



SECONDER'S SPEECH FOR THE REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON TRADE, INDUSTRY, FINANCE AND INVESTMENT (TIFI) TO THE 52ND PLENARY ASSEMBLY

Mr President, I rise to second the motion moved so eloquently by the Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment (TIFI).

Mr President, small and medium enterprises and informal cross border trade remain the hope of most SADC countries on account of their ability to create employment, provide household income, ensure food security and improve livelihoods.

As highlighted by the mover of the motion, women and young people comprise the majority of informal border traders and are reported to experience discrimination and sexual harassment while small and medium enterprises also face challenges in accessing finance to re-capitalise their business ventures. Given the demographic dynamics coupled by the highlighted challenges, it is only when national and regional frameworks responsive to the

prevailing circumstances that these entities can grow and contribute meaningfully to economic growth.

Mr President, the Committee is pleased to note that the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development was revised in 2016 in order to align the objectives of the protocol to various global targets and emerging issues such as the Sustainable Development Goals, the African Union Agenda 2063 and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The Protocol provides for the empowerment of women, elimination of discrimination and the promotion of gender equality and equity through gender-responsive legislation, policies, programmes and projects.

Unfortunately, Mr President, the reality in the SADC countries is that the financial sector continues to provide non-inclusive financial services and products which do not adequately support growth of small and medium enterprises and cross border traders due to the restrictive requirements placed on access to financing.

I therefore, wish to join the mover of the motion in strongly calling upon SADC Governments to prioritise small and medium enterprises and informal cross border traders by providing access to affordable financial services and products if they are to achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Number 1 on ending poverty,

SDG 2 – Zero Hunger, SDG 5 on gender equality and SDG 10 on reduced inequalities.

I further wish to reiterate that implore SADC PF, in collaboration with national Parliaments and the civil society to scale up monitoring mechanisms and ensure that SADC governments design and implement trade policies that promote inclusive development and gender mainstreaming.

Mr President, before I conclude, allow me to commend the office of the Secretary General of the SADC Parliamentary Forum for the unique and inclusive manner in which the meeting of the Standing Committee on Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment was held.

It is gratifying to note that the SADC Parliamentary Forum took advantage of its unique regional position to provide such a platform, in form of a public hearing, to the SADC citizens to add their voices to the big conversation on economic integration.

As I conclude allow me, on behalf of the Committee, to convey my gratitude to the SADC citizens and representatives of organisations for their well thought out contributions during the public hearing.

Mr President, I second the Motion, and I thank you.