



**PRESENTATION OF COUNTRY REPORTS ON PROGRESS ON
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISIONS BY THE 51ST
PLENARY ASSEMBLY**

TUESDAY 06 DECEMBER 2022

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE DRC

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report outlines the various initiatives that have been done by the Parliament of Zimbabwe in sync with the Resolutions of the 51st Plenary Assembly Meeting held in Lilongwe, Malawi in July 2022. From the onset, it is important to observe that the seating of Parliament was infrequent as the Session of Parliament was drawing to a close.

1.2 His Excellency the President, Cde. E. D. Mnangagwa, officially opened the Fifth Session of the Ninth Parliament of Zimbabwe on 23 November 2022, at the new Parliament Buildings, in Mount Hampden. The Budget Statement was presented the following day, on 24 November 2022, by the Minister of Finance and Economic Development. Both occasions are key events in the life of Parliament as the first one outlines the trajectory of debate in the following Session, whilst the second one ultimately is approved by Parliament as the resource envelope is parcelled to different Ministries, Departments and Agencies of Government.

2.0 BACKGROUND TO THE PRESENTATION

Section 119(1) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe, 2013, provides Parliament with the power to ensure that provisions of the Constitution are upheld. The power includes ensuring that the State, all its institutions and agencies of Government at every level, act constitutionally and in the national interest. As the Constitution declares, “all institutions and agencies of the State and Government at every level are accountable to Parliament”. It is out of this contextual background that this report is presented.

3.0 RESPONSES TO SPECIFIC RESOLUTIONS OF THE MALAWI PLENARY ASSEMBLY

3.1 A) Report back on Resolutions of the 51st Plenary Assembly Session

Responses

- Plenary Assembly pronounced itself clearly on the need to achieve self- sufficiency in the energy sector throughout the SADC Region. It was noted that vandalism of energy infrastructure such as transformers and copper wires has negative effects on uninterrupted energy supply in the region. This vandalism can be viewed as economic sabotage. Member States were encouraged to guard against this vandalism and ensure that stolen equipment from other Members States is not sold across borders in other countries within the region. Stiff penalties were encouraged in all Member States. Zimbabwe has adopted a raft of stiff penalties regarding vandalism of electricity infrastructure in the intervening period after the 51st Plenary Assembly Meeting.
- Observing that the Russia/Ukraine conflict had created energy imbalance as the prices of gas and oil increased exponentially resulting in imported hyperinflation. It has also become imperative

that SADC countries come up with clear Independent Power Producers (IPPs) policies in order to mitigate against the energy deficit. Zimbabwe is spearheading this programme to augment its power supply mechanisms.

3.2 UPDATE ON LOBBY THAT MAY BE PUT IN PLACE AT NATIONAL LEVEL TO ENSURE SIGNATURE OF THE APPROVED AMENDMENT TO THE SADC TREATY IN VIEW OF REACHING A ¾ MAJORITY OF SIGNATORY STATES

3.2.1 Zimbabwe firmly remains focussed on the need for the Transformation of the SADC PF into a Regional Parliament, and is satisfied about the developments at Summitry level towards this just cause. As we are all aware, the 42nd SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government held in Kinshasa, DRC, on 17 August 2022 approved the Agreement Amending the SADC Treaty on the Transformation of the SADC PF into a Regional Parliament during the 42nd SADC Summit.

3.2.2 Accordingly, Hon. Ambassador F.M.M Shava, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, signed the Agreement as delegated by His Excellency Dr. E. D. Mnangagwa at the Summit. Zimbabwe remains solid in its commitment towards setting up the Regional Parliament. You may also recall that Hon. Advocate Jacob Francis Nzwidamilimo Mudenda, Speaker of Parliament has worked tirelessly on the matter as the Chairperson of the Strategic Lobby Team on the Transformation of the SADC PF into a Regional Parliament. The results of his telling commitment, together with his fellow Presiding Officers, are very evidently telling.

3.2.3 Consideration of financial, administrative, and policy related matters of the Forum in view of ascension to a Regional Parliament and the Forum's current goals and objectives

3.2.4 Parliament of Zimbabwe is aware that the Institution to be established in the Region will not be burdensome financially to the National Parliament except for the usual subscriptions. The sincere hope for Parliament of Zimbabwe is hinged on the envisaged Trust to raise enough funds to support the programmes of the Regional Parliament.

4.0 UPDATE ON THE NOMINATION OF TRUSTEES TO THE SADC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM AND ITS SUCCESSORS TRUST AND THE ENSUING PROCEDURES TO ENSURE THAT A SIGNATURE CEREMONY TAKES PLACE IN WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA, THE SITE OF REGISTRATION OF THE TRUST

4.1 Zimbabwe is supportive of the need to establish a Trust for the Forum to raise additional funding for activities. As you are aware, our Hon. Speaker, Advocate Jacob Francis Nzwidamilimo Mudenda has been an unflinching campaigner for

the establishment of this important vehicle. He has already indicated that there are donors waiting in the wings to support the initiative.

4.1.1 The Zimbabwe Parliament looks forward to the signing of the agreement to set up the Trust.

5.0 ADOPTION OF THE MODEL LAW ON PUBLIC FINANCE MANAGEMENT

5.1 Plenary Assembly adopted the Model Law on Public Finance Management which seeks to cure a multiplicity of legal and regulatory gaps in the Financial Management Systems across SADC Member States that impede sound public financial management.

5.2 The Model Law aims at good governance, accountability and transparency in the deployment of scarce public resources.

Significant Takeaways

- 1. In Zimbabwe, the Public Accounts Committee continues to play the requisite role in ensuring that financial probity is achieved in the SADC Region. In the same vein, Parliament of Zimbabwe hosted the Fifth Africa Network of Parliamentary Budget Officers in August 2022.**
- 2. For Zimbabwe, which is currently revamping its Public Finance Management Act with a view to align it to the 2013 Constitution and incorporate International Best Practices, the model law would not have come at a better opportune moment. The country will benchmark its Public Finance Management System (PFMS) with a well-researched model comparable to the regional standard.**

6.0 DISTURBANCES IN THE REGION

6.1 On concerns arising on the negative effects of destabilizing forces such as the conflict between DRC and M23 in the Eastern part of this country, as well as the banditry in Northern Mozambique, Zimbabwe has always pronounced itself clearly on the need for a peaceful region that ensures sustainable development for the good of the Regional populace.

7.0 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Electoral Observation: Following an invitation by the National Electoral Commission (CNE) of the Republic of Angola, the SADC PF, the regional organisation of National Parliaments of SADC Member States, constituted an Election Observation Mission to observe the 24th August 2022 Angolan General Elections. This Mission was led by Hon. Advocate Jacob Francis Nzwidamilimo Mudenda, Speaker of Parliament of Zimbabwe and supported by Hon. Dought Ndiweni, Member of the Executive Committee of the SADC PF and Chairperson of the Democracy Governance and Human Rights Committee. In contradistinction to the uptake of the Angolan Election Observation Missions, the SADC PF Mission to Lesotho was called off due to lack of quorate among Member Parliaments due to resource constraints. **Parliament of Zimbabwe is**

looking forward to the SADC PF fulfilling all requirements towards observing the forthcoming elections in Zimbabwe.

8.0 PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

8.1 Hon. Kwaramba presented a paper on Zimbabwe Progress Report on the ICPD@25 since 1994. It is trite to note that Zimbabwe has been implementing the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action. Over the past twenty-eight years, Zimbabwe has realized gaps and challenges that have threatened to disrupt its progress.

8.2 Towards Global Commitment 3, Zimbabwe dedicated itself to reducing maternal mortality from the current 651 per 100 000 live births by 2030 and to developing a comprehensive national SRHR package and integrate it into the national UHC strategies, policies and programmes: and to deploy 2 trained midwives to provide maternity services at all eligible primary health care facilities by 2030.

8.3 Zimbabwe committed to aligning all laws pertaining to marriage to the Constitution of Zimbabwe (Amendment No. 20) of 2013, by 2030; implementing the National Plan of Action on Ending Child Marriages, harmonise marriage laws and set age of marriage at 18 by 2030, invest resources to provide comprehensive multi-sectoral services for survivors of GBV and to strengthen key institutions; Economically and socially empower women and girls to be actively engaged in Country's development; and to finalize and fully implement the Disability Amendment Act to support service access by women and girls with disabilities by 2030.

8.4 Parliament passed the harmonized Marriages law which was assented to by the President of the Republic, Dr. E.D. Mnangangwa. Further, in a landmark ruling, the Government set the age of consent to sex at 18 years with the implication that is criminal to engage in sexual activities with minors or persons below 18 years. Further to that, Parliament of Zimbabwe has engaged in GBV awareness campaigns mostly in rural communities where information dissemination is poor to raise awareness on GBV the related available services for survivors. These awareness programmes, implemented in partnership with various civil society organisations and relevant line ministries, include community outreach initiatives and radio and television programmes. Promotional material and brochures are also part of the Information, Educational and Communication (IEC) materials used in raising awareness by Parliamentarians.

9.0 PREPARATION OF THE FULL TRANSFORMATION OF SADC PF INTO A REGIONAL PARLIAMENT

9.1 Parliament of Zimbabwe has a codified and functional strategy of inviting the Members of the Public to participate in Legislative business in form of ;

- Public Hearings
- Committee Hearings
- Parliamentary Debates

For example, in fulfilment of the provision of the Constitution of Zimbabwe and the mandate of Parliament as an Institution, in March 2017, the Institution in liaison with the SADC PF Secretariat carried out country- wide consultations on Child Marriages. These were aimed at obtaining input from; business, CSOs, public officials and the general public about proposed or existing policies, Bills, regulations and other issues or changes that would significantly affect the public if introduced. Public hearings on child marriages were conducted under the SADC PF SRHR, HIV and AIDS and Governance Project, by Members of Parliament from selected Portfolio and Thematic Committees in selected provinces of the country. Zimbabwe will not be a stranger to such interventions as the Forum transforms into a Regional Parliament. Needless to recall that Member Parliaments hail the just ended inaugural Virtual Standing Committee Meetings that have changed the whole face of interaction between the Forum and the SADC citizens and stakeholders.

10.0 Going Forward 2023 to 2026 UNDER THE SRHR PROJECT

10.1 Parliament of Zimbabwe envisages conducting the following activities tied to the Regional Parliament during the period 2023-2026:

1. Capacity building of Members and staff of Parliament on the SADC Model Law on Gender Based Violence.
2. Field visits to schools, clinics and Community Dialogues on teenage pregnancies.
3. Capacity building Programmes for Members of Parliament on the SRHR, HIV and AIDS Governance issues. Zimbabwe will hold her general elections in 2023, thus, Parliament will have new Members who will require the Capacity Building Workshops on the SRHR Research Project and others on Diplomacy and the Ratification of International Agreements and Protocols.
4. Continuation with lobbying for access to SRHR services by adolescents and young people in Zimbabwe.
5. Continue with lobbying for the review of the Termination of Pregnancy Act
6. Continue with lobbying for improved access to SRHR services by key populations.
7. Continue with lobbying for sustainable domestic health financing in Zimbabwe for the achievement of the universal health care coverage.
8. Engaging the Executive, Communities and Stakeholders on addressing drug and substance abuse in Zimbabwe.

11.0 Conclusion

11.1 Parliament of Zimbabwe is aware of the crucial role being played by the SADC PF as an interlocutor of regional issues and look forward to its playing a more meaningful role in the improvement of livelihoods of Citizens of the SADC region.