



**COUNTRY REPORT: THE SOUTH AFRICAN PARLIAMENT'S IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE 51ST SADC PF PLENARY RESOLUTIONS**

Hon. President

Hon. Speakers of SADC Parliaments and Leaders of Delegation

Members of Parliament

Ladies and Gentlemen

Thank you for this opportunity to present South Africa's report on our Parliament's implementation of the 51st Plenary Assembly's resolutions.

Please allow me to reassure this House of South Africa's unwavering commitment to the work of this Forum and the valuable role it plays in our region. The Forum continues to grow from strength to strength and, as South Africa, we truly appreciate the platform it provides to parliamentarians of our region to share knowledge and experiences on common issues faced by our countries. South Africa remains fully committed to the development and integration of SADC and Africa as a whole and we will continue to pursue our region and continent's goals through various multilateral platforms, including the SADC PF.

We view the work of the Forum as a necessary stepping stone towards borderless region, where our people will have access to its abandoned resources, be able to share in functional and efficient free decolonised education and health system that

prioritise primary healthcare to be able to exploit these resources through the creation of sustainable environment.

Hon. President,

As per a resolution of the 51st Plenary Assembly, our Parliament intensified its lobbying efforts to support the Forum's transformation into a SADC Parliament. We had regular engagements with our Department of International Relations and Cooperation to ensure parliamentary input into our executive's interventions before the Summit of Heads of State and Government commenced in August 2022. While our Head of State, His Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa was not able to attend the signing ceremony at the SADC Summit due to unforeseen circumstances and currently engagements are underway with the SADC Secretariat to determine a suitable date for President Ramaphosa to sign the Amendment Treaty. It is important to note that South Africa endorsed the SADC Amendment Treaty to establish a SADC Parliament at the level of the Council of Ministers.

Hon. President,

It is important that our Presidents translate the 42nd SADC Summit approval to transform the SADC –PF into a SADC Regional Parliament into action by signing the Treaty and once tabled in our respective parliaments, we have to accelerate our own internal processes to ensure its ratification or accession.

As we transform this Forum, it is important for us to learn from the successes of other regional parliaments including the ECOWAS Parliament and East African Legislature

which have been pushing to have legislative powers that can influence change and respond to the demands of the citizens.

Hon. President

The overarching theme of the 51st Plenary came at the time of Russia military operation in Ukraine, which has led to Europe opening old and decommissioned coal power stations.

We must ask ourselves serious questions as parliaments on why the West's Just Energy Transition is more focused on investment instead on the eradication of poverty and transformation of the economy. We must ask why Just Energy Transition demand of us to abandon coal when we have more than 50 billion worth of coal that should be central to the electrification and industrialisation of the SADC region. Therefore, all parliaments must be cautious of plans that are central to profiteering by multinational companies presented as solutions for Africans.

The solution to the energy stability and development of Africa, particularly industrialisation, is depended on a mixed and well-balanced energy plan that uses all sources of energy from nuclear, coal, renewable energy and other sources. We must explore, build, operate and transfer financing model for large scale infrastructure and take advantage of the relationship we have with China and other Asian partners. The road to Just Transition should not be a road to debt entrapment for the SADC region and the Continent.

As regards the South African Parliament's engagement with issues related to energy =efficiency – the overarching theme of the 51st Plenary Assembly – Parliament held a robust debate on the topic “Energy crisis and the threat of a protracted failure of

Eskom” in May 2022, just before the 51st Plenary Assembly met. Members of Parliament from the various political parties represented in Parliament presented their party’s views on the collapse of ESKOM that continues to threaten millions of our peoples’ livelihood.

Moreover, in October 2022, Parliament’s Portfolio Committee on Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment held public hearings on the Climate Change Bill that aims to enable the development of an effective climate change response and a long-term, just transition to a low-carbon and climate-resilient economy and society for South Africa in the context of sustainable development. The Committee received submissions from various stakeholders representing diverse sectors, including business, academia, non-profit organisations, etc. which will be taken into consideration in the finalisation of the Bill.

Hon. President,

The Standing Committee- and other thematic resolutions adopted by the 51st Plenary Assembly, including the novel SADC Model Law on Public Finance Management, have been captured in a parliamentary report due for tabling before the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces. Once adopted by both Houses of Parliament, the resolutions will be disseminated to the relevant parliamentary committees for their consideration.

The consolidated model law on public finance management must be linked with massive industrialisation through the use of government public procurement. Public procurement should be the driving force behind SADC region industrialisation. As Parliamentarians we should not only focus on financial crimes but we must also

incorporate economic benefits that will allow the SADC to produce goods that are consumed in the region.

Hon. President

Our societies are making it extremely difficult for women to cope with any sort of disturbance to their lives. The patriarchal and exploitative nature of our societies towards women makes it difficult for women to assert themselves and lead their lives without undue influence of men. We therefore commend this Forum for taking the initiative and prioritising the question of gender equality and the prevention of violence against women and girls. Our own experience showed that the levels of abuse against women and children increased during hard lock downs. Women could not even find escape routes from violence that normal working hours provided and were forced to stay with their abusive partners during this period.

Hon. President

We must incorporate interventions aimed at reducing GBV in our respective public service.

In conclusion, Hon. President, South Africa remains appreciative of the SADC PF as a platform that supports SADC parliamentarians in their contributions to our region's integration and development.

Thank you.