COMMUNIQUÉ

SADC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM 59TH PLENARY ASSEMBLY SESSION 20TH TO 27TH NOVEMBER 2026

EZULWINI PALAZZO, KINGDOM OF ESWATINI

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1. The SADC Parliamentary Forum (SADC PF) 59th Plenary Assembly was held from 20th to 27th November 2026 in Ezulwini, Kingdom of Eswatini, hosted by the Parliament of the Kingdom of Eswatini, under the theme: *"Harnessing Political Leadership, Progressive Culture and Data to Accelerate the Eradication of Child Marriage in the SADC Region."*

2. The Plenary Assembly elected Hon. Dithapelo L. Keorapetse, Speaker of the National Assembly of Botswana, as President of the SADC PF and Hon. Nokuthula Dlamini of the Parliament of Eswatini as Vice-President, to serve a two-year term from 2026 to 2028, in accordance with the Forum's established rotational principle.

3. All fifteen (15) SADC PF Member Parliaments participated in the Plenary Assembly, with fourteen (14) attending in person and Seychelles participating virtually. The participating Member Parliaments were Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

4. The Plenary Assembly was also attended by representatives of development partners, regional and international organisations, and civil society, including the Government of Sweden, Kenya's State Department for East African Community (EAC) Affairs, Plan International, Equality Now, Hivos, and UN Women. Their participation reaffirmed the value of strategic partnerships and interregional cooperation in advancing parliamentary development, gender equality, and the elimination of child marriage.

5. The 59th Plenary Assembly was officially opened by His Excellency the Right Honourable Russell Mmiso Dlamini, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Eswatini, who, on the tenth anniversary of the SADC Model Law on Eradicating Child Marriage and Protecting Children Already in Marriage, called for accelerated action to end child marriage through decisive political leadership, progressive social and cultural norms, strengthened legislation, adequate resource allocation, and effective parliamentary oversight. He also welcomed the Regional Child Marriage Monitoring Dashboard as an important tool for evidence-based policymaking, monitoring, and accountability.

6. The Prime Minister reaffirmed Eswatini's long-standing commitment to the transformation of the SADC Parliamentary Forum into a SADC Parliament, highlighted His Majesty King Mswati III's consistent support for this historic initiative, welcomed the entry into force of the Agreement Amending the SADC Treaty in July 2024, and pledged Eswatini's continued support for advancing the transformation agenda.

7. The SADC PF President and Speaker of the Parliament of Madagascar, Hon. Randrianasoloniaiko Siteny Thierry, underscored the Forum's role in advancing democracy, good governance, and regional integration, and urged Member Parliaments to translate regional commitments into tangible outcomes, particularly by strengthening legislation, resource allocation, and parliamentary oversight to eradicate child marriage and protect children's rights.

8. In his welcome address, Hon. Jabulani Clement Mabuza (MP), Speaker of the House of Assembly of Eswatini and Plenary Host Speaker, emphasised inter-parliamentary cooperation, dialogue, and the exchange of best practices to strengthen parliamentary democracy and regional integration, and urged delegates to adopt practical outcomes towards a peaceful, prosperous, and integrated SADC region.

9. The SADC PF Secretary General, Her Excellency Boemo Sekgoma, commended Eswatini's commitment to regional integration and His Majesty King Mswati III's regional leadership, noting the Kingdom's strong economic performance and deep SADC trade integration. She further recognised Eswatini's achievements in HIV treatment, women's empowerment, regional cooperation, and accelerated public service delivery under the *Nkwe!* initiative.

10. Hon. Thembela Msibi, representing the Southern Africa Youth Parliament (SAYP) and Southern Africa Youth Forum (SAYoF), called for stronger parliamentary action on youth employment, entrepreneurship, skills development, digital inclusion, and meaningful participation in

peacebuilding, climate action, and democratic governance, and advocated for National Parliamentary Youth Caucuses as a foundation for a Regional Parliamentary Youth Caucus.

11. The RWPC Chairperson, Hon. Senator Dr Linda Nxumalo, paid tribute to Eswatini's legacy of women's leadership and called for decisive parliamentary action to domesticate and implement the SADC Model Laws on Child Marriage and Gender-Based Violence, advance women's economic empowerment and climate resilience, institutionalise gender-responsive budgeting, combat technology-facilitated violence, and accelerate reforms towards gender parity.

12. The Plenary Assembly commemorated the tenth anniversary of the SADC Model Law on Eradicating Child Marriage and Protecting Children Already in Marriage, reaffirmed its commitment to ending child marriage, and commended Eswatini's progress. It urged Member Parliaments to accelerate domestication and implementation, establish 18 years as the minimum marriage age without exception, strengthen enforcement and resources, and address the root causes of child marriage through political leadership, progressive social norms, and coordinated action.

13. The Plenary Assembly launched the SADC PF Regional Child Marriage Monitoring Dashboard as a key tool for policy tracking, evidence-based parliamentary action and accountability, and urged Member Parliaments to use disaggregated data, regional cooperation, peer learning, and strategic partnerships to monitor domestication and implementation of the Model Law.

14. The Plenary Assembly considered Country Reports on progress in the signature, ratification, accession, domestication, and implementation of SADC Protocols and other regional instruments, noted uneven progress across Member States, and called for enhanced parliamentary advocacy, resource mobilisation, and accelerated implementation of regional commitments to deepen regional integration and deliver tangible benefits to the peoples of the SADC region.

15. The 59th Plenary Assembly adopted the SADC Model Law on Correctional Centre Oversight, as a guiding legislative tool, making it the sixth Model Law, adopted by the Policy organs. The Model Law is a governance tool to assist Member States in developing, enacting, or reforming oversight laws in line with their international, continental, and regional human rights obligations, particularly those relating to the rights of persons deprived of liberty and the prevention of rights violations.

16. The Plenary Assembly considered and adopted the reports of the Standing Committees, the Joint Sitting of Standing Committees, the RWPC and the Regional Parliamentary Model Laws Oversight Committee (RPMLOC). Consistent with the Forum's strategic plan 2024-2028, the SADC RISDP 2030 focus on the furtherance of advancing the signature, ratification, accession, domestication, and implementation of SADC Protocols and other regional instruments through parliamentary action, the Plenary Assembly, among others:

    (i) Urged Member Parliaments to champion the 2021 Amendment to the SADC Protocol on Energy to advance energy security and a just energy transition, while strengthening oversight of climate resilience, disaster preparedness, and food and nutrition security;

    (ii) Called upon Member Parliaments to implement the SADC Protocols on Employment and Labour (2023) and Education and Training (1997) to advance education, skills, youth employment, decent work, social protection, and child protection, and directed the Secretariat to advance preparatory work on a SADC Model Law on Child Rights and Child Protection;

    (iii) Urged Member Parliaments to strengthen electoral integrity and democratic resilience through the SADC Model Law on Elections and revised SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections, prioritising digital campaigning and political financing, cybersecurity, inclusive participation, election observation, and responsible use of artificial intelligence;

    (iv) Called upon Member Parliaments to accelerate reforms under the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development and the SADC Gender Parity Framework (2025-2035) to advance gender parity, gender-responsive budgeting, eradicate gender-based violence, including technology-facilitated violence, and promote meaningful youth participation;

    (v) Urged Member Parliaments to accelerate industrialisation and regional integration through the SADC Protocol on Industry (2019) and AfCFTA commitments, including through expanded intra-regional trade, value addition, removal of non-tariff barriers, strengthened fiscal and investment oversight, and the expedited signature and ratification of the SADC Regional Development Fund Agreement;

    (vi) Reaffirmed constitutionalism, the rule of law, institutional independence, separation of powers, civic freedoms, and

accountability as foundations of democratic resilience and regional integration, and underscored the importance of the SADC Model Law on Constitutionalism and the Rule of Law under development;

(vii) Called for gender-responsive climate action and sustainable blue economy development through legislative reforms, gender-responsive budgeting, the removal of discriminatory barriers, and equitable access for women to economic and leadership opportunities;

(viii) Welcomed the outcomes of the RWPC advocacy mission to Botswana, particularly the Government's commitment to accede to the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development by the end of 2026, and called for constitutional, legislative, and institutional reforms to advance gender parity and women's representation in decision-making;

(ix) Welcomed the findings of the RPMLOC benchmarking mission to Angola and commended progress in domesticating the SADC Model Laws on HIV and AIDS, Child Marriage, and Gender-Based Violence, while calling for strengthened legal protections, parliamentary oversight, regional indicators, peer learning, and technical assistance to accelerate implementation.

17. Noted the Report on the 2026 Pan-African Parliament Annual Conference of Speakers of National and Regional Parliaments, which underscored parliamentary diplomacy, legislative harmonisation, stronger cooperation between national and regional Parliaments and the PAP, and coordinated parliamentary action to advance Agenda 2063.

18. Adopted the Report on the 153rd IPU Assembly and related meetings in Arusha, noting key governance and climate resilience outcomes, the election of Hon. Milton Dick of Australia as IPU President, and the importance of sustained SADC parliamentary engagement in global processes;

19. The Plenary Assembly conveys its sincere appreciation to Host Speaker, Hon. Jabulani Clement Mabuza (MP), Speaker of the House of Assembly of the Kingdom of Eswatini, and, through him, to His Majesty King Mswati III, the Government, Parliament, and people of the Kingdom of Eswatini for their gracious hospitality and support, which contributed to the resounding success of the 59th Plenary Assembly Session.

Done at Ezulwini Town, Kingdom of Eswatini, on 25 November 2026.