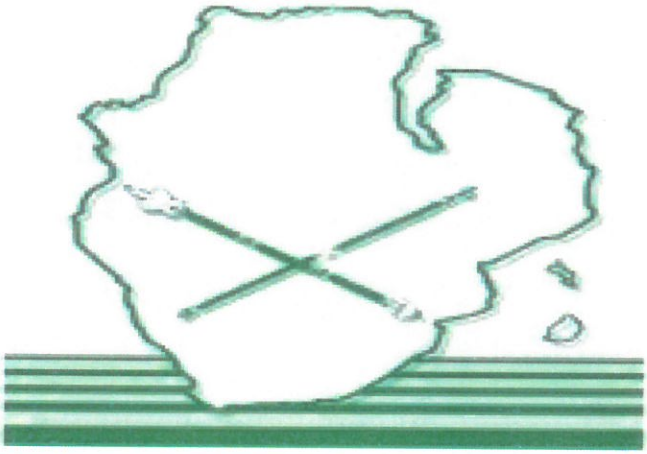
SADC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM

SADC
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THE RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY PARLIAMENTARY FORUM (SADC PF)

Updated as at 5th November 2019

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PREAMBLE

The SADC Parliamentary Forum, being an institution of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) established in terms of Article 9 (2) of the Treaty establishing SADC; and

Having regard to Article 19 of the Constitution of the Forum;

HAS ADOPTED THESE RULES OF PROCEDURE:

CHAPTER 1

PRELIMINARY

RULE 1 Definitions

In these Rules of Procedure:

"Chairperson" means a Chairperson of an organ of the Forum, as the case may be in a given context. Chairperson includes a Vice Chairperson when the latter is acting in place of the former;

"Clerk, Secretary, or Secretary General of a National Parliament" means the Accounting Officer of a Member Parliament;

"Constitution" means the Constitution of the SADC Parliamentary Forum;

"Executive Committee" means the Executive Committee of the SADC Parliamentary Forum established in terms of Article 10 of the Constitution;

"Forum" means the SADC Parliamentary Forum;

"Host Speaker" means the Speaker of the Member Parliament hosting the headquarters of the SADC Parliamentary Forum;

"Host Clerk/Secretary/Secretary General" means Clerk, Secretary, or Secretary General of the Member Parliament hosting the headquarters of the SADC Parliamentary Forum;

"Member Parliament" means a National Parliament registered as a Member of the SADC Parliamentary Forum;

"Member State" means a Member State of SADC;

"Officials" means staff employed by the SADC Parliamentary Forum;

"Order Paper" means the official agenda of the Plenary Assembly;

"PAP" means the Pan African Parliament;

"**Parliamentary Business Sub-Committee**" means a Sub-Committee of the Executive Committee which is responsible for managing the conduct of Parliamentary business of the Plenary Assembly;

"Plenary Assembly" means the Plenary Assembly of the SADC Parliamentary Forum established pursuant to Article 10 of the Constitution;

"President" means the President of the SADC Parliamentary Forum elected in terms of Article 11(2) of the Constitution and includes a Vice-President when the latter is acting in the place of the former;

"Presiding Officer" means a Presiding Officer of a Member Parliament and includes a Deputy Presiding Officer;

"Proxy" means a Presiding Officer or a Member of Parliament who is duly designated in place of a Representative and who shall be accorded the full rights of a Representative;

"**Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus**" means an organ of the SADC Parliamentary Forum that shall comprise Chairpersons of National Women Parliamentary Caucuses and all female Representatives of the Forum;

"Representative" means a member of a National Parliament designated to the Forum in terms of Article 7 of the Constitution;

"Retire by rotation" means the process through which representation and membership in respect of Presiding Officers and ordinary members in the Executive Committee and Chairperson and Vice chairperson of Standing Committees shall rotate among member Parliaments;

"SADC" means the Southern African Development Community;

"**Secretariat**" means the Secretariat of the SADC Parliamentary Forum headed by the Secretary General;

"Secretary General" means the Secretary General of the SADC Parliamentary Forum appointed in terms of Article 13 (2) of the Constitution;

"Session" means Sittings of the Plenary Assembly commencing when the Standing Committees first meet from the appointed day and terminating when the calendar of the Plenary Assembly's business is adjourned;

"Simple Majority" means 50%+1 of votes;

"Sitting" means a period which the Plenary Assembly meets continuously without adjournment, including any period during which the Plenary Assembly is in Committee;

"Sitting Day" means any week day which is prescribed in the SADC PF Rules of Procedure to be a sitting day, whether or not the Plenary Assembly meets on that day;

"Standing Committees" means the Standing Committees of the Forum established in terms of Article 10 of the Constitution;

"Summit" means the Summit of Heads of State or Government of SADC;

"Vice-President" means the Vice-President of the SADC Parliamentary Forum elected in terms of Article 11(2) of the Constitution; and

"Quorum" means the number of members competent to transact business in the absence of the full membership.

CHAPTER II

ORGANS, MEMBERSHIP AND COMPOSITION OF THE FORUM

Rule 2 Organs Composition and membership of the Forum

The organs, composition and membership of the Forum shall be as prescribed in the Constitution.

Rule 3 Verification of Members

(1) After election of representatives in terms of Article 7 of the Constitution, each National Parliament shall submit the names of the elected representatives to the Secretary General accompanied with information on the representatives, showing evidence of their membership and election by the National Parliament.

(2) Where the Secretary General receives information in terms of Rule 4 (1) which is incompatible with the provisions on membership to the Forum, the Secretary General shall refer the matter to the Legal Sub-Committee of the Executive Committee for determination and inform the affected National Parliament accordingly.

(3) The Legal Sub-Committee shall advise the Executive Committee accordingly regarding the matter referred to it in terms of Rule 15 (2).

Rule 4 Vacation of Seat

(1) The seat of a representative shall become vacant if he or she:

(a) dies;

(b) resigns in writing to the President;

(c) ceases to be a member of the National Parliament; or

(d) is withdrawn from the Forum by his or her National Parliament.

(2) Where a vacancy occurs in terms of sub-rule 4 (1), the relevant National Parliament shall, within 90 days, designate another representative to fill the vacancy.

CHAPTER III

THE PLENARY ASSEMBLY

Rule 5 Composition of the Plenary Assembly

The Plenary Assembly shall consist of Presiding Officers and the Representatives of the SADC Parliamentary Forum designated by National Parliaments.

Rule 6 Functions of the Plenary Assembly

In its consultative and deliberative role as provided in Article 11 (5) of the Constitution, the Plenary Assembly shall:

(1) provide a platform for consideration of matters of regional interest;

(2) deliberate comprehensively on the Standing Committee reports introduced by Motion of the Chairperson or any delegated member of that Committee;

(3) through resolutions on the Motions, adopt the reports of the Standing Committees, which resolutions shall be submitted to the SADC Secretariat and to relevant National Ministries through National Parliaments;

(4) collaborate with National Parliaments to advocate for the harmonisation, ratification, domestication and implementation of SADC Protocols, treaties and other decisions at the national level;

(5) consider and deliberate on any matters that will strengthen the implementation capacity of SADC;

(6) convene meetings as may be appropriate for the purpose of promoting the objectives and programmes

of SADC and the interest of its representatives and Member Parliaments;

(7) debate SADC sectoral and other reports in the context of strengthening the implementation capacity of SADC;

(8) promote ways of achieving the objectives of the Forum;

(9) invite Members of SADC to brief the Plenary Assembly on issues of mutual interest;

(10) send delegations, upon invitation from appropriate authorities, as observers to meetings of the SADC Summit;

(11) invite any person or organisation to attend its meetings as observers;

(12) exercise all other powers incidental to the discharge of its functions.

(13) on the recommendation of the Executive Committee, determine the annual mandatory contributions to the Forum by Member Parliaments;

(14) on the recommendation of the Executive Committee, establish Standing Committees in terms of the Constitution;

(15) consider and approve the annual budget of the Forum;

(16) on the recommendation of the Executive Committee, appoint an Auditor for each financial year;

(17) consider and approve the annual audited accounts of the Forum;

(18) consider and approve the terms and conditions of service for the Secretary General upon recommendation by the Executive Committee; and

(19) exercise all other powers incidental to the discharge of its functions.

Rule 7 Quorum

The quorum of the Plenary Assembly meetings shall be a simple majority of the Member Parliaments.

CHAPTER IV

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Rule 8 Composition, Tenure and Sessions of the Executive Committee

The Composition, tenure and sessions of the Executive Committee shall be as prescribed under Article 12 of the Constitution.

Rule 9 Quorum

(1) The quorum for a meeting of the Executive Committee shall be a simple majority of its members.

(2) Decisions shall be arrived at by consensus and in the event of failure to reach consensus, by a simple majority of members present and voting:

Provided that each member shall be entitled to one vote.

(3) Voting shall be by secret ballot.

(4) In the event of a tie, the President shall have a casting vote.

(5) A member of the Executive Committee who is unable to attend a meeting of the Committee may only be represented by a proxy.

Rule 10 Election of the President and Vice-President

(1) The Plenary Assembly shall, pursuant to Article 11 (2) of the Constitution, elect from among the nominated Executive Committee members, a President and a Vice-President of the Forum.

(2) The President shall be elected from among the Presiding Officers who are members of the Executive Committee;

(3) The Offices of President and Vice-President shall rotate among Member Parliaments taking into account

gender representation and political diversity of the Forum in line with the Constitution.

(4) The Vice-President shall assume duties and functions of the President in the absence of the latter.

(5) Where a representative who has been elected as President or Vice-President in accordance with Article 11 of the Constitution, or designated as Treasurer pursuant to Article 12(5), has ceased to be a member of the respective Parliament, for whatever reason, the person designated by the National Parliament to replace that member shall assume the position of President, Vice-President or Treasurer as the case might be, for the remainder of the term, except that only a Presiding Officer shall be eligible to replace the President.

Note: Sub-rule (5) added through amendment by the 43rd Plenary Assembly of the SADC-PF.

Rule 11 Functions of the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall:

(1) be responsible for the overall management and conduct of the Forum business;

(2) prepare the agenda of the Plenary Assembly Session;

(3) present to the Plenary Assembly for approval, the annual budget of the Forum;

(4) table the annual audited accounts before the Plenary Assembly;

(5) present to the Plenary Assembly the annual implementation plan of the activities of the Forum;

(6) table reports and other submissions as the Plenary Assembly may direct;

(7) submit to the Plenary Assembly for approval any amendments to the Constitution in line with Article 30 and Rules of Procedure pursuant to Rule 48;

(8) recommend to the Plenary Assembly any review of the membership annual mandatory contributions;

(9) appoint, on such terms and conditions as it may determine, staff necessary for the performance of the functions of the Forum;

(10) ensure that in the appointment of staff to the Forum, the gender and geographic representation are adequately addressed; and

(11) without prejudice to the powers of the Plenary Assembly, take binding decisions in between meetings of the Plenary Assembly.

Rule 12 Functions of the President

(1) The President shall:

(a) preside over all proceedings of the Plenary Assembly;

(b) preside over all meetings of the Executive Committee;

(c) open, suspend or close the sittings of the Plenary Assembly, after consultation with the Parliamentary Business Sub-Committee;

(d) rule on the admissibility of draft resolutions and amendments thereto in consultation with the Parliamentary Business Sub-Committee;

(e) represent the Forum in its relations with outside institutions; and

(f) perform any other duties incidental to these functions.

(2) The President may delegate his or her functions to the Vice- President.

CHAPTER V

SUB-COMMITTEES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Rule 13 The Sub-Committees

(1) The Sub-Committees of the Executive Committee shall include the following:

(a) Parliamentary Business Sub-Committee;
(b) Legal Sub-Committee;
(c) Finance Sub-Committee; and
(d) Human Resources and Capacity Development Sub-Committee.

(2) The Executive Committee may establish any other Sub-Committees or Ad hoc Committees as and when necessary.

(3) Immediately after the election of the President and Vice-President, and designation of the Treasurer pursuant to the Constitution, the Executive Committee shall establish Sub-Committees during the same Session.

(4) The Executive Committee shall, through the Office of the Secretary General, convene the first meeting of each Sub-Committee at which meeting a Chairperson and Vice- Chairperson shall be elected.

Note: New sub-rule (3) added through amendment by the 43rd Plenary Assembly of the SADC-PF.

Rule 14 Parliamentary Business Sub-Committee

(1) The Parliamentary Business Sub-Committee shall comprise the following:

(a) President;
(b) Vice- President;
(c) Plenary Assembly Session Host Speaker;
(d) Treasurer;
(e) Chairperson of the RWPC as ex-officio; and
(f) Secretary General as Secretary of the Committee

(2) The functions of the Parliamentary Business Sub-Committee shall include the following:

(a) formulate, develop and make recommendations to the Executive Committee concerning the business of the Plenary Assembly;

(b) be responsible for managing the conduct of Parliamentary business of the Plenary Assembly;

(c) be responsible for determining the calendar of the Plenary Assembly;

(d) be responsible for the planning of Standing Committee meetings;

(e) monitoring implementation of decisions of the Executive Committee; and

(f) execute any other function or duty assigned to it by the Executive Committee.

(3) The meetings of the Parliamentary Business Sub-Committee shall be convened by the President.

(4) The quorum of the Parliamentary Business Sub-Committee shall be a simple majority of its members.

(5) In the event that a quorum has not been met, the President shall co-opt other member/s of the Executive Committee to sit on the Sub-Committee on an interim basis, for the purposes of transacting business.

(6) Decisions of the Committee shall be by consensus and in the event of failure to reach consensus, then such decisions must be referred to the Executive Committee.

Rule 15 Legal Sub-Committee

(1) The Executive Committee shall from time to time determine the composition of the Legal Sub-Committee, a majority of whom shall, where possible, be members with knowledge in legal matters.

(2) The functions of the Legal Sub-Committee shall include the following:

(a) to advise the Executive Committee on constitutional, legal and procedural matters relating to the operations and functions of the Forum;

(b) to scrutinise and report to the Executive Committee on the credentials of Representatives of Member Parliaments attending Plenary Assembly meetings; and

(c) to attend to any other legal matter referred to it by the Executive Committee or the Plenary Assembly.

(3) The quorum of the Legal Sub-Committee shall be a simple majority of its Members.

(4) In the event that a quorum has not been established, the President shall co-opt other Member/s of the Executive Committee to sit on the Sub-Committee on an interim basis, for the purpose of transacting business.

(5) Decisions shall be by consensus and in the event of failure to reach consensus, then such decisions must be referred to the Executive Committee.

(6) The Legal Sub-Committee shall be serviced by a staff member of the SADC PF Secretariat appointed by the Secretary General.

Rule 16 Finance Sub-Committee

(1) The Finance Sub-Committee shall consist of the Treasurer who shall be the Chairperson, and other members as may be elected by the Executive Committee.

(2) The Sub-Committee shall advise the Executive Committee on financial matters of the Forum.

(3) The quorum of the Finance Sub-Committee shall be a majority of its members.

(4) In the event that a quorum has not been met, the President shall co-opt other member/s of the Executive Committee to sit on the Sub-Committee on an interim basis, for the purpose of transacting business.

(5) Decisions shall be by consensus and in the event of failure to reach consensus, then such decisions must be referred to the Executive Committee.

(6) The Committee shall be serviced by a staff member of the SADC PF Secretariat appointed by the Secretary General.

Rule 17 Human Resources and Capacity Development Sub-Committee

(1) The Human Resources and Capacity Development Sub-Committee shall consist of the Vice-President of the Forum, who shall be the Chairperson of the Sub-Committee, the Treasurer and other members as may be elected by the Executive Committee.

(2) The Sub-Committee shall have the following functions:

(a) consider recommendations from the Secretary General pertaining to appointment of staff;

(b) make recommendations to the Executive Committee on the terms and conditions of service for staff of the Forum;

(c) consider matters of probation and termination of service of staff and make recommendations to the Executive Committee;

(d) consider reports of the Parliamentary Capacity Development (PCD) Steering Committee;

(e) make recommendations to the Executive Committee on the Forum's parliamentary capacity development issues and priorities; and

(f) attend to any other issues referred to it by the Executive Committee.

(3) The quorum of the Human Resources and Capacity Development Sub-Committee shall be a simple majority of its members.

(4) In the event that a quorum has not been met, the President shall co-opt other member/s of the Executive

Committee to sit on the Sub-Committee on an interim basis, for the purpose of transacting business.

(5) Decisions shall be by consensus and in the event of failure to reach consensus, then such decisions must be referred to the Executive Committee.

(6) The Committee shall be serviced by a staff member of the SADC PF Secretariat appointed by the Secretary General.

Rule 18 The Treasurer

(1) The Executive Committee shall, pursuant to Article 12 (5) of the Constitution, designate one of its Members as Treasurer.

(2) The Treasurer shall:

(a) report to the Executive Committee in respect of the management of the finances of the Forum; and

(b) be the Chairperson of the Finance Sub-Committee of the Executive Committee in line with Article 12 (5) of the Constitution.

CHAPTER VI

REGIONAL WOMEN'S PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUS (RWPC) AND REGIONAL PARLIAMENTARY MODEL LAWS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE (RPMLOC)

Rule 19 Composition and Functions of the RWPC

(1) The Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus (RWPC) shall comprise Chairpersons of National Women's Parliamentary Caucuses and all female Representatives of the Forum.

(2) The Chairperson of RWPC shall be an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee of the Forum.

(3) The Chairperson and Vice- Chairperson of the RWPC shall be elected from among the Chairpersons of the National Women's Parliamentary Caucuses and shall adhere to the principle of rotation.

(4) The RWPC shall submit its report to the Executive Committee for noting.

(5) The RWPC shall report directly to the Plenary Assembly.

The functions of the RWPC shall include the following:

(a) lobbying and advocacy on equal and equitable representation of women in political and decision-making positions in SADC Member States in line with the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development and other continental and international instruments;

(b) creating a platform for women Parliamentarians to mobilise on women's agenda for equality, equity and effective representation of women in Parliament and political parties;

(c) capacity development for women Parliamentarians for effective participation and performance; and

(d) creating avenues for knowledge sharing by women Parliamentarians at Regional level.

Rule 20 Reporting of the RPMLOC

(1) The RPMLOC, constituted in accordance with Article 16 of the Constitution, shall submit its report to the Executive Committee for noting.

(2) The RPMLOC shall report directly to the Plenary Assembly.

Note: Title of Chapter VI amended, and Rule 20 inserted, through amendment by the 43rd Plenary Assembly of the SADC-PF.

CHAPTER VIA

THE COMMITTEE OF CLERKS OF MEMBER PARLIAMENTS

Rule 20A The Committee of Clerks of Member Parliaments

(1) There shall be a Committee of Clerks of Member Parliaments (thereafter referred as "CCMP" or "Committee" in this Chapter), established in accordance with Article 16A of the Constitution.

(2) The Chairperson of the Committee shall be nominated for a period of 2 years, unless removed by Simple Majority.

Rule 20B The quorum of the Committee

(1) Subject to sub-rule (2), the quorum of the Committee shall be a simple majority of the members.

(2) In case a meeting of the Committee is postponed because the quorum has not been constituted and the quorum is still not constituted at the subsequent meeting, that quorum shall be deemed to have been duly constituted if the same members were absent at the original and subsequent meeting.

Rule 20C The ability to co-opt

(1) The CCMP shall be able to co-opt members, when the need arises, depending on the subject matter under consideration.

(2) Representatives of the Forum, be they Members or Officials, may attend the Committee as observers, with the approval of the Chairperson.

(3) The Secretary General shall be considered as a co-opted member of the Committee.

Rule 20D The Secretary to the Committee

The Secretary General shall designate a representative to act as Secretary to the Committee.

Rule 20E Duties of the Secretary to the Committee

(1) The Secretary to the Committee shall have the following duties –

a) convene the Committee and circulate the agenda to the members;

b) draft the minutes of proceedings of the meetings of the Committee;

c) have the minutes of proceedings cleared by the Chairperson of the Committee and keep records of the meetings;

d) release information or documents after clearance of the Chairperson and share the documents with the Secretary General for further action.

(2) Except in exceptional circumstances, a meeting of the Committee shall be convened and the agenda circulated by the Secretary not less than one week prior to a meeting.

Rule 20F Other Procedure of the Committee

Except as otherwise provided in the Constitution, this Rule, decisions of the Executive Committee and resolutions of the Plenary Assembly, the Committee may regulate its own procedure.

Note: Chapter VIA inserted through amendments by the 45th Plenary Assembly of the Forum.

CHAPTER VII

THE SECRETARIAT

Rule 21 The Secretariat

There shall be a Secretariat headed by the Secretary General and comprising such other staff as may be appointed by the Executive Committee.

Rule 22 The Secretary General

(1) The Plenary Assembly shall appoint a Secretary General on the recommendation of the Executive Committee in line with Article 13 (2) of the Constitution.

(2) The Secretary General shall:

a) be the Chief Executive Officer of the Forum;

b) be the Chief Accounting Officer;

c) coordinate the activities of the Forum;

d) coordinate the overall business of the Plenary Assembly;

e) be responsible for the preparation of all documents necessary for the meetings of the Forum as directed by the Executive Committee;

f) be responsible for recording all proceedings of the Plenary Assembly and constituting the Journals of the Plenary Assembly;

g) take custody of the Journals and records of the Plenary Assembly including papers and accounts presented to or belonging to the Plenary Assembly;

h) take safe custody of all Forum assets;

i) ensure the preparation of the financial statements and the annual audit of accounts;

j) manage the elections of office bearers for the Plenary Assembly and Standing Committees;

k) advise the President in directing the work of the Executive Committee and the Plenary Assembly;

l) provide simultaneous interpretation of the debates in the official languages of the Forum;

m) be responsible for the translation of all official documents of the Forum into the official languages of the Forum;

n) communicate to Member Parliaments the agenda of the Plenary Assembly at least two months before the opening of the Plenary Assembly Session;

o) keep a record of votes and proceedings of the Plenary Assembly and Standing Committees as well as the journals of the Plenary;

p) keep attendance register of Members in respect of all meetings of the Forum;

q) collaborate with SADC institutions and officials on matters of common regional interest; and

r) undertake any other duties that may be assigned to him or her by the Executive Committee or the Plenary Assembly.

(3) The Secretary General shall direct and supervise all Forum staff appointed by the Executive Committee.

(4) The Secretary General shall give a solemn undertaking before the Plenary Assembly at a ceremony presided over by the President to perform his/her duties conscientiously with absolute impartiality.

CHAPTER VIII

ORDER OF BUSINESS IN THE PLENARY ASSEMBLY

Rule 23 Meetings of the Plenary Assembly

(1) The Plenary Assembly shall have at least two Sessions a year.

(2) The Plenary Assembly may, on the recommendations of the Executive Committee, meet at any other time to consider urgent matters.

(3) The Plenary Assembly shall convene at the Headquarters of the Forum or in the different countries of Member Parliaments on rotational basis.

(4) Where the Plenary Assembly convenes at the Headquarters of the Forum, Member Parliaments shall be responsible for the costs of their delegations ordinarily carried by the hosting Member Parliament.

(5) The dates and venue of the Plenary Assembly shall be determined by the Executive Committee in consultation with the Member Parliament hosting the Plenary Assembly Session.

(6) The Parliament hosting a session of the Plenary Assembly shall endeavour to secure the Head of State or Government to officially open the Session.

(7) The Member Parliament hosting a Session of the Plenary Assembly shall provide all necessary facilities and services for the Session as per the cost-sharing agreement concluded with the Office of the Secretary General.

Rule 24 Hours of Meeting

(1) Sittings shall, unless the Plenary Assembly otherwise resolve, ordinarily commence at 09:00 in the morning up to 13:00 in the afternoon, and resume at 15:00 in the afternoon and conclude at 18:00.

(2) The President may, in consultation with the Parliamentary Business Sub-Committee, suspend a sitting or adjourn the Plenary Assembly.

(3) The President shall at the close of business of a meeting announce the time and date of the next meeting.

(4) The President may, in consultation with the Parliamentary Business Sub-Committee, call a sitting of the Plenary Assembly before the date or time to which it has been adjourned or at a time after the Plenary Assembly has adjourned *sine die*.

(5) The Plenary Assembly shall ordinarily not sit on a day which is a gazetted public holiday in the Member State in which its Sitting is at the time.

(6) Subject to these rules, the sittings of the Plenary Assembly and its Committees shall be open to the public.

Rule 25 Routine of Business

Unless these Rules otherwise permit, the daily routine of business shall be as follows:

(a) Moment of silent prayer or meditation;
(b) Introduction of new Members;
(c) Announcements by the President;
(e) Giving of notices of Motions; and
(f) Requests for leave to move the adjournment of the Plenary Assembly on matters of urgent regional importance.

Rule 26 Motions

(1) A Member may introduce a Motion in the Plenary Assembly.

(2) A Member shall give written notice of a Motion to the Secretary General at least 15 days before the sitting at which the Motion is intended to be moved.

(3) Before giving notice of Motion, a Member shall deliver to the Secretary General a copy of the proposed Motion in writing and signed by himself or herself and the Secretary General shall submit the same to the President.

(4) Notwithstanding the provision of sub-rule (2), a Member may, with leave of the President, give oral notice of a Motion during a sitting but the Motion shall not be placed on the Order of Business until one clear day has elapsed since the

notice was given, unless the President is of the opinion that it is urgent and in the public interest that it should be placed on the order of business prior to the expiration of one day.

(5) An oral notice of Motion shall be reduced into writing and handed to the Secretary General before notice is given to the Plenary Assembly.

(6) In the Plenary Assembly, the question upon a Motion or amendment shall not be proposed by the President unless the Motion or amendment has been seconded.

Rule 27 Admissibility of Motions

(1) Any Motion which in the opinion of the President, contains derogatory, disrespectful, offensive or unbecoming references to a Head of State or Government, Assembly or its Members, or the President, or contains unbecoming expressions or is of a frivolous nature or offends against these Rules or is otherwise out of order shall not be admissible.

(2) No Motion may be moved which is the same in substance as a Motion which has been resolved, in the affirmative or in the negative, during the same session but a Motion to rescind the decision of such a Motion may be moved with the permission of the President.

Rule 28 Amendment of Notices of Motion

The President may allow a Member to move, in amended form, a Motion of which notice has been given, if in the opinion of the President the amendment does not materially alter a principle embodied in the original Motion.

Rule 29 Moving Motions

(1) A Member who has a Motion standing in his or her name may authorize, in writing, another Member to move the Motion in his or her stead.

(2) Where a Member fails to move a Motion at the time prescribed by the Parliamentary Business Sub-Committee such Motion shall not be put on the Order Paper again during the same session except with leave of the President.

Rule 30 Withdrawal of Motion

(1) A notice of Motion may be withdrawn by the mover before it is put on the Order Paper.

(2) A Motion or an amendment to the Motion may be withdrawn at the request of the mover, by leave of the House or Committee, before the question is put.

(3) A Motion may be withdrawn by the mover before the question is put. A Motion or an amendment withdrawn under this rule may be proposed again, if, in case of a Motion, notice required by these Rules is given. Where the question has been proposed on an amendment to a Motion, the original Motion may not be withdrawn until the amendment to the Motion has been disposed of.

Rule 31 Motion Which May be Moved Without Notice

The following Motions may be moved without notice-

a) a Motion for the adjournment of the Plenary Assembly;
b) a Motion for adjournment of a debate;
c) a Motion for the suspension of Rules of Procedure; and
d) a Motion raising a question of privilege.

Rule 32 Manner of Debating Motion and Amendments Thereto

(1) When a Motion has been moved, the President shall propose a question on the Motion in the same terms as the Motion, and debate may then take place upon that question.

(2) At the conclusion of the debate, the President shall put the question.

(3) When a Motion is under consideration in the Plenary Assembly, an amendment may be proposed to the Motion if it is relevant.

(4) An amendment to be moved and seconded in the Plenary shall be required by the President to be put in writing by the mover and delivered to the Secretary General.

(5) An amendment shall not be permitted if, in the opinion of the President, it substantially alters the principle of the Motion proposed.

Rule 33 Order in the Plenary Assembly and Rules of Debate

(1) ***Members in Plenary***

Members shall at all times show respect to the President and observe the decorum of the Plenary Assembly.

(2) ***Member to Address himself or herself to President***

The President shall recognise a Member to speak and the Member shall rise from his or her seat to speak unless physically challenged.

(3) ***Mode of Debate and Time Limits***

A Member shall as far as possible not read his or her speech but may refresh his or her memory by reference to notes.

A Member shall speak for a maximum of five minutes unless the speaking time is varied by the Parliamentary Business Sub-Committee.

A Motion that has been moved shall be concluded by the close of the business in that particular Session of the Plenary Assembly.

A Member having moved or seconded a Motion for the adjournment of a debate without discussing the main question shall be entitled to speak again on the main question.

(4) ***Order at Commencement of Business and on Adjournment***

At the commencement of business and when the Plenary Assembly adjourns or business is suspended, Members shall rise in their places until the President or other Member presiding has entered or left the Chamber, as the case may be.

(5) ***Rights of Members to Speak to Question***

(a) Every Member shall have the right to speak to any question before the Plenary Assembly.

(b) No member shall interrupt another member whilst speaking unless-

(i) to call attention to a point of order or breach of privilege suddenly arising;

(ii) to call attention to the want of a quorum; and

(iii) to call attention to the presence of members of the public.

(6) ***Limitation of Speech***

No Member shall speak more than once to a question, except in explanation or reply, such explanation being allowed only in case a material part of his or her speech has been misquoted or misunderstood, but he or she may not introduce any new matter, and no debate shall be allowed upon such explanation.

(7) ***When Point of Order Raised***

Upon a point of order being raised, the Member called to order shall resume his or her seat, and, after the point of order has been stated to the President by the member raising it, the President shall give his or her ruling or decision thereon, and may do so forthwith.

(8) ***Rules to be Observed by Member Speaking***

No Member shall, while speaking-

(a) use derogatory, disrespectful, offensive or unbecoming words against a Head of State or Government, the Plenary Assembly or its members, the President, nor refer to any matter on which a judicial decision is pending in a Member State; and

(b) use his or her right of speech for the purpose of obstructing the proceedings of the Plenary Assembly, abusing the rules or misusing the forms of the Plenary Assembly;

(9) ***Question Put When Debate Concluded***

When a Motion has been moved and seconded, the President or the Chairperson shall propose the question for the consideration, and shall put it for the decision, of the Plenary Assembly or the Committee.

(10) ***Reply of Mover of Motion Closes Debate***

Save with the unanimous concurrence of the Plenary Assembly to the contrary, in all cases the reply of the mover of the original Motion shall close the debate.

(11) ***Maintenance of Order in Plenary and Committees***

Order shall be maintained in the Plenary Assembly by the President and by the Chairperson in Committees.

(12) ***Precedence of President***

Whenever the President rises during a debate, any Member then speaking or offering to speak shall sit down, and the Member shall be silent so that the President may be heard without interruption.

(13) ***Irrelevance or Repetition***

The President after having called to order any Member who persists in irrelevance or tedious repetition either of his or her own arguments or of those used by other Members in debate, or who disregards any ruling or observation made from the President which defines or restricts the scope of any debate, may direct such Member to discontinue his or her speech.

(14) ***Members not Explaining or Retracting***

Any Member, having used objectionable words and not explaining or retracting them or offering apologies for the use thereof to the satisfaction of the Plenary Assembly, shall be dealt with as the President may think fit; and any Member called to order shall resume his or her seat unless permitted to explain.

(15) ***Disorderly Conduct in Plenary***

The President shall order a Member whose conduct is grossly disorderly to withdraw immediately from the precincts of the Plenary Assembly for the remainder of that day's Sitting.

CHAPTER IX

JOURNALS AND RECORDS OF THE PLENARY ASSEMBLY

Rule 34 Records and Journals of the Plenary Assembly

All proceedings of the Plenary Assembly shall be recorded by the Secretary General and shall constitute the Journals of the Plenary Assembly.

Rule 35 Custody of Journals and Records

The custody of the Journals and records of the Plenary Assembly, including all papers and accounts presented to or belonging to the Plenary, shall be in the Secretary General.

Rule 36 Hansard Reports

(1) A verbatim report of the proceedings of each sitting shall be drawn up as a multilingual document in which all oral contributions appear in their original language.

(2) Speakers may make corrections to typescripts of their oral contributions within five working days. Corrections shall be sent within that deadline to the Forum Secretariat.

(3) The multilingual verbatim report shall be published as an annex to the Official Journal of the Plenary Assembly and preserved in the records of the Forum.

(4) A translation into any official language of an extract from the verbatim report shall be made on request from a Member. If necessary, the translation shall be provided at short notice.

Rule 37 Languages

The official languages of the Forum shall be English, Portuguese, French and such other languages as the Plenary Assembly may determine in line with Article 29 of the Constitution.

CHAPTER X

STANDING COMMITTEES

Rule 38 Establishment of Standing Committees

(1) The Plenary Assembly may, for the purpose of performing its functions establish Standing Committees in line with Article 14 of the Constitution. Each Member Parliament shall be represented in each of the Standing Committees.

(2) The following Standing Committees are established:

a) Gender Equality, Women Advancement and Youth Development;
b) Trade, Industry, Finance and Infrastructure;
c) Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resources;
d) Democratisation, Governance and Human Rights; and
e) Human and Social Development and Special Programmes.

(3) Notwithstanding Sub-Rule (2), the Plenary Assembly may establish, align or abolish other Standing Committees as it deems appropriate.

(4) For the purposes of balancing gender, political affiliation and geographical spread in the membership and leadership of Standing Committees, the Plenary may mandate the Secretary General, subject to the approval of the Executive Committee, to reallocate Parliamentarians to Standing Committees.

(5) As far as it is practically possible, gender considerations shall be taken into account when deciding Chairpersonship of Committees. Where the Chairperson of a Committee is a woman, the Vice- Chairperson shall be a man and vice versa.

Rule 39 Election of Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of Standing Committees

(1) Each Committee shall elect a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson.

(2) The Chairperson of a Standing Committee shall preside over all meetings of the Committee. In his or her absence, the Vice-Chairperson shall assume those duties and in the absence of the Vice-Chairperson, a Member designated by the Committee shall preside over the Committee on an interim basis.

Rule 40 Quorum

The quorum of each Standing Committee shall be a simple majority of its Members.

Rule 41 Decision Making

(1) A Standing Committee shall strive to reach decisions by consensus.
(2) Where a Standing Committee fails to reach consensus, voting shall be by secret ballot.
(3) The Chairperson shall have a casting vote in the event of a tie.

Rule 42 Specific Mandate of Standing Committees

STANDING COMMITTEE	MANDATE
1. Committee on Gender Equality, Women Advancement, and Youth Development	To deal with issues of gender equality, women advancement and empowerment as well as youth development and children.
2. Committee on Trade, Industry, Finance and Infrastructure	To deal with all matters related to economic cooperation, industry and trade, mining, finance and investment and regional integration.
3. Committee on, Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resources,	To deal with matters related to agriculture, fisheries, forestry and wildlife, water and environment, energy, transport, tourism, ICTs, meteorology, food security and natural resources.
4. Committee on Democratisation, Governance and Human Rights,	To deal with democratisation and governance issues including open, transparent and accountable governance, democracy, political participation including elections, security, peace and stability on the basis of collective responsibility, rule of law, human rights, and conflict resolution
5. Committee on Human and Social Development and Special Programmes	To deal with human and social development issues pertaining to health and combating illicit drug trafficking, HIV/AIDS, human resource development, education, professional training, employment and labour, culture and sport, science and technology and humanitarian issues as well as and other issues to be determined accordingly.

CHAPTER XI

PROCEDURE FOR ELECTIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, STANDING COMMITTEES AND THE RWPC

Rule 43 Procedure for Election to the Executive Committee

(1) **Nomination Guidelines**

(a) The Secretary General shall, not less than 60 days before the date of the Plenary Assembly at which the next elections are to be held, notify National Parliaments of the composition of the Executive Committee.

(b) The notice shall clearly indicate those National Parliaments that are eligible to elect Presiding Officers and those eligible to elect non Presiding Officers to the Executive Committee.

(c) Each National Parliament shall communicate in writing the full names, gender and political affiliation of the nominee for the one position on the Executive Committee within 30 days from the date of notice referred to in Rule 43 (1) (a) above.

(d) Where a National Parliament fails to comply with the nomination guidelines, the Secretary General shall reject the nominations and request the National Parliament concerned to address the matter.

(2) **Election Procedure**

a) The Secretary General shall be the Returning Officer.

b) Once the outgoing Executive Committee has confirmed the names and credentials of the Executive Committee, the Secretary General shall prepare for the elections of the President, Vice-President and Treasurer.

c) The Electoral College shall comprise all the Members of the Plenary Assembly.

d) A quorum of a simple majority of the Plenary Assembly is required before elections can take place.

e) In the event that a quorum is not established at end of the Plenary Assembly Session, Members of the Plenary Assembly present shall proceed with election of office bearers.

f) A National Parliament that has previously held the position of President shall not be eligible for election to the position before the rotation cycle is completed.

g) A National Parliament that has previously held the position of Vice-President shall not be eligible for election to the position of Vice-President before the rotation cycle is completed.

h) The Returning Officer shall call for nominations for each position.

i) Where only one candidate is nominated for a position, that candidate shall be declared duly elected.

j) Where more than one candidate is nominated to a position, voting shall be conducted by secret ballot except that where a man is elected to the position of President, only the women present shall be eligible for the position of Vice-President and vice versa.

k) Where there is no opposition Member elected to the position of President or Vice President, only opposition Members shall be eligible for the position of Treasurer.

l) The Returning Officer shall count ballots immediately after voting.

m) The electoral process shall be open to observation by Clerks/Secretaries General of National Parliaments.

n) The Returning Officer shall announce the results of the election to the Plenary Assembly.

CHAPTER XII

OBSERVERS AT FORUM MEETINGS

Rule 44 Observer Status

1) The status of observer may be granted to:

   a) organisations which enjoy official observer status with SADC; and

   b) inter-parliamentary and other organisations or associations whose general objectives are shared by the Forum.

2) The Executive Committee shall determine those observers that will be accorded permanent status and those that will be admitted on ad hoc basis depending on Thematic Sessions at a given Plenary Assembly.

3) An observer organisation may register a maximum of two delegates to Forum Meetings.

4) Where the Forum allows an observer organization to speak at any of its meetings, only one observer may speak.

5) The President of the Plenary Assembly may invite observers to address the Plenary Assembly. The President shall determine the speaking time of an observer.

6) An observer shall not enjoy the right of reply or the right to raise points of order.

7) An observer shall not vote, present candidates or be presented as a candidate.

8) A Chairperson of a Standing Committee may, in consultations with the Secretary General, invite an organization with Particular expertise in a subject under consideration to provide technical advice.

9) Observers from Member Parliaments or a Parliament hosting a meeting of the Plenary Assembly shall not have the right to vote present candidates or be presented as candidates.

10) The Plenary Assembly shall reserve the right to evaluate the status of observers from time to time.

CHAPTER XIII

MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Rule 45 Statements by Speakers and Leaders of Delegation

The President may allow a Speaker or a Leader of Delegation of a Member Parliament who wishes to make a statement on issues of importance to the Forum to do so.

Rule 46 Media Policy

Unless otherwise advised by the Secretary General, after consultations with the President, all meetings of the Forum, except those of the Executive Committee and its Sub-Committees, shall be open to the media. All such media shall be duly accredited.

Rule 47 Applications of Rules

(1) The power to apply and interpret these Rules shall be vested in the President.

(2) In the event of a doubt arising over the application or interpretation of the Rules, the President shall consult the Legal Sub-Committee for advice.

Rule 48 Amendments of Rules

(1) Any National Parliament may propose an amendment to these Rules

(2) A proposal for an amendment shall be done by notice and in writing to the Secretary General for preliminary consideration by the Executive Committee no less than three months prior to the next Plenary Assembly. The Secretary General shall not submit a proposal for an amendment to the Executive Committee until all National Parliaments have been notified no less than thirty days prior to submission to the Executive Committee:

> Provided that the Executive Committee may decide to waive the notice period upon a resolution supported by two-thirds of the Members present and voting.

(4) Amendments to these Rules shall be adopted only if they secure a simple majority of the votes of all the Members.

(5) Amendments to these Rules shall enter into force on the first day of the Plenary Assembly Sitting following their adoption.

Rule 49 Entry into Force

These rules shall enter into force upon adoption by the Plenary Assembly.

Rule 50 Repeal of the Rules of Procedure

The Rules of Procedure adopted by the 27th Plenary Assembly at Livingstone, Zambia on Wednesday 2 June 2010, are hereby repealed.



