing in carbon markets and institutionalising gender analysis across all climate policies, these are not optional steps, they are prerequisites if we are to build climate policies that genuinely protect and empower our communities.

Mr. President, I particularly support the call for stronger parliamentary oversight. Without accountability on climate finance, on national commitments, on the implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), our policies risk remaining aspirational rather than transformational.

Mr. President, Parliament must be the watchdog that ensures climate responses are not only effective but equitable.

Equally important, Mr. President, is the recommendation to amplify the voices of women, farmers, entrepreneurs, indigenous groups and other frontline communities. Their lived experiences must inform the strategies we adopt. Climate action cannot be designed from a distance. It must be shaped by those who live its realities daily.

Mr. President, this report gives us a clear roadmap. What is required now is political will. By embracing these recommendations, we strengthen not only women's leadership, but the region's collective ability to adapt, mitigate and thrive in the face of climate threats.

I fully support their adoption and urge this Plenary to prioritise implementation with the seriousness the crisis demands. I thank you, Mr. President. – [*Applause*] –

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Zimbabwe!

HON. MAYBE MBOHWA [ZIMBABWE]: Mr. President, my name is Maybe Mbohwa from the Parliament of Zimbabwe and I am the Chairperson of the Zimbabwe Women Parliamentary Caucus.

I want to come in support of the motion raised by Senator Linda on issues of gender and climate and I want to share how we are doing it or how we are in the process of handling issues of gender and climate change in Zimbabwe.

It is of utmost importance to note that the Government and Parliament of Zimbabwe have made notable progress in recent years to acknowledge and institutionalise the intersection between climate change, gender and social justice.

In this regard, Mr. President, Zimbabwe has established a strong foundation for gender-responsive climate governance through several key legal and policy instruments. Accordingly, the adoption of the Climate Change Gender Action Plan of 2024 provides structured measures to ensure women's participation and protection in climate adaptation and mitigation processes.

The National Gender Policy of 2025 therein reinforces these commitments by mainstreaming gender equality across all sectors of the economy, including environmental management and climate change action in general.

Additionally, Mr. President, the Zimbabwe Gender Commission at [Chapter 20:31] empowers the Commission to monitor, evaluate and promote gender-responsive approaches within national policies, ensuring that climate and environmental laws address the distinctive vulnerabilities and contributions of women.

Mr. President, together, these frameworks that institutionalise women's rights, their voices and roles are at the core of Zimbabwe's climate governance agenda.

The Climate Change Management Bill 5 of 2025, which the Parliament is currently considering, demonstrates a high level political will.

Furthermore, civil society organisations like the Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe and the She Changes Climate Zimbabwe Network are actively shaping climate and gender advocates. They work to amplify women's voices, push for gender-transformative policies and build collaborative platforms for climate action. They have already helped to shape the debate and narrative, especially around water security, gender-responsive budgeting and the inclusion of women in climate governance, which are being enhanced.

For women Parliamentarians and other leaders, of course, to turn policy into meaningful change, especially for rural youth and marginalised women, active engagement, the whole of government approach and partnership with civil society are essential. Of note, persistent advocacy remains key in the whole ecosystem.

I so submit and support the motion, Mr. President. – [*Applause*] -

THE HON.PRESIDENT: Thank you Hon. Member. Angola!

PT.

HON. LUÍSA DAMIÃO (ANGOLA): Obrigada Excelência Presidente. Eu sou Luísa Damião do Parlamento de Angola.

Angola apoia o Relatório porque reconhece a pertinência desta temática e a necessidade de as mulheres parlamentares estarem dotadas de competências para uma abordagem sensível ao género para a acção climática.

Neste sentido, nós propomos a criação de uma Carta parlamentar regional sobre a acção climática, harmonizando princípios e responsabilidades. O estabelecimento de um mecanismo regional e de monitorização e reporte parlamentar sobre compromissos climáticos, a mobilização colectiva junto de parceiros internacionais para aumentar o financiamento para fazer face as consequências das alterações climáticas, o reforço da cooperação científica e tecnológica entre os Estados-membros, a integração entre políticas de climas, água, energia e segurança alimentar e a promoção de soluções baseadas na natureza e economia verde inclusiva. Excelência Presidente

O desenvolvimento sustentável, a segurança e a estabilidade da região dependem de uma resposta climática colectiva, forte, inclusiva e baseada na justiça.

Assim sendo, a integração regional energética deve passar a ser vista como um instrumento ao serviço de adaptação climática, sensível as questões do género e um pilar de transição justa que gera empregos dignos e capacitação para as mulheres e a juventude na nossa região.

Não podemos, senhor Presidente, ignorar metade da população do nosso continente composta por mulheres resilientes que asseguram 70% dos alimentos destinados ao consumo doméstico e não só, porque são elas que trabalham a terra, muitas vezes, em condições extremamente difíceis.

Nós defendemos uma acção parlamentar coordenada e assertiva capaz de responder as reais necessidades das aspirações das mulheres e jovens na nossa região que são severamente afectadas pela seca, inundações, insegurança alimentar e até uma migração forçada.

Excelência Presidente

Honoráveis Deputados

Os impactos sociais e económicos são profundos. Famílias inteiras são obrigadas a abandonar as suas comunidades em busca de meios de subsistência.

Em muitas ocasiões as mulheres, raparigas e crianças são expostas a predadores sexuais, ao tráfico de pessoas e até ao tráfico de órgãos humanos.

Defendemos, por isso, um quadro jurídico sensível ao género, uma acção climática sensível ao género, um orçamento sensível ao género e o fortalecimento da diplomacia parlamentar na defesa de uma maior justiça climática.

Senhor Presidente

Nós somos o continente que menos polui, mas somos o continente que mais sofre e este peso do sofrimento recai, sobretudo, para as mulheres.

Entendemos que enquanto parlamentares devemos advogar com respostas cruciais na aprovação de leis, na fiscalização de políticas públicas,

na alocação de fundos e outras acções que contribuam para uma resposta climática inclusiva.

Temos uma oportunidade histórica, Senhor Presidente, para renovarmos o nosso compromisso político regional para transformarmos as resoluções em acções concretas.

Com estas palavras, Senhor Presidente, eu apoio a Moção.

Muito obrigada. – *Aplausos*

EN.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Thank you Honourable. Lesotho!

HON. N. MOSHOESHOE [LESOTHO]: Hon. President, thank you for giving me the floor to rise in support of the motion which has been adequately moved by the Chairperson of the Caucus. My name is Napo Moshoeshoe and I am a Member of the National Assembly of Lesotho.

Hon. President, it is indeed concerning that in this day and age, the women's voice remains hardly heard in the climate change discourse, yet it is women, more than anyone, who are suffering the consequences of climate change-related situations.

I, therefore, appeal to the male colleagues to change their mindsets and support and work together with our women counterparts in forging practical and sustainable solutions. Hon. President, as much as I support that women be empowered to be resilient to the climate shocks and that women Parliamentarians be capacitated to adequately take the lead in ensuring that women's unique needs are sufficiently addressed, I also appeal to the male Parliamentarians to be supported so that we may move together, on the same understanding.

Hon. President, I also wish to commend the efforts being made by member countries to capacitate grassroots communities to be resilient. Allow me, Hon. President, to briefly highlight efforts being made in Lesotho regarding the adaptation and mitigation strategies. The Lesotho Government, in partnership with the UN, is implementing a project that is called Improving Adaptive Capacity of Vulnerable and Food-Insecure Populations in Lesotho (IACoVFIP), in three remote districts of the country that have been highly exposed to shocks, namely Mafeteng, Mohale's Hoek and Quthing. The project aims to enhance the adaptive capacities and build resilience of vulnerable and food-insecure households and communities, and it is financed through the Adaptive Fund.

Lesotho also has a project called ReNOKA, which is a transformative national initiative designed to mitigate the escalating impacts of climate change by restoring the health and functionality of the country's critical watershed systems. It involves the construction of water, conservation and rainwater catchments in selected areas throughout the country. Lesotho has also made significant progress on renewable energy projects and promotion of climate-smart agriculture, where farmers are assisted to engage in improved farming practices such as the use of drought-tolerant and early maturing crops, minimum tillage, crop rotation and rooftop harvesting. There are also programmes on rangeland management, reforestation and land restoration under the Lesotho Highlands and Watershed Conservation programme supported by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF). I also wish to commend the SADC PF for supporting our National Women's Caucus under the Sexual and

Reproductive Health and Rights Project to engage in community consultations regarding climate change and the sexual and reproductive health rights, including gender needs in the district of Mafeteng, where significant findings were made. Hon President, with these few remarks, I support the motion. Thank you.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Botswana!

HON. L. CHOMBO [BOTSWANA]: Thank you very much, Mr. President. My name is Lesego Chombo. I am a specially elected Member of Parliament and the Minister of Youth and Gender Affairs in Botswana. I am currently the Chairperson of the Specialised Technical Committee on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment at the African Union. I rise to support the motion for the adoption of the report and to underscore several areas of strategic importance for our region, areas that also reflect Botswana's ongoing commitments and national reforms.

Firstly, as Botswana, we strongly align with the Caucus's call for dedicated financing mechanisms for women-led enterprises, as well as dedicated procurement, particularly within the green and blue economies, and in Botswana, through our quota system, which reserves a portion of public procurement for women-owned businesses, we have already institutionalised the economic empowerment of women and are undertaking efforts to expand them.

I must note that recently, procurement in the mining industry has increased to 35% and this indeed supports the proposal as presented in this report. Over and beyond financing, we are undertaking programmes to empower women, such as our Entrepreneur Programme, which capacitates

women on climate-smart agriculture. I would also like to stand in support of the proposal for a region-wide assessment of discriminatory laws and procedural bottlenecks, which I consider both timely and necessary.

Mr. President, this exercise will allow our Parliament to clearly identify where gender gaps persist within climate governance and to allow us to design corrective legislation and administrative measures that are informed by real data, something that we know is currently lacking in our continent.

Thirdly, I echo the call for Parliament to move more rigorously to scrutinise national budgets for gender-responsive climate financing and to strengthen oversight of climate-related expenditures. I must note that through our National Development Plan 12, which was recently passed in Parliament, we have inculcated mandatory gender mainstreaming, obligating each sector, including that of the environment and climate, to undertake gender impact assessments in their budgets.

Fourthly, I would like to support the emphasis on gender-responsive legal frameworks for carbon trading and benefit sharing. I consider this timely and I believe that as Member States move towards developing carbon markets and nature-based solutions, it is imperative that women's land and resource rights are safeguarded and that carbon revenues deliver tangible benefits to women.

Finally, Mr. President, we support the recommendation that national Parliaments should prioritise the strengthening of the national gender machineries to ensure that they are both fully capacitated technically as well as financially to lead national responses on climate governance.

In Botswana, we are strengthening our National Gender Commission to afford it the capacity to not only lead responses on gender issues but also to hold all stakeholders accountable to their commitments. With those few remarks, Mr. President, the report before us speaks directly to the region's most urgent development and climate justice concerns and these recommendations offer us a pathway towards a more equitable, climate-resilient SADC and I wish to express Botswana's full support and readiness to work with fellow Member States and advancing this shared agenda for gender equality. I so submit and I thank you.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Hon. Member from Mozambique, you have the floor.

PT.

HON. SAIMONE MUHAMBI MACUIANA (MOÇAMBIQUE): Muito obrigado Sua Excelência Presidente desta Sessão e todo o protocolo observado.

Primeiro começar por apoiar o Relatório e também dizer o meu nome, chamo-me Saimone Muhambi Macuiana, membro do Parlamento moçambicano. E como disse, começo por apoiar o Relatório apresentado, em segundo lugar dizer que as questões de mudança climática devem ser analisadas em duas vertentes: a primeira vertente é a mudança climática global que não depende de nós a sua superação. Mas há uma mudança climática que nós reconhecemos, nós próprios ajudamos na destruição das nossas florestas através de países que nós próprios…(*inaudível*) mas vem destruir as nossas florestas.

Aqui queria apelar a todos os parlamentos para que nós possamos ter uma legislação que não permita que isso aconteça. Todos nós sabemos que ao destruir florestas, também estamos a aumentar que não haja chuva. Em segundo lugar, queria aqui dizer que o nosso país tem dedicado exactamente esta temática em relação ao apoio ao género.

Ao nível da Assembleia da República de Moçambique temos uma Comissão dos Assuntos Sociais e do Género e, além disso, para reforçar a democracia temos na República de Moçambique dos 250 Deputados, 98 são mulheres e a nossa Presidente da Assembleia da República também é mulher, o primeiro-ministro é mulher, o Presidente do Tribunal Administrativo é mulher, o Presidente do Conselho Constitucional é mulher, significa que temos uma gama de pessoas que podem ajudar na advocacia em relação a esta matéria.

Ora, as mudanças climáticas se no século passado a velocidade desta mudança climática era de 5% por ano, agora é 200% por ano.
O que significa têm que ser tomadas as medidas robustas com vista a minimizar a situação das mudanças climáticas ao nível da região austral e ao nível do continente.

Cientes que nós os africanos não somos os grandes emissores de gases de estufa, mas existem grandes potências, mas para isso é preciso que os países da África Austral sejamos unidos nessa temática de todo o continente para que, de facto, a África não possa ser um sítio onde as mudanças climáticas não só são afectadas através dos gases de estufa, como também nós próprios sermos destruidores das nossas florestas, destruidores dos nossos rios.

Esta é a parte que queria apresentar reiterando que o nosso país, a República de Moçambique considera este tema de extrema importância e vai continuar a trabalhar na advocacia tanto ao nível do Governo como ao nível da Assembleia da República.

Feito isto, o nosso muito obrigado. – *Aplausos*

EN.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. We have seven minutes left and we still have Namibia and Zambia. So, I have to share this seven minute for both of you. Hon. Speaker of Namibia.

HON. S. KUUGONGELWA [NAMIBIA]: Thank you, Hon. President. My name is Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila, Speaker of the National Assembly of Namibia. Namibia supports the report in its well-thought-out recommendations. The recommendations would enable our countries not only to give practical implementation to the gender equality and women empowerment initiatives in our respective countries but they will also ensure that we leverage regional capacities and resources to ensure shared development at the regional level.

The importance of access to finance and markets for women cannot be overemphasised. Further, government procurement offers great opportunities for access to markets and can be leveraged to facilitate access to private finance, as well as State financing through cessation of contract income in lieu of security, which many women lack. We also have quotas for women and youth for public tenders and for financing from public financial institutions to support inclusive development.

In many countries, women's cooperatives have mobilised savings to finance women's projects. Climate financing can support women's initiatives aimed at savings mobilisation and financing of women's initiatives. In Namibia, a women's cooperative called Shack Dwellers Federation is one of the largest mechanisms for providing low-cost housing, which enables many women to move from shacks to decent housing and supports women's agricultural initiatives. So, these recommendations talk to the aspirations of the women of Namibia and we support them wholeheartedly. Thank you.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Thank you Hon. Speaker. Zambia!

HON. M. C. MAZOKA [ZAMBIA]: Thank you, Mr. President. I am greatly honoured to contribute to the deliberations of this august Forum, particularly on the caucus's recommendations for SADC Parliaments to amplify the voices of vulnerable and marginalised communities in climate policy platforms and to build cross-party coalitions for stronger climate action.

Mr. President, allow me to briefly share what the Parliament of Zambia has done in this regard. We have established the Zambian Parliamentary Caucus on Environment and Climate Change, which brings together Members of Parliament from all political parties. This platform enables us to work collectively on climate issues beyond political lines. Through the Parliamentary Caucus, we engage directly with communities most affected by climate change, including rural farmers, women and youth. For example, the caucus recently engaged women and youth farmers using indigenous seed varieties to adapt to climate impacts in partnership with the Zambia Alliance for Agro-ecology and the biodiversity.

Mr. President, this initiative directly supports the SADC call by ensuring inclusiveness and strengthening collective advocacy for people-centred climate policies. With these few remarks, Mr. President, Zambia fully supports the report of the Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus and its recommendations. I thank you.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Thank you, Hon Mutinta. Now, I call upon Hon. Nxumalo to respond in two minutes.

SENATOR. DR. L. NXUMALO [ESWATINI]: Thank you Mr. President. I will endeavour to respond in much less than two minutes. I want to appreciate the overwhelming support for the motion by all the speakers and the distinguished delegates in this august House. I appreciate the gender balanced inputs that we have received from both male and female delegates. That to me says, indeed, the leadership of SADC and all the Members are really walking the talk in terms of gender mainstreaming and gender responsiveness.

I also want to appreciate the country presentations. We have had several countries that are sharing their success stories and it is in that regard that we believe that the country missions that we were recommending in our report, the advocacy missions, are going to bear fruit, because it is already information that is being shared on successes in other countries. With that, Mr. President, I thank all the distinguished delegates for supporting the motion. I thank you. [*Applause*.]

THE HON. PRESIDENT: I put the Question that the Report of the Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus be adopted.

Motion put and agreed to.

Motion with leave, adopted.

MOTION

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENDER EQUALITY, WOMEN'S ADVANCEMENT AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Motion for the adoption of the report of the Standing Committee on Gender Equality, Women's Advancement and Youth Development is being presented by Hon. Kasanda.

HON. C. KASANDA [ZAMBIA]: Mr. President, I beg to move that the 58th Plenary Assembly do adopt the report of the Standing Committee on Gender Equality, Women's Advancement and Youth Development laid on the table on 2 December 2025. Thank you.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Any seconder?

SENATOR. T. M. MOHALE [LESOTHO]: Mr. President, I, Senator Thato Mako Mohale from Lesotho, support the motion.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Thank you. I call upon Hon. Kasanda to present the report.

HON. C. KASANDA [ZAMBIA]: Mr. President, the theme for my report is "*Enhancing the Role of Parliamentarians in Advocating for the Signing, Ratification, Accession, Domestication and Implementation of the SADC PF Protocols*". Mr. President, the Standing Committee on Gender Equality, Women's Advancement and Youth Development was composed of the Members as contained in Appendix 1, Appendices 2 and 3, containing the list of officials and resource persons who attended the meeting.

Terms of reference and theme of the meeting:

The specific terms of reference for the Gender Equality, Women Advancement and Youth Development (GEWAYD), Standing Committee are set out in Rule 42A of the Rules of Procedure (EN | FR | PT), of the SADC-PF. The Committee convened its statutory meeting on 30 and 31 October 2025 at the Premier Hotel, O.R. Tambo in Johannesburg, South Africa. The meeting was convened under the overarching theme: “notamment une meilleure protection contre la violence et la discrimination, un accès amélioré aux services de santé reproductive, une reproduction de l’égalité dans les domaines de l’éducation, l’emploi et une plus grande participation politique.

Et cela impliquerait une révision et une harmonisation des lois nationales pour se conformer aux droits garantis par le Protocole tels que le droit à la vie, à l’héritage, à la propriété et l’interdiction du mariage forcé et le mariage, la grossesse précoce. Nous puissions accélérer le progrès pour l’émancipation des femmes et des jeunes filles et pour qu’elles puissent jouir de la justice sociale dont elles méritent.

Et pour terminer, Monsieur le Président, chers membres du Forum, je tenais à souligner que nous, femmes, nous sommes une force active et notre participation dans le processus de développement doit être un choix délibéré et chaque Gouvernement étatique n’a pas que le choix de nous inclure dans tout processus décisionnel.

Monsieur le Président, je soutiens la motion et je vous remercie.

EN.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Zambia!

HON. K. MUKOSA [ZAMBIA]: Thank you, Mr. President. As I rise to support the adoption of this report, allow me to commend the mover and seconder of the motion, as well as the entire Standing Committee on Gender Equality, Women Advancement and Youth Development, for a clear, evidence-based report that speaks directly to the realities facing our region.

The deliberations remind us that while we have strong police instruments, Mr. President, the revised SADC Protocol on Gender and Development (EN | FR | PT): and the SADC Declaration on Youth Development implementation remain our biggest challenge. Mr. President, it is deeply concerning that almost a decade after its revision, the Gender Protocol is still not fully signed and ratified across the region. Without universal commitment, the goal of true gender equality will remain out of reach. Equally, while every Member State has youth structures in place, their impact on employment and empowerment remains limited. This is a Thank you, Mr. President. My name is Kalalwe Mukosa, Member of Parliament from Zambia.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Let us move to Botswana.

HON. L. CHOMBO [BOTSWANA]: Thank you very much, Mr. President. I rise once again to support these recommendations. I am very happy to not only be supporting them as a Member of Parliament or as the Minister of Youth but as a young person myself at the age of 27. I support this because they address the very real obstacles that continue to undermine youth development in our region, and these are the obstacles that young people face every day.

Firstly, I support the call to ensure that Ministries of Finance participate in the SADC statutory meetings. It speaks to a chronic problem. Youth programmes across the region collapse not because the ideas are poor, not because young people lack passion and commitment and intellect, but because of the limited champions in the fiscal space. We cannot continue designing ambitious youth empowerment initiatives, innovation and climate resilience programmes only for them to disappear at the point of budget allocation. Bringing finance ministries into these conversations from the very beginning is how we stop youth development from being treated as a peripheral cost but rather as a strategic investment.

Secondly, I strongly support the expansion of intergenerational dialogue platforms and the formalisation of youth desks. Now, many of our countries rely on informal youth consultations that depend on personalities rather than institutional mandates. And this leads to inconsistency, it leads to exclusion and quite frankly, a much-despised tokenistic approach, much despised by the young people. Youth frequently express their frustration that their views are often harvested, documented and then shelved. As we establish these mandatory structures, we ensure continuity, accountability and protection from political turnover. It creates a governance home where youths' voices are not only heard but translated into meaningful policy.

Thirdly, the call to accelerate gender-responsive budgeting with ring-fenced youth resources speaks directly to another systemic challenge; that is, the invisibility of youth needs in national budgets. We speak about digital inclusion, climate participation, youth entrepreneurship and yet the budget lines meant to deliver these outcomes are either fragmented or too thin. Too

thin to ensure or create impact. Our young women in particular, Mr. President, navigate economic participation challenges with limited safety nets and limited capital. I say limited as a very diplomatic word, when in fact it is below limited.

In Botswana, I must note that we are curbing this through our mandatory youth impact assessments as mandated by the National Development Plan 12. We intend that these should ensure each sector truly considers the value of how our programmes and budget allocations impact youth. We are speaking of youth mainstreaming in each and every sector to ensure that the various programmes are indeed impacting the lives of our young people. We continue to revamp various programmes, including our Youth Development Fund, which is intended to accelerate youth enterprises by affording them the necessary finance.

Fourthly, the recommendation to institutionalise the SADC Youth Forum responds to a long-standing gap in regional governance. Our young people continue to remain peripheral to regional integration despite being the largest demographic. Without a structured body, youth influence has been happening in episodes and is dependent on whoever is invited into the room. This formal Forum will ensure the creation of continuity, strategic voices and a mechanism for young leaders to shape regional spaces.

Lastly, I support the call for a youth development scorecard. At present, we have commitments that are scattered across protocols, declarations, and national strategies but with little comparative data on what is working and what is not. Therefore, the original scorecard will expose these implementation gaps. It will spotlight countries that are innovating and it

will also create peer pressure where progress has stalled. Most importantly, it gives our young people a very transparent tool to hold all of us accountable to the commitments that we have made in their names.

With that, Mr. President, I consider these recommendations as the ones that remind us that the greatest barrier facing young people is not lack of ambition; it is the absence of systems that are designed with them in mind. Today, we are asked not only to adopt a report but to confront these systemic failures honestly, truly honestly and to reimagine a SADC where youth leadership is structured, financed and protected. I so submit and I thank you, Mr. President. – [*Applause*] -

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Hon. Members, you are reminded that for a correct verbatim record, you should always introduce yourself by your name and the country whenever you are given the floor. Could you please introduce yourself?

HON. L. CHOMBO [BOTSWANA]: My name is Lesego Chombo from Botswana.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Now we move to Mozambique.

PT.

HON. IVANDRO JORDÃO MASSINGUE (MOÇAMBIQUE): Obrigado pela palavra. Bom-dia.

Sua Excelência Senhor Presidente do Fórum Parlamentar da SADC

Suas Excelências Senhores Presidentes dos Parlamentos Nacionais

Excelências Deputados, Meus Pares

Distintos Convidados

Todo o protocolo observado.

O meu nome é Ivandro Massingue, parlamentar de Moçambique.

Excelências

Inicio por apoiar a Moção aqui apresentada e permitam-me referenciar que o tema em debate é de vital importância para o futuro das nossas nações e da nossa região.

Entendemos que reforçar o papel dos parlamentares na defesa da assinatura, ratificação, adesão e implementação dos protocolos da SADC é na verdade a materialização da nossa visão colectiva de paz, estabilidade, prosperidade partilhada ao nível da África Austral.

Excelências

O impacto em Moçambique do Protocolo revisto da SADC sobre o Género e Desenvolvimento 2016 é positivo principalmente porque exerceu uma influência para a ratificação e implementação de Leis e políticas de igualdade de género em alinhamento com os padrões regionais, o que tem levado a uma melhor representação das mulheres na política, na governação e nos locais de poder e tomada de decisão.

Excelências

Não temos como continuar a ignorar a juventude e as mulheres da nossa região. O futuro das nossas nações não é uma promessa distante, mas uma realidade que pulsa na força inabalável da mulher e no ímpeto revolucionário da juventude. Por isso que digo hoje, aqui, as mulheres e jovens sejam erguidos e exaltados. Não como coadjuvantes, mas como

protagonistas de uma transformação social e política que não aceita mais a submissão ou o silêncio.

Eu como jovem e em nome da juventude digo, nós os jovens somos a vanguarda da mudança, a encarnação da esperança e a garantia de um amanhã verdadeiramente justo, igualitário, onde a coragem e a determinação feminina se unem à energia e à visão de uma nova geração para acabar com as velhas estruturas das desigualdades, da pobreza, da miséria e das dificuldades que assolam as nações e, principalmente, a juventude e as mulheres.

Excelências

Moçambique também ratifica e implementa leis nacionais que se alinham com os objectivos do Protocolo como as de criação de políticas de licença de maternidade e paternidade.

O país busca promover a igualdade de género e oportunidades no mercado de trabalho e educação para garantir que as mulheres ocupem cargos de confiança e tenham salários iguais aos dos homens nos mesmos postos de trabalho e que haja inclusão dos jovens.

O país tem buscado criar condições para que os jovens e as mulheres ocupem assentos permanentes nos comités da SADC, no conselho e na cimeira.

Moçambique tem ainda iniciativas de promover e apoiar o diálogo nos processos consultivos, nos fóruns e parlamentos juvenis.

Para terminar, permitam-me referenciar que o nosso compromisso com a SADC é um compromisso com o desenvolvimento sustentável e a estabilidade dos nossos países.

Exortamos a todos os presentes a assumirmos com a máxima contundência o nosso papel enquanto defensores e promotores desta agenda vital porque o futuro da nossa pátria e da nossa região depende da nossa juventude e, principalmente, da nossa mulher.

Desde já, mais uma vez, declaramos o nosso apoio a Moção e recomendamos a mesma que seja adoptada.

Tenho dito e muito obrigado.

EN.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Zimbabwe!

HON. M. MBOHWA [ZIMBABWE]: Mr. President, thank you, once again. My name is Maybe Mbohwa, Parliament of Zimbabwe. I want to come in support of a Motion moved by Hon. Kasanda from Zambia.

Mr. President, I want to contribute by sharing practical examples from my country, which helps me to put a clearer picture of what I will be contributing. Let me say, at the national level, Zimbabwe has aligned its Constitution and National Gender Policy with the Protocol, embedding gender equality in law and practice.

First, regarding recommendation number two, which calls upon *"Member Parliaments to accelerate the implementation of gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) frameworks and allocate adequate, ring-fenced resources for gender equality structures and youth development programmes."* After intensive lobbying and advocacy by the Zimbabwe Women Parliamentary Caucus and its partners, Zimbabwe formally introduced gender responsive budgeting into its Budget Call Circular in May 2021, when the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development issued official Guidelines for the

Preparation of Gender Responsive Budgets. Since 2022 onwards, Gender Responsive Budget Statements have been accompanying the national budget, profiling performance and proposals from a gender perspective.

Secondly, concerning recommendation number six, which encourages "*Member Parliaments to promote legislative reforms to tackle technology-facilitated gender-based violence and digital exclusion, in line with the provisions of the Protocol and Declaration." Our* Constitution provides a strong foundation for gender equality and protection from all forms of violence. Section 51 grants every person the right to human dignity, which includes protection from degrading treatment, including online abuse. Section 52, on personal security, protects individuals from all forms of violence, whether public or private, which is interpreted to include digital spaces. The Domestic Violence Act [Chapter 5:16] covers emotional, psychological and verbal abuse, which includes online harassment. Furthermore, the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act [Chapter 9:23] prohibits acts such as cyberstalking, threats and distribution of intimate images without consent and this includes online abuse. Additionally, the Data Protection Act (2021) acknowledges the heightened risks faced by women and children and prohibits the use of ICTs to perpetrate abuse. It introduces provisions on cybersecurity and data privacy, criminalising the unauthorised sharing of personal data, including intimate images.

Thirdly, pertaining to recommendation number eight, which speaks to the support of "…*the expansion of intergenerational dialogue platforms and the introduction of mandatory youth desks and programmes across all Member States to formalise youth representation and leadership*

opportunities". Parliament of Zimbabwe has established Junior Parliament, Junior Councils, and a Youth Caucus in Parliament as formal structures to promote youth participation in governance and foster intergenerational dialogue between young people and policymakers.

Mr. President, although a lot still needs to be done, these efforts resonate with the Committee's call for a regional Youth Forum and a Youth Development Scorecard, as Zimbabwe already tracks youth participation through indicators aligned to Vision 2030. I thank you. I so submit and support the adoption of this report.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Namibia!

HON. MEMBER [NAMIBIA]: Hon. President, I wanted to comment, but my comment angle has been catered for. Thank you so much.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: I call on Hon. Kasanda to close the debate.

HON. C. KASANDA [ZAMBIA]: Mr. President, thank you very much. I just want to thank all the Members who debated and supported the motion. Clearly, from the debates, we are all in agreement that women and youth need to take up key decision-making positions. What came out very clearly was that we need to accelerate the progress on women and youth empowerment and development. From the debates, it was also clear that we need adequate resources.

I think resources are something that we need to look at and without the resources, I think it becomes very difficult to implement and it slows down the progress. Mr. President, having said that, I also took note of the youth structures that were spoken about. I think most countries do have these

youth structures but the problem that is there is also the slowness of the implementation.

They are there but most of them are not working. So, Mr. President, clearly, I have the support of the Members. From the debates, it was very clear that the support is overwhelming. Thank you, Mr. President.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: I put the question that the report of the Standing Committee on Gender Equality, Women's Advancement and Youth Development be now adopted.

Motion put and agreed to.

Motion with leave, adopted.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: It is now breaking time, a health break. I would like to ask everyone to return at half past eleven. Thank you very much.

[HEALTH BREAK 1057 hours]

Business resumed at 1145 hours

THE HON. PRESIDENT: The Secretary will read the third order.

MOTION

ADOPTION OF REPORT OF JOINT SITTING OF STANDING COMMITTEES

THE HON. PRESIDENT: The Report of the Joint Sitting of Standing Committees is being moved by Hon. Khati of Lesotho.

HON. M. KHATI [LESOTHO]: Thank you very much, Mr. President. I beg to move that this Plenary Assembly do adopt the Report on the Joint Sitting of Standing Committees to the 58th Plenary Assembly of the SADC Parliamentary Forum tabled on the 2nd of December 2025. I so move.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Any seconder?

PT.

HON. RUTH ADRIANO MENDES (ANGOLA): Senhor Presidente, eu sou Ruth Mendes de Angola e vou apoiar a adopção do Relatório da sessão conjunta das comissões permanentes do Fórum Parlamentar da SADC. Submeto.

EN.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. I call upon Hon. Khati to present the report.

HON. M. KHATI [LESOTHO]: Thank you very much, Mr. President. Before I get into the presentation of the report, I would like to say that the youth of Botswana are indeed blessed. Through you, Hon. Minister of Youth, the leadership of young people will no longer be undermined. You are disproving the two stereotypes that have existed for quite a long time ; that young people cannot lead and that women cannot lead. You are breaking both of them. Thank you very much. – [*Applause*] –

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Congratulations!

HON. M. KHATI [LESOTHO]: Mr. President, the Report of the Joint Sitting of Standing Committees contains a lot of information but in presenting it here today for Members' appreciation, I will merely speak to some of the salient highlights of the report. A copy of the full report has been shared with Hon. Members and it actually deliberates on the issues that the Standing Committee has already addressed, reports that we have received over the past two days.

Mr. President, in the quest to promote regional integration, socioeconomic development and peace and security in consonance with its

agenda, SADC has adopted various protocols covering different thematic areas. Needless to say, the benefits of these regional instruments can only flow to the citizens of SADC, who are the intended beneficiaries. Once the instruments are signed, they are ratified, acceded to, domesticated and implemented in our Member States. It is therefore worrisome that despite the Member States agreeing in principle and commissioning the development of these instruments, the pace of ratification of some of these instruments has been extremely slow.

Mr. President, noting that Parliamentarians have a crucial role to play in the ratification process as advocates and representatives of the people, the Forum's Standing Committee convened ahead of the 58th Plenary Assembly in a capacity-building session aimed at empowering and equipping Parliamentarians to actively advocate for the domestication and implementation of the SADC protocols in their respective countries, among other things.

The overarching objective of this engagement was to enhance the capacity of Parliamentarians to undertake their legislative functions regarding the regional Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), commitments embodied in the SADC protocols and policy instruments to ensure that they are ratified, domesticated and implemented promptly for the ultimate benefit of SADC citizens. The sessions, therefore, considered the importance of ratification and domestication of the SADC protocols as an accountability mechanism for regional commitments.

Mr. President, the Plenary may recall that in July 2017, during the 41st Plenary Assembly held in Seychelles, the SADC Parliamentary Forum's

Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus championed a historic milestone in regional advocacy for adopting the Mahe Declaration on safe abortions. Through this declaration, the Plenary Assembly called for the decriminalisation of abortion across the region and the development of a model law on safe abortions, calling for the harmonisation of national laws with regional and international human rights standards. In this vein, the declaration calls for the development of a model law on safe abortions, which is envisaged to place the needs of adolescent girls and young women at the centre by advancing age-appropriate, rights-based policies designed to safeguard health and strengthen their autonomy.

Mr. President, it is of grave concern that about nine of SADC's protocols have not yet entered into force. It is of grave concern that even the agreement on the operationalisation of the SADC Regional Development Fund has been ratified by only three Member States.

Mr. President, the deliberations during the joint session underscored the urgent need for the harmonisation of legal frameworks, effective policy reforms and integrated data monitoring systems. Noting the over-dependence on donor funding, which poses a threat to the programme's sustainability, there was also a call for budgetary commitments coupled with reinforced accountability systems, including the routine use of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms informed by data and youth feedback.

Mr. President, the joint session made the following recommendations to the 58th Plenary Assembly:

- To urge SADC Parliamentary Forum Member Parliaments to advocate for the adoption of legislation of SADC's SRHR strategy as a national road map;
- To implore SADC National Parliaments to review and harmonise the age of marriage and the age of consent laws, aligning the marriage of 18 years and addressing contradictory provisions affecting adolescents' SRHR in their respective countries, as we realise that there are still inconsistencies across different Member States;
- To further urge SADC Parliamentary Forum Member Parliaments to call on their governments to map and address gaps between gender-based violence (GBV) laws and available health, legal and psychosocial services;
- To reiterate that the SADC legislatures must leverage their oversight mandates to ensure that SRHR policies uphold human rights principles, non-discrimination, privacy, informed consent and safe abortions.
- The Committee recommends that the Plenary calls on SADC Parliaments to promote inclusive policy-making processes through stakeholder consultations and public participation.
- It implores SADC Member Parliaments to enact and amend laws to ensure rights-based, safe and accessible abortions in line with regional and international commitments.
- The session further recommends that SADC Parliaments encourage their governments to ensure adequate budgetary

allocations for abortion-related care, contraception, training and data systems.

- The Committee recommends that the Plenary persuade SADC National Parliaments to engage in regional dialogue on the health and human rights impact of unsafe abortions and promote legal frameworks across the SADC to reduce maternal deaths, enhance reproductive rights and advance gender equality.
- The Committee further recommends that the Plenary urges SADC Member Parliaments to advocate for the acceleration of legal reforms for the harmonisation of all relevant laws governing marriage, sexual consent and SRHR services to remove inconsistencies and exceptions that undermine child protection efforts.
- The Committee recommends that the Plenary calls upon SADC Parliamentary Members to strengthen institutional and parliamentary capacity by investing in training for Parliamentarians, judicial officers, social service providers and law enforcement officials to enhance the understanding and effective application of SRHR and child marriage laws.
- The Committee requests the Plenary to encourage SADC Member States to advocate for increased allocation and strategic distribution of national resources across Ministries of Health, Ministries of Education, Justice and Gender to support comprehensive interventions started in child marriage, SRHR work towards sustainable domestic financing.

- Mr. President, the Committee recommends that the Plenary advises SADC Member States to promote awareness and cultural change initiatives by leading and supporting campaigns that engage communities, traditional leaders and religious institutions to dispel harmful norms and practices sustaining child marriage and barriers of access to SRHR.
- It further appeals to the Plenary to request SADC Member Parliaments to institutionalise meaningful youth engagements through the creation of parliamentary frameworks and platforms to incorporate the voices of the youth through policy cycles, ensuring policies are responsive and inclusive of adolescents' rights and needs.
- Lastly, Mr. President, the Committee requests the Plenary to encourage SADC Member States to utilise the digital dashboard to strengthen their legislative and oversight roles, endorse budgetary appropriations informed by real-time data and heighten public engagement and advocacy inspired by robust evidence.

Mr. President, at this juncture, allow me to conclude by saying that the joint session was an important capacity-building opportunity for the Members of Parliament. The focus of the joint session on the ratification of SADC protocols was timely, as it touched on matters that are pivotal to the core business of the SADC Parliamentary Forum as set out in the constitutive documents.

I therefore wish to place on record the Forum's gratitude to our partners and resource persons whose support made the joint sitting possible. I must also commend the Secretary-General and her team for this initiative and for the excellent arrangements made in terms of the facilitation of this engagement.

Mr. President, with this, I request that this Plenary adopts the Report on the Joint Sitting of the Standing Committees of the SADC Parliamentary Forum. Thank you. – [*Applause*] -

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Honourable. I shall now allow the seconder to debate the motion.

PT.

HON. RUTH ADRIANO MENDES (ANGOLA): Senhor Presidente, todo o Protocolo observado.

Permita-me saudar o Proponente desta Resolução pela clareza e eloquência durante a apresentação do mesmo.

Nesta conformidade, vou tecer breves considerações para enfatizar pontos que expressam o meu apoio ao Projecto de Resolução.

Senhor Presidente

A sessão conjunta das comissões permanentes registou com preocupação os desafios persistentes e críticos enfrentados na adolescência, particularmente, as raparigas e as jovens, incluindo taxas elevadas de mortalidade materna e incidências generalizadas de gravidez precoce indesejada.

Esses desafios perturbam a trajectória do ensino e limitam as oportunidades económicas. Além disso, o impacto desproporcional do HIV e

SIDA nesta faixa etária é alarmante e é agravado pela violência de género generalizada que afectou as jovens em todos os Estados-membros.

Senhor Presidente

Permita-me salientar, ainda, que o aborto inseguro é reconhecido em toda a região da SADC como uma emergência de saúde pública e uma questão de direitos humanos, contribuindo significativamente para a mortalidade materna, particularmente entre as populações vulneráveis, nomeadamente, as adolescentes e as jovens.

Infelizmente, os dados disponíveis também nos indicam que as adolescentes e as jovens entre 15 e 24 anos, especialmente as residentes nas áreas rurais e com poucos recursos são as que enfrentam as taxas mais elevadas de gravidez precoce indesejada.

Este facto reforça a correlação entre aborto inseguro, pobreza e desigualdade.

Senhor Presidente

A sessão conjunta constatou, ainda, que embora as taxas de aborto sejam semelhantes em todos os países tanto desenvolvidos como em vias de desenvolvimento os resultados são muito diferentes.

A grande maioria das mortes e complicações decorrentes de procedimentos inseguros ocorrem nos países em desenvolvimento. Pelo contrário, o aborto seguro, apoiaria objectivos de desenvolvimento mais amplos como saúde, igualdade de género e crescimento económico e está em consonância com os objectivos de desenvolvimento sustentável 3, 5, 8 e 10.

Os desafios identificados em matéria de saúde e direitos sexuais e reprodutivos são imensos, incluindo lacunas no acesso e os elevados níveis

prevalecentes de mortalidade materna. Todos eles sublinham a urgência de intervenções políticas específicas.

A sessão conjunta voltou a enfatizar a necessidade da solidariedade regional e destacou o papel crucial dos parlamentos na fiscalização legislativa, na defesa e na promoção da implementação de compromissos regionais, continentais e internacionais para promover os direitos dos cidadãos.

Neste sentido, os parlamentos devem desempenhar o seu papel fundamental de responsabilizar os governos nacionais pelos compromissos assumidos ao nível internacional.

Não gostaria de terminar, sem realçar algumas palavras sobre o quadro de monitorização e avaliação elaborada pelo Fórum e seus parceiros como uma ferramenta de monitorização da implementação da Lei-modelo da SADC sobre a erradicação do casamento prematuro e a protecção dos menores em casamento.

Apelo a todos os parlamentos membros do Fórum Parlamentar da SADC para apoiarem essa iniciativa, incentivando os seus governos nacionais a prestarem apoio através da actualização do quadro de indicadores, de modo a garantir que este Diploma de informações actualizadas provenientes de organismos estatísticos e de dados reconhecidos, a fim de garantir a sua relevância e legitimidade.

Com estas palavras, Senhor Presidente, reitero o apoio actual ao Projecto de Resolução. Muito obrigada.

EN.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Thank you, Hon. Mendes. I now open the floor for debate, starting with South Africa.

HON. A. T. DIDIZA [SOUTH AFRICA]: Mr. President, I would like to thank the mover and the seconder of the motion on the report of the Joint Standing Committee, who highlighted clearly some of the issues that the Joint Standing Committee had deliberated on which also includes the evaluation of progress or nonprogress that has been made in terms of implementing some of the decisions that we take as this Forum.

I want to start by indicating that on the important issue that has been raised, particularly that relates to abortion, South Africa passed legislation in 1997, the Choice of Pregnancy Act, to allow for safe abortion, particularly for women and where it may be a young girl underage, with the support of their families. This is important not only for the safe procedures but it also prevents unnecessary deaths that happen as a result of backstreet abortion. Also, it saves women's health for the future and, indeed, for the present. I do think that this is a matter that, even if we have legislation, it is a continuous engagement within our communities that must still be undertaken.

I also want to indicate that section 12(2)(a), of our Bill of Rights does provide for reproductive rights, which also includes women to have rights in terms of reproductive health and also choices that they may want to make.

As we all know, legislation or even constitutions with a Bill of Rights are not the only guarantee. Public education remains important. Enforcement remains critical. Resourcing also becomes important, particularly to ensure that facilities such as our hospitals and clinics are

better resourced to be able to deal with such needs in terms of reproductive health and choice of pregnancy.

I also want to indicate that, as a country, we have passed legislation in 2006 that prohibits child marriages. Again, the same will apply, that more education at the community level to indicate why such Acts impede the growth of young women and young children. It is also a matter where honest discussions need to be held with our traditional leaders to ensure that our customs and culture also appreciate the realities that such choices or such actions, at times, hurt the lives of young girls.

On the promotion of youth development, I want to indicate that as a country, we do have various initiatives that seek to ensure that young people participate at various levels of decision-making. For instance, the promotion of young Parliamentarians is one such Act. Annually, around June, Parliament has a Youth Parliament where not only our young Parliamentarians from the National Assembly or provinces but also youth formations participate, so that we can take into consideration the views of young people. I do appreciate the Chairperson, that more still needs to be done. With these few interventions, I would like to support the motion. I thank you.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: South Africa again.

HON. B. S. MADIKIZELA [SOUTH AFRICA]: Mr. President, again, my name is Bonginkosi Madikizela. I am a Member of the SA Parliament. I also rise in support of this report and want to add from where my Speaker left off. I think there was a lot of controversy when this law was passed, allowing teenagers to access health clinics without the consent of their parents. I

think what we have been witnessing is that several young girls suffer in the hands of their fathers, their uncles, their relatives.

We realise that, as a country, if you are going to say a young girl must get permission to access those facilities, the chances are that the young girl might die without getting help because you would find that the perpetrator is a father or an uncle.

I think again about the issue of child marriages, I appreciate the report again by the Chairperson. I do believe that as Member States, we really need to keep a very close eye on the performances of the various countries within the Southern African Development Community, SADC Region because even though we have committed, as this body, to end child marriage and we have adopted a nonbinding model law on eradicating child marriage and protecting children already in marriage (EN | FR | PT)s, I think some of the legislation that exists in our countries is not going far enough to make sure that we deal with this.

In some countries that are members of SADC, this issue is still as prevalent as it is, with some countries having between 50-56% of child marriages. I think it is high time, really, colleagues, that even though we have this nonbinding model law, we take it upon ourselves to get the report regularly on some of these treaties and model laws that we have signed, so that we can hold each other accountable. I submit, President. Thank you. - [*Applause.*]

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Let us hear from the third Member of South Africa.

HON. N. V. MENTE-NKUNA [SOUTH AFRICA]: Mr. President, I greet everyone once more. I as well rise to support the report with the observations that I would outline. In terms of the Member States that are urged to accelerate their ratification and domestication of SADC protocols and other legal instruments to ensure their national level of implementation, at the centre of it, we have the SADC Regional Development Fund, which is very much delayed, unjustifiable and with only three countries that have signed it and the rest could not explain as to why.

Mr. President, we need a very radical shift in terms of accountability. We cannot always come here and persuade people to ratify, domesticate and implement everything that we sit here and agree on. Yet, we come back here without any of the implementation but no one takes account of that. No country ever stands up to explain why you have not done it. While that is always accurate to persuade each other, the observation might lack the deeper analysis into why these delays and challenges are persisting in these countries.

Perhaps they can tell us if the delays are bureaucratic in terms of the State's inefficiencies in officials like Lesotho, as he was explaining earlier on why the comments could not be submitted. Is it a political will? Is it a lack of national capacity or conflicting national priorities? How do we remedy that situation? Does it require our intervention or a resolution that we can take and persuade our Heads of State to persuade each other and to realise that the cause that we are on is serious?

For instance, unsafe abortions are killing our young girls who fall prey to perverts, monsters and molesters who get away with murder by not decriminalising abortions. Through insistence on coupling safe abortions with exceptions, that we will give you a safe abortion in an exception of, we create an enabling environment for young girls and sometimes boys who fall prey to their family members and cannot access safe abortions. Hence, the high number of young girls who are today committing suicide. We are not creating an enabling environment for our young girls to be free, to be liberated to make decisions.

Again, if we want to create a space for advocacy, we need to be very clear about what we are advocating for. If we advocate for resource allocation, it is a common call that resources are very limited. But why and where are we going to place them? Therefore, I would like to implore our drafters that every report must carry the details of strategies in terms of how we overcome potential national budget limitations or the competing priorities within the Member States, so that we can find a common ground on how we approach or rather, a guided document on what the priorities are in the immediate.

Then also, when we resolve on what is going to benefit in the immediate, we must have measurable targets in terms of, if we come in the next session, what targets should we have already achieved. We do not want to come to the next session in Seychelles and still be told that some young girls cannot access safe abortions. So, we need measurable targets. We need

measurable results. We do not only need to hammer on; things must be done. Yet, people come back here with nothing done. Thank you very much.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: I call upon Botswana.

HON. D. KEORAPETSE [BOTSWANA]: Mr. President, this platform presents a strategic opportunity to reaffirm our collective commitment to sexual and reproductive health and rights, SRHR, as a human right, a development imperative and a powerful driver of economic growth.

We have made commendable progress in improving access to SRHR services in Botswana. We have expanded family planning coverage, integrated human immunodeficiency virus (HIV and reproductive health services and introduced youth-friendly health facilities in over 40 locations. We are also exploring innovative solutions, such as drone-assisted delivery of maternal health commodities in hard-to-reach areas.

I wish to express strong support for the recommendation calling upon Member States to align gender-based violence (GBV) legislation with the full continuum of health, psychological and social protection pathways. Too often in our region, GBV laws criminalise the offense but do not adequately map, mandate or fund the support systems that must surround a survivor from the moment violence occurs. And this results in fragmented care, inconsistent referrals and long delays that compound trauma.

In Botswana, we are in the final stages of introducing a comprehensive GBV law precisely to address these gaps. The new frameworks seek to unify our response architecture, ensuring that legal provisions are directly tied to the availability of multidisciplinary services, emergency medical support,

mental health and psychological, psychosocial counselling, social protection interventions, shelters and coordinated case management. The intention is clear. The law must not stand apart from the services. It must guarantee access, regular delivery and strengthen accountability.

We nonetheless continue to face persistent challenges, including our maternal mortality ratio, which remains unacceptably high at 175,5 deaths per 100 000 live births, as recorded in 2022. Teenage pregnancies are also rising, with over 7,5 girls aged 10 to 19 falling pregnant in 2023.

There are also challenges of access to contraceptives and HIV prevention tools, particularly among adolescents and young women. This remains limited and stigma around emergency contraception and sexual health services continues to hinder progress.

We are proud of several initiatives that reflect Botswana's commitment to innovation in health service delivery. Integration of family planning with HIV care, the rollout of the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine and cervical cancer screening, the strengthening of maternal death surveillance and response systems, capacity building for emergency obstetric and newborn care and the establishment of youth-friendly health centres and our partnerships with the World Health Organisation (WHO), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and civil society for technical and programmatic support.

Of course, we still have a challenge with the Marriage Amendment. There are instructions from a private member with the intention to rectify this issue of child marriages so that marriage can only occur at 18 and that there are no exceptions, as is currently the case in our laws.

Affiliation proceedings, including the deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) will also be amended so that DNA can be done for as long as the child is below 18 because there is currently a restriction that caps the age at five.

The recent labour law, which has been passed by Parliament, has increased maternity leave and introduced parental and paternity leave for the first time in the history of our country. We have paternity and parental leave.

On safe abortion, the law is still backwards, like in some countries. The male-dominated Parliaments are still refusing to legislate for safer abortion, especially for our young women. This has put a burden on our healthcare system, which continues to treat such cases of unsafe abortion attempts.

The Superior Court of Record in Botswana has recently pronounced on the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual/aromatic, plus, LGBTQI+, that it is now legal in Botswana, despite what the written law says.

That law has been struck off as unconstitutional and now the rights are there. The fight against period poverty continues, with the government having decided to provide sanitary towels in schools. Thank you so much, Mr. President. I submit. I really appreciate it.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Namibia, you have the floor.

HON. S. KUUGONGELWA-AMADHILA [NAMIBIA]: Hon. President, I am Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila, Speaker of the National Assembly of Namibia. I would like to record Namibia's support for this report.

The matter of abortion, unfortunately, polarised many of our communities, with those who are in support of it and those who are

vehemently against it. The need for abortion, unfortunately arises for the most part because of several factors, such as limited or lack of access to reproductive health services to empower our communities to make the correct choices because of things like rape, including statutory rape, that result in unwanted pregnancies and thus the demand for backyard abortion, even if we continue to criminalise abortion, unfortunately and because of poverty.

It is thus of utmost importance that our policies address the underlying factors that drive the demand for abortion. Without doing that, there is a risk of dangerous backyard abortions that pose a risk to the lives of many young people, especially young girls.

It is also important that the adoption systems in our countries are strengthened so that those young people that may not be prepared to become parents have an alternative to give up these children for adoption and that young women are supported to return to school if they give birth because some of them are afraid if they do not terminate the pregnancy, then they can no longer continue with their education.

Furthermore, development programmes should recognise the importance of support to vulnerable communities through social grants by the government to those who cannot take care of themselves but also by mobilising the corporate sector to invest in corporate social responsibilities to bring along our communities, who are an asset to them and their economies.

So, Namibia supports the report. Thank you.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: South Africa!

HON. D. M. SKOSANA [SOUTH AFRICA]: My name is David Skosana. I am a Member of Parliament of South Africa. I just wanted to say that the issue of child pregnancy in South Africa, especially with adolescent girls, is a cause for concern because the prevalence has increased from Sub-Saharan Africa to where we are sitting now.

I must say that it can be prevented as well, as we are encouraging the boy child as well, not only the girl child. The social fabric has collapsed and we must accept that we need to improve our interaction with our kids, particularly the young ones. It is so embarrassing to find that we have children as young as 10 who are pregnant all over Africa and the world. I must emphasise that we are adopting this report; however, we have to improve, as one of my colleagues has already said that when we meet again, hopefully, this message that we are discussing here will filter into our society as well. It should not just end here; we need to encourage government departments and there must be social cohesion in this matter. Otherwise, we will be complaining for many decades to come and it will not stop. We have to protect our children. You can imagine a child having a child at the age of 10 or 15 and in some countries, some are getting married too early. I must also say that cultures are not the same but we must protect the young ones as parents and as SADC. We need to make sure that we are preaching this to our society and those who are vulnerable and not with us here. I thank you, Chair.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Eswatini!

HON. M. MASILELA [ESWATINI]: Mr. President, I appreciate the progress that has been made on the model prison law and child marriage,

which I say has benefited a lot and also the redress on Gender-Based Violence, which has been a pandemic to everyone.

Mr. President, in my opinion, abortion is a complex and sensitive issue. According to our cultural and religious beliefs, I wonder if it will work for us truly. Inasmuch as I understand the choice of termination of pregnancy in South Africa and their law, they mentioned from 1996, I agree with that but according to us, religiously as Christians, we label ourselves under this congregation. I am asking, will it work?

I know you guys agree but I totally disagree with all of you in terms of my religious beliefs. I would just propose that maybe we move from criminalising it and make it in a way that one would understand. But then again, going back to my country, I know it is a very religious country with cultural beliefs. South Africans know where I come from. I would request that we domesticate abortion.

Mr. President, with Madam SG, you would better come to Eswatini and and then we can talk about it. I am an elected Member of Parliament and I know that as soon as I start talking about this, you will not see me again; I will be voted out. I am telling you. I am just looking at the larger proportion of the congregation, the pastors and everyone, including my beliefs. I promise you that I will be out of Parliament as soon as I start talking about this issue.

Pertaining to the issue of climate change, they will refer to this. They will tell you that climate changes is because of God and what we are doing. So, Mr. President, if you want this to go ahead, you had better come to my country, Eswatini and advocate for this. Madam SG, I will just follow you

and then we can domesticate it afterwards. Thank you, Mr. President. – *[Applause]* -

THE HON. PRESIDENT: I now call on Hon. Khati to respond.

HON. M. F. KHATI [LESOTHO]: Thank you very much, Mr. President. First, I would like to thank Hon. Mendes, who seconded the adoption of the report and thank all Hon. Members who engaged in the debate around the issues that were raised in the report.

I would particularly want to highlight a few things that were mentioned and reiterated by specific Hon. Members, speaking of the comment that came through the Hon. Speaker of South Africa, where she really emphasised public education enforcement and resourcing of our legislative efforts. I believe this by itself will then answer the question and the scepticism that the Hon. Member from Eswatini just raised right now.

We are dealing with topics of social concern and topics that actually become very difficult to engage with but we need to put so much emphasis and importance on engaging our communities, the electorate, our community leaders, our religious leaders, to make them understand how pertinent these issues are, regardless of any reservations that may come based on our cultural differences and everything. We need to be firm about the social and economic impacts that we witness every day, brought by issues around abortion.

Not decriminalising abortion does not get us to a point where abortions do not happen. I think it is an overview that if they are happening, we need to ensure that those who need those services are getting them safely in a way that we do not continue to lose lives as we are doing. However, we

acknowledge the fact that this is a very sensitive topic that needs further engagement and further education for us to be able to achieve the results.

We also had an Honourable from Namibia who also mentioned the very same topic that I am talking about, that abortion will continue to happen if we do not decriminalise it and we will continue to be putting our young women at risk because some of the drivers and causes that lead to these young girls needing to abort are persisting. Issues such as poverty and many other things that are not being addressed. So, we really need to look at it holistically and try to see how we can address the issue of abortion.

Hon. Madikizela also raised an issue of safety from family members who tend to be perpetrators of abortion to these young people. So, if we are going to still request a young person to get an abortion and get permission from their elders, either being parents or relatives, who could potentially be the perpetrators that have put these young people into the situation, that is also one of the limitations that remain and need to be addressed. Overally, Hon. Members engaged in support of this report and I thank you so much, Hon. Members of the Committee and those who are not members of the Committee. I thank you all for your engagement. Thank you.

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Thank you. I put the question that the report be adopted.

Motion put and agreed to.

Motion with leave, adopted.

THE HON. PRESIDENT'S RULINGS

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Hon. Members, during the course of the 58th Plenary Assembly, several points of order were raised concerning the

practice and the procedure governing the sitting of the SADC Plenary Forum.

I have duly considered this matter and now issue my ruling in accordance with Rule 32 (7) of the rules of procedure (EN | FR | PT).

Guiding principles: In reaching my determinations, I was guided by the Constitution of the SADC Parliamentary Forum (EN | FR | PT), the rules of procedure (EN | FR | PT) and the policy direction of the Plenary Assembly as the highest policy organ of the Forum.

In particular, I rely upon the resolution of the 35th Plenary Assembly Session held in Grand Bay in Mauritius from 23 to 28 June 2014, which resolved that the Forum should henceforth operate like a Parliament.

That the resolution marked the Forum's formal transition from concluding in business in conference style and embracing established parliamentary procedure in preparation for its transformation into a fully-fledged SADC Parliament.

Determination: The Assembly, recognising the diversity of parliamentary tradition across the SADC region, resolved to adopt an integrity approach to parliamentary practice.

This approach incorporated the diverse traditions in trans-inclusive and modern practice and established a hybrid parliamentary system reflective of Members of Parliament.

Accordingly, all the ruling issues here are according to the resolution and the principle that the practice of the Forum must remain inclusive, adaptive and consistent with the transformation agenda.

Point of order raised by the head of delegation of Angola, Hon. Pedro Sebastiao:

Primary clarification: I wish to apologise for the interpretation difficulty that arose when Hon. Sebastiao initially raised his point of order.

To answer clearly and the common understanding, I should provide further explanation for the Hon. Member, for which I am grateful.

Inclusivity and freedom of conscience: I sincerely thank Hon. Sebastiao for commending the Forum's inclusive practice, allowing Members to observe silence or meditation before commencement of sitting.

This practice recognises the religious diversity of the SADC region and the most attractive Forum's strong commitment to tolerance, inclusivity, and mutual respect.

It is full of the values espoused in the Constitution and the strategic plan for the SADC Parliamentary Forum.

I reaffirm that the Forum remains committed to further unify parliamentary culture that safeguards the freedom of conscience and ensures that all the Members feel respected and adequately represented in its proceedings.

Institutions at the high table: I further thank Hon. Sebastiao for commanding the revised seating arrangement at the high table. Under the current arrangement, the Secretary-General sits in proximity to the President, enabling timely, discreet and seamless consultation during the seating.

This replaces the previous arrangement where the Secretary-General sat with the Clerks-At-The Table. This refined arrangement enhances

procedural efficiency, maintains decorum and strengthens institutional coordination. I have re-ruled that this practice has been formally institutionalised with immediate effect.

The seating arrangement of the Vice-President: Concern raised - I acknowledge the concern raised by Hon. Sebastiao regarding the seating arrangement of the Vice-President of the Forum.

This concern is valid and is appreciated for the constructive contribution to our strengthening institutional protocol.

Guiding consideration: The matter is receiving active consideration with a view to ensuring that the seating arrangement reflects both the statute and the functional rules of the Vice-President.

In so doing, due regard shall be given to establish parliamentary practice.

The Forum shall draw from the diverse parliamentary tradition of Members of Parliament to inform harmonious site protocol practice.

Determination: The seating arrangement of the Vice-President shall be reviewed. Any adjustments shall uphold the current heresy and institutional efficiency.

The Assembly is assured that this matter will be addressed with due regard to parliamentary integrity and evolving best practice.

Point of order raised by Hon. Member from South Africa on dress code: The Hon. Member from South Africa raised a point of order concerning the wearing of a cap in the House. The matter was duly considered in light of the rules of procedure (EN | FR | PT).

Applicable Rules: The current rules of procedure (EN | FR | PT) are silent on the matter relating to the dress code. In the absence of an applicable provision, no procedure breach can be established. Nonetheless, Members are reminded that parliamentary decorum requires conduct befitting the dignity of the House.

Determination: While no breach according to the existing rules, the concern raised is both valid and constructive. The Forum will be considering strengthening the guidelines concerning dress standards.

In doing so, the Forum shall draw up applicable traditions from across the region.

A formal proposal will be submitted at the Plenary Assembly in accordance with established procedure.

The objective of the reform will be to formally approve dignity and respect in the conduct of the procedure. Thank you very much. – [*Applause*]

Now we have a break time for 10 minutes and we return here at 1 o'clock for the closing ceremony. Thank you very much. I really appreciate it. – [*Applause.*]

[*Health Break 1250 hours*]

Business resumed at 1302 hours

THE HON. PRESIDENT: I invite the Host Speaker, Hon. Angela Thokozile Didiza, to present the Communique for the 58th Planetary Assembly. - [*Applause.*] -

PRESENTATION OF THE COMMUNIQUÉ FOR THE 58TH PLENARY ASSEMBLY

HON. A. T. DIDIZA [SOUTH AFRICA]: Thank you President, Vice President of the Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum, Members of the Executive of the SADC Parliamentary Forum present, all Speakers of the SADC Parliament present hear, all South African Speakers, Deputy Speakers, all delegates from the provincial legislatures, Members of Parliament, Secretaries of Parliament led by Secretary Boemo, who is the Secretary of SADC Parliamentary Forum, honoured guests, ladies and gentlemen.

I present to you the Communique of SADC Parliamentary Forum's 58th Plenary Assembly, which started here in KwaZulu-Natal, Province, eThekwini Metro, from 30 November to 5 December 2025, under the theme: "*The Impact of Climate Change on Women and Youth in the SADC Region and the Role of Parliaments in Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation*".

The Plenary Assembly was attended by 14 of the 15 SADC PF Member Parliaments, namely, Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The Parliament of the United Republic of Tanzania tendered its apology.

The Plenary Assembly was also attended by representatives from partner organisations, including civil society, Members of Parliament from the Parliament of South Africa, who participated as observers, delegates from the KwaZulu-Natal Legislature, the South African Legislative Sector, eThekwini Municipality, Toyota South Africa, who presented on the theme,

as well as the academia, including the Thabo Mbeki African School of Public and International Affairs at UNISA.

The Plenary Assembly was officially opened by His Excellency Mr. Paul Mashatile, the Acting President at the time, of the Republic of South Africa, and South Africa's Deputy President, who called for collective parliamentary action to address climate change, particularly its impact on women and youth. He highlighted key outcomes of the Group of Twenty (G20) Summit hosted by South Africa, including progress on climate resilience, energy access, food security and youth empowerment, commending SADC's efforts to develop regional climate strategies.

The Acting President emphasised the need for gender-responsive legislation, alignment of policies with international frameworks and stronger oversight. Citing South Africa's 2024 Climate Change Act, the Acting President urged Parliaments to allocate resources effectively, promote accountability and ensure inclusive, people-centred climate policies.

The President of the SADC PF and Speaker of the Parliament of Madagascar, Hon. Randrianasoloniaiko Siteny Thierry, emphasised the Plenary Assembly's role in promoting democracy, good governance and regional integration, while commending South Africa's leadership in championing the establishment of a SADC Parliament.

He reaffirmed the Forum's commitment to inter-parliamentary cooperation and citizen participation, reiterated its readiness to evolve into a fully-fledged Parliament, anchored on strong governance and professional management systems and called for support to ratify the protocol to establish the SADC Parliament by August 2026.

In her welcome address, Hon. Thokozile Didiza, the Speaker of the National Assembly of South Africa, underscored the urgency of collective action on climate change, citing recent climate-related disasters in the SADC region and stressed the need for climate-resilient policies and parliamentary leadership through legislation, oversight and gender-responsive budgeting. Reflecting on the Conference of the Parties, COP30, outcomes, including: "Global Mutirao Decision" and the just transition mechanism. The Host Speaker called for harmonised legislative action across the SADC Member States to advance climate mitigation, adaptation and inclusive development.

The Secretary-General of the SADC PF, Her Excellency Boemo Sekgoma, in her introductory statement, paid tribute to South Africa's visionary leadership in global and regional affairs under the stewardship of President Cyril Ramaphosa and highlighted eThekwini's legacy as a symbol of resilience and pan-African unity. Characterising climate change as a daily reality, she called for urgent, innovative and bold parliamentary action rooted in regional solidarity and the legacy of the Frontline States. The Secretary General welcomed the Plenary Assembly's diverse representation, with 40.6% of the 69 Parliamentarians in attendance being female.

Hon. Princess N. Mojapelo from the Southern Africa Youth Parliament, representing the youth, reaffirmed the vital role of young people in shaping policy in the SADC region, commended the SADC PF's youth-inclusive practices and called for investment in youth leadership to address challenges such as unemployment, exclusion, conflict, gender-based violence and climate change. She welcomed the establishment of the SADC PF Youth Caucus, urged Parliaments to enact bold, inclusive legislation and

concluded by declaring that youth are not leaders in waiting but leaders in motion.

The Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus, RWPC, as it is known, interim Chairperson, Hon. Senator Dr. Lindiwe Nxumalo, commemorated the 2025 16 Days of Activism campaign by honouring iconic KwaZulu-Natal women leaders, Queen Nandi, Charlotte Maxeke and Dorothy Nyembe and called for urgent action against digital violence, gender-based violence and climate vulnerability.

The RWPC Interim Chairperson urged the domestication of the SADC PF Model Laws on GBV and Child Marriage, she also urged for the adoption of climate-smart, as well as gender-responsive legislation, expanded Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), access and full women's representation in all decision-making bodies, while commending South Africa's leadership through its National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide and the recognition of GBV as a national crisis.

The Plenary Assembly expressed profound concern over the escalating impact of climate change in the SADC region, including intensified droughts, devastating floods, tropical cyclones and rising sea levels, which threaten food security, water access, public health, and socioeconomic stability, thereby undermining the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the SADC's regional integration agenda.

The Plenary Assembly acknowledged that climate change is neither gender neutral nor generation blind, recognising that women and youth bear a disproportionate burden due to pre-existing socioeconomic inequalities,

reliance on climate-sensitive resources and limited access to decision-making, finance and technology.

The Plenary Assembly resolved to prioritise parliamentary oversight and promote regional policy harmonisation to combat the climate crisis, safeguarding citizens and aligning climate action with the developmental aspirations of the SADC region, as outlined in the SADC Vision 2050, the African Union: Agenda 2063 (EN | FR | PT), the outcomes of the 2025 G20 Summit and COP30.

The Plenary Assembly reaffirmed the critical interlinkages between climate change and health and sexual and reproductive health and rights, noting that climate-induced disasters disrupt healthcare systems, restrict access to essential SRHR services and heighten the risk of maternal mortality, gender-based violence, child marriage and the spread of HIV/AIDS.

The Plenary Assembly reaffirmed the central role of Parliaments in enacting climate-responsive legislation, approving climate-sensitive budgets, and strengthening oversight, whilst emphasising the need for dedicated climate research funding and the urgent adoption of gender-responsive, youth-sensitive policy that recognises women and youth as key agents of change.

The Plenary Assembly underscored the importance of strong parliamentary oversight to ensure transparency and accountability in climate finance, whilst promoting innovative financing for a just transition, and urged Member Parliaments to integrate climate resilience into national

policies on agriculture, water management and energy in response to threats to food sovereignty and water security.

The Plenary Assembly commended Member Parliaments for their progress in implementing previous resolutions and exercising effective oversight over the Executive. It further applauded the comprehensive country reports presented, reflecting a strong commitment to peer learning, mutual accountability and advancing the SADC Parliamentary Forum's strategic objective of strengthening the implementation capacity of the SADC.

The Plenary Assembly adopted reports of Standing Committees, the joint sitting of Standing Committees and the Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus (RWPC) and accordingly called for parliamentary action to address the regional energy deficit by urging National Parliaments to prioritise the ratification and domestication of the SADC Energy Protocol, strengthen oversight of its implementation and regional power pool integration and utilise their budgetary authority to approve strategic investment in renewable energy and grid modernisation to promote a just energy transition.

It also reaffirmed the critical role of Parliamentarians in election observation for democratic consolidation, called for predictable funding and increased parliamentary participation in SADC Parliamentary Forum election observer missions and urged the institutionalisation of SADC Electoral Observer Mission funding within the national budgets of Member Parliaments. It encouraged Member Parliaments to strengthen oversight of anticorruption strategies, advocate for the ratification of the SADC Protocol

on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation (EN | FR | PT) and lead the revision of the SADC Model Law on Elections (EN | FR | PT) to address contemporary challenges such as cybersecurity, digital disinformation and the conduct of elections during public health emergencies.

It also expressed strong support for the RWPC's advocacy for gender-responsive climate action and encouraged Member Parliaments to ensure that climate policies and financing are guided by robust gender analysis, supported by gender-disaggregated data in carbon markets and reinforced by strengthened oversight to hold implementing agencies accountable to gender inclusion standards.

It also commended the landmark benchmarking visit to Lesotho by the Regional Parliamentary Model Law Oversight Committee and urged Member Parliaments to institutionalise similar peer learning processes to support the domestication of SADC model laws, strengthening legal drafting capacity, enhancing multistakeholder collaboration, establishing dedicated budgetary allocation and developing robust monitoring frameworks to translate model laws into tangible outcomes for SADC citizens.

It also commended the ongoing development of the SADC Model Law on Safe Abortion as mandated by the Plenary Assembly and urged Member Parliaments to actively champion it as a vital, harmonised regional framework, whilst facilitating inclusive national consultations on its context-sensitive, rights-based provisions. It urged National Parliaments to advocate for the ratification and domestication of the SADC Gender and Development Protocol, accelerate the adoption of gender-responsive budgeting, strengthen monitoring frameworks, implement reforms to address digital gender-based

violence and promote expanded intergenerational dialogue. It reaffirmed the SADC Parliamentary Forum's commitment to gender equality and youth empowerment and called for the development of a youth development scorecard alongside the institutionalisation of multisectoral engagements and sustained resource allocation to ensure inclusive and effective regional implementation.

It also emphasised the critical need for strengthened parliamentary oversight in the areas of health and labour by urging Parliaments to ensure adequate domestic funding for health protocols and ring-fenced resources for HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis programmes, as well as to expedite the ratification of the SADC Protocol on Employment and Labour (EN | FR | PT). It strongly recommended that the SADC Parliamentary Forum advocate for the elevation of the SADC SRHR strategy into a legally binding protocol to ensure uniform legal reforms, enforceable commitments and mandatory budgetary allocation across Member States, thereby strengthening accountability, enhancing implementation and promoting sustainable progress in SRHR.

It reiterated that regional economic integration relies on effective parliamentary action and urged Member Parliaments, to prioritise the ratification of key trade and industry protocols and their annexures, align national legislation to eliminate non-tariff barriers and enhance oversight of Executive commitments related to regional trade obligations. It also resolved to urge SADC Member Parliaments to fast-track ratification and domestication of the Protocol on the Facilitation of Movement of Persons (EN | FR | PT), align national laws to support regional integration and a unified

investment zone and enhance oversight to ensure timely implementation of related commitments.

The Plenary Assembly adopted the report of the 151st Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly held in Geneva from 19 to 23 October 2025. It also welcomed the active participation of SADC Member Parliaments, acknowledged key outcomes, including the Geneva Declaration on Upholding Humanitarian Norms, the resolution on illegal international adoptions and the call for a female United Nations Secretary General and commended both Member Parliaments for their continued engagement in global processes and the SADC Parliamentary Forum for its effective coordination, which ensures a unified SADC voice within the African geopolitical group.

The Plenary Assembly expressed its deep gratitude to the Speaker of the National Assembly of South Africa, the Hon. Angela Thokozile Didiza and, through her, to the government and the people's of the Republic of South Africa for their exceptional hospitality, flawless execution and steadfast commitment to the success of the 58th Plenary Assembly Session. The Plenary Assembly also expressed its appreciation to the National Assembly of the Republic of Seychelles, through Hon. Speaker Azarel Jolinda Ernesta, for offering to host the 59th Plenary Assembly scheduled for the second quarter of 2026.

This communiqué was presented in the City of eThekwini, South Africa, on 4 December 2025. I submit. Thank you. — [*Applause*]

CLOSING STATEMENT BY THE SADC-PF PRESIDENT, HON SPEAKER RANDRIANASOLONIAIKO SITENY THIERRY AND HANDOVER OF GRATITUDE LETTERS TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN PRESIDENCY AND HOST PARLIAMENT

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Vice President of the Forum, Sylvia Izaks, our host Hon. Angela Didiza, Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of South Africa, Hon. Speakers and Heads of delegation, all Hon. Members of Southern African Development Community, SADC, Members of Parliament, Secretary-General of SADC Parliamentary Forum and all of SADC-PF staff and the Secretaries-General of SADC Member of Parliaments, all staff of National Parliaments, distinguished invited observers, ladies and gentlemen.

We have successfully transacted all of the business on the agenda of the 58th Plenary Assembly hosted by the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, here in eThekwini Metropolitan, in this marvellous coastal City of Durban. Hon. Members, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, I must, from the outset, reiterate our gratitude to His Excellency, Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, President of South Africa, who assigned the Acting President, His Excellency Paul Mashatile, to grace and address our official opening ceremony.

You will agree with me that the Acting President's address was both insightful and encouraging for all of us. Hon. Members, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, in the short time we have been here in Durban, we have covered an impressive amount of parliamentary business, to be specific. We

have considered two reports of the Executive Committee, one on administrative matters and the other on finance issues. Through deliberation of this report, the Plenary Assembly has been updated and has guided the Forum on the broad issues affecting its operations. The 58th Plenary Assembly has reinforced our resolution to promote solidarity. More critically, the Plenary Assembly has highlighted the crucial role of Parliament in legislative oversight and advocacy for the ratification and implementation of regional, continental and international commitments to advance the rights of citizens.

In this vein, we as Members of Parliament must play our pivotal roles in holding the National Governments to account for their regional and international commitments. Hon. Members, ladies and gentlemen, it remains for me to sincerely thank all of the 14 Member Parliaments who have sent delegates to the 58th Plenary Assembly. This Assembly has been a resounding success. Thanks to your attendance and participation, let me therefore take the opportunity to thank every one of you Hon. Members, for your commitment and cooperation throughout this Assembly.

Hon. Members, ladies and gentlemen, I must also highlight and commend our gracious hosts, the people of South Africa, the leadership of the province of KwaZulu-Natal and eThekwini Municipality for their warm hospitality. I wish to recognise further and appreciate the long hours of hard work put in by the staff of the Parliament of South Africa, resulting in the seamless arrangement made for our comfort and convenience during this meeting. Please join me in expressing our deepest gratitude to Hon. Speaker Angela Thokozile Didiza, who has graciously hosted us. Hon. Didiza, I

believe I speak for all of the delegates when I say you have been a true representative of South Africa's hospitality. I would be remiss if – [*Applause*] - I did not praise you for treating us to excellent cuisine, refreshments and music during numerous dinners and events you have organised in honour of the delegates. We might need a few weeks in the gym to work off the extra kilograms gained here in KwaZulu-Natal.

I also wish to thank the Secretary-General and her team and the Secretary to Parliament and his staff, for their unwavering support to all of us. We doubt that our meeting would have run as smoothly as it did without your support. – [*Applause*] –

It is now my distinct honour and profound privilege to declare the 58th Plenary Assembly Session officially closed. – [*Applause*] - Thank you very much. I therefore adjourn the Plenary Assembly until we meet again at the 59th Plenary Assembly Session, which will be hosted by the Parliament of the Republic of Seychelles on the date and at the venue to be communicated in due course. I wish you all safe travels as you return to your respective countries. – [*Applause*] -

Thank you very much. May I invite the Vice-President and the South African Speakers for the recognition letters. Again, thank you very much for hosting us here in this beautiful city – [*Applause*]. Thank you once again.

I will now invite the military band to lead us in singing the anthems of the African Union, SADC and the Republic of South Africa. In that order, as we close the 58th Plenary Assembly Session.

Presentation of letters of appreciation

THE HON. PRESIDENT: Thank you. Hon. Members, we have concluded

our proceedings for the 58th Plenary Assembly. I have adjourned the Plenary Assembly until the 59th Plenary Assembly Session to be hosted by the Parliament of the Republic of Seychelles. The specific date will be communicated in due course. Thank you for your participation and dedication during this session. Have safe travels. Thank you very much. - [*Applause*]

The Plenary adjourned at 1342 hours until the 59th Plenary Session.