SECONDER'S SPEECH FOR THE REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON TRADE, INDUSTRY, FINANCE AND INVESTMENT (TIFI) TO THE 59th PLENARY ASSEMBLY

Mr. President, I rise to second the motion so eloquently moved by the Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment (TIFI) for the adoption of the Committee's Report to the 59th Plenary Assembly.

In doing so, I wish to underscore the significance of this Report, which speaks directly to our collective ambition of building a fair and sustainable global economy and deepening regional integration within SADC. The Report reminds us that, although SADC has adopted important instruments such as the SADC Protocol on Trade (1996), the SADC Protocol on Finance and Investment (2006), the SADC Protocol on Industry (2019), and the SADC Protocol on the Facilitation of Movement of Persons (2005), our progress continues to be constrained by delayed ratification, slow domestication and weak implementation at national level.

Mr. President,

The Report challenges us to move beyond an approach to regional integration that measures success through tangible effort such as, the movement of goods or the construction of transport corridors. Roads, railways and border facilities are essential, but their

developmental value must bring economic emancipation to the people.

The North–South Corridor, for example, must become more than a route through which raw materials leave our region. It should connect centres of production, processing, manufacturing and enterprise development. It should support mineral beneficiation, agro-processing, small and medium-sized enterprises, and employment opportunities along its length. We must build economic corridors that connect our productive capacities, not merely transport corridors that connect our borders. Regional integration must be judged by its contribution to livelihoods, opportunity and community welfare.

We must apply the same discipline to non-tariff barriers. The Report identifies customs delays, licensing requirements, inconsistent standards and border inefficiencies as serious obstacles to regional commerce. Parliamentary committees should require national inventories of these barriers, clear removal plans and regular progress reports.

Equally, industrialisation cannot be sustained if the revenues needed to finance it are continually eroded. The Committee's concerns about illicit financial flows, trade misinvoicing, profit shifting, and harmful tax competition must therefore receive serious parliamentary attention.

Mr. President,

It is in this context that I wish to give particular emphasis to the **ratification** and domestication of the SADC Protocol on Industry of 2019.

First, the Protocol provides a framework for advancing regional value chains. As the Report highlights, Article 6 calls upon Member States to jointly determine and prioritise appropriate regional value chains for support and to facilitate cross-border participation.

Second, the Protocol supports the shift from exporting raw materials towards retaining greater value within the region. The Committee notes with concern that SADC risks remaining an exporter of unprocessed resources unless Member States strengthen frameworks for beneficiation, value addition, technology transfer, skills development and Public-Private-Partnerships (PPPs). The case for ratification is therefore a case for using our resources to support broader industrial development, rather than allowing extraction alone to define our economic future.

Third, regional industrialisation requires greater coherence between industrial policy and the rules governing cross-border trade. The Report links Article 6 to the need for harmonised trade rules, tariffs and export standards. A regional value chain cannot function efficiently when its different stages are separated by cumbersome customs procedures, inconsistent standards, restrictive licensing or unpredictable border delays.

Finally, industrial development must be inclusive and environmentally responsible. Article 19 calls for women, youths and persons with disabilities to have opportunities not only to participate in production, but also to own enterprises, access

finance, acquire skills and assume leadership. Throughout this work, public participation must remain central.

Mr. President,

Ratification is a necessary step, but it is not the final destination. Our region does not lack agreed instruments or statements of intent. What remains inadequate is the timely ratification, domestication and effective implementation of those commitments. Ratification must be followed by enabling legislation, adequate budgets, capable institutions and sustained oversight. Our responsibility as parliamentarians is therefore to bridge the gap between regional ambition and national action.

For these reasons, I support the Committee's call upon the Parliaments of Lesotho, Malawi, Eswatini and Tanzania to advocate for ratification and domestication of the Protocol on Industry, in accordance with their respective constitutional procedures. South Africa signed the protocol on August 17, 2025, and the Cabinet subsequently submitted it to Parliament for ratification consideration in mid-2026.

Mr. President,

With these remarks, Mr. President, I second the motion for the adoption of the Report of the Standing Committee on Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment.

I thank you.