



**SPEECH TO BE DELIVERED BY HON. ISHMAEL J NDAILA ONANI,  
MP ON THE REPORT OF THE REGIONAL PARLIAMENTARY  
MODEL LAWS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

Mr President, I beg to move that this Plenary Assembly do adopt the Report of the of the Regional Parliamentary Model Laws Oversight Committee (RPMLOC) to the 52<sup>nd</sup> Plenary Assembly Session of the SADC Parliamentary Forum, laid on the table on ... December, 2022.

Mr President, this Committee draws its mandate from Article 16(4) of the Constitution of the SADC PF and Rule 20 (2) of the Rules of Procedure of the SADC PF.

The Committee met under the theme ‘Consolidating Democracy by Bringing Parliament to the People’ The Committee was privileged to benefit from experienced presenters and citizens drawn from within the SADC Region.

Mr President, the findings of the Committee, including recommendations arising from its interactions with the presenters and SADC Citizens, are outlined in the Committee's Report. Allow me to merely highlight a few of the salient issues contained therein.

Following the presentations and deliberations, the Committee agreed that SADC Member States need to heighten their efforts towards domestication and implementation of the Model Law on Elimination of Child Marriage and Protection of Children Already in Marriage and the Model Law on Gender Based Violence. Further, Member States should initiate budgets for funding National Parliamentary Committees responsible for gender and children's issues as well as funding for initiatives and programmes aimed at addressing issues of Gender Based Violence and child marriage.

Mr President, Committee resolved that the Secretariat should proceed to engage with the AU with a view to collaborate, partner and share experiences in the fight against GBV and Child marriage and possibly be included in the AU Summit programme for the promotion of the SADC Model Laws in Africa. The Committee further noted the following:

1. The RPMLOC could make a difference in the fight against Gender Based Violence and child marriage by ensuring vigorous oversight in the implementation of the Model laws. This could be done through visits to member countries to

investigate instances of GBV and child marriage and to ensure implementation of the Model Laws in the countries that had already adopted the Model Laws.

2. The SADC PF was well placed to initiate cooperation with other like-minded institutions such as the AU and the UN on issues of Gender Based Violence and child marriage and promoting the Model Laws in Africa.
3. The scourges of Gender Based Violence and child marriage continued to affect citizens in SADC Member States despite the domestication of international instruments, the adoption of the Model Laws and the existence of national laws.
4. There was limited funding by national governments for initiatives and programmes aimed at addressing Gender Based Violence and child marriage and SADC member Parliaments should ensure appropriation of budgets specifically for addressing the two issues.
5. Traditional norms and practices continued to play a role in exacerbating Gender Based Violence and child marriage and that there was need to engage with traditional authorities and religious leaders to address these issues comprehensively and realise positive change.

6. The protection of children already in marriage was very important; and it was especially important to provide such children with psychosocial support and the necessary entrepreneurial skills in order for them to be able to financially support themselves and their families.
7. SADC National Parliament Committees responsible for gender and children's issues should put in place a mechanism, funded by Parliaments, to carry out investigations and oversee the implementation of initiatives, programmes and relevant national laws aimed at combating child marriage.
8. Efforts by Parliamentarians to address Gender Based Violence by initiating and piloting legislation through Private Members' Bills were often not successful owing to protracted Parliamentary procedures; red tape by the Executive for approval of Bills; and limited resources for members, which made it difficult for Private Members' Bills to be enacted into law.

Pursuant to its deliberations, the Committee recommends that the 52<sup>nd</sup> Plenary Assembly to:

**URGE** SADC Member States to pursue the domestication and implementation of the Model Law on Elimination of Child Marriage

and Protection of Children Already in Marriage and the Model Law of Gender Based Violence.

**ENCOURAGE** SADC Member States to initiate budgets for funding National Parliament committees responsible for gender and children's issues as well as funding for initiatives and programmes aimed at addressing issues of Gender Based Violence and child marriage.

**AUTHORISE AND DIRECT** the Secretariat to proceed to engage the AU with a view to collaborate, partner and share experiences in the fight against GBV and Child marriage and explore the possibility of the RPMLOC participating in the AU Summit programme for the promotion of the SADC Model Laws in Africa or other relevant activities.

The Committee further resolved that the information gathered through the presentations will be considered at its subsequent meetings so that reporting on progress can be done periodically.

Mr President, on behalf of the Committee, I wish to sincerely thank all the presenters for the insightful and well-researched presentations made during in the public hearing.

In conclusion, allow me, Mr President, to also place on record the gratitude of the Committee to the Secretary General and her team for the sterling work done in facilitating our work.

Mr President, I beg to move.

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