



**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT TO THE 53RD PLENARY ASSEMBLY ON
SADC PF POLICY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS TABLED ON
04 JULY 2023**

Mr. President, I beg to move that this Plenary Assembly do adopt the Report of the Executive Committee on SADC PF Policy and Administrative Matters which call for policy consideration by the 53rd Plenary Assembly Session of the SADC Parliamentary Forum, laid on the Table on 04 July 2023.

I. PREAMBLE

Article 12(1) of the Constitution of the SADC PF provides that:

“The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the management of the affairs of the Forum, giving direction to the Secretariat and ensuring that the decisions of the Plenary Assembly are implemented and shall be answerable to the Plenary Assembly.”

Pursuant to this mandate, the Executive Committee (EXCO) of the SADC Parliamentary Forum (SADC PF) met from 27th to 28th May 2023 at Eden Bleu Hotel in the Republic of Seychelles. The EXCO now presents its Consolidated Report on Policy and Administrative Matters which call for policy considerations by the Plenary Assembly which is the main policy-making body of the SADC-PF. The Report contains EXCO’s recommendations and resolutions to the 53rd Plenary Assembly for consideration, adoption and/or noting, as the case may be.

II. MEMBERSHIP OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

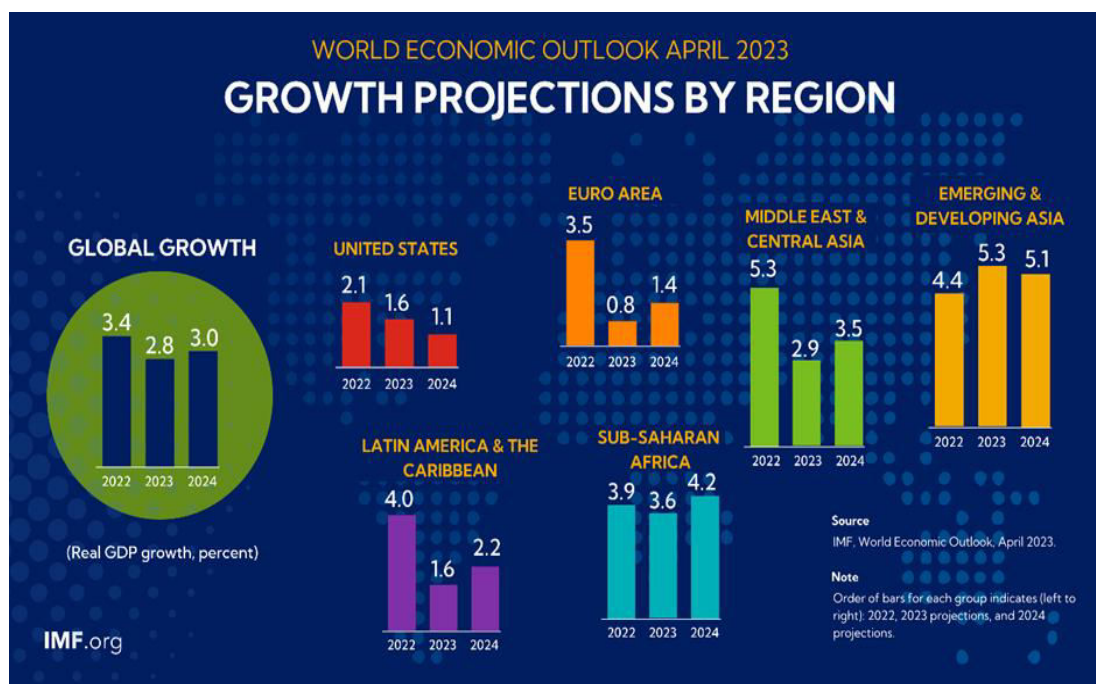
The full list of members of the Executive Committee is attached as **Annexure 1** to this Report.

The meeting was quorate and therefore proceeded to the consideration of its adopted agenda.

III. MATTERS FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE 53RD PLENARY ASSEMBLY

1.0. PLENARY ASSEMBLY TO NOTE THE SADC REGIONAL OUTLOOK IN 2023

- 1.1. In terms of the SADC Regional Outlook in 2023, EXCO invites the Plenary Assembly to note that the SADC region continues to face multiple challenges which endanger the socio-economic life of citizens in the 21st century. One major issue is the lack of prioritisation of agendas to attain the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Whilst it is commonly accepted that the SDGs are a sustainable avenue to implement basic human rights such as the right to health and food, it is noted that Governments around the world are proceeding with differential agendas such as investing massively in the military, aerospace research, ways to develop the fashion industry, and more recently, artificial intelligence.
- 1.2. The Plenary Assembly may wish to note that a similar disconnect is noted in the SADC region, where food and energy security are major issues which affect the enjoyment of basic human rights. Economic growth in 2023, which is a direct indicator of how much a society is able to produce, is projected to be less for Sub-Saharan Africa than for other regions. The latest data available from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), as below is of concern since the economic growth for Sub-Saharan Africa is projected to drop from 3.9 to 3.6 percent in 2023 before rising to 4.2 in 2024, thus indicating that 2023 is likely to be a harsher year for the consumer.



- 1.3. As specified in the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2022-2031, it is expected that Sub-Saharan Africa will be adding more than 330 million to its domestic population by the year 2031, thus representing a growth of 2.5% per annum. While economies in the region have a high dependency on resource-based commodities and on production of agricultural products, the development of a sustainable agro-industry appears to be imperative for the long-term survival of the region, and for the absorption of the emerging youth into skilled positions. In addition, Africa is also home to millions of hectares of unused arable land which have a potential to yield high-end agricultural products that can be used both for the domestic market and for export.
- 1.4. The Plenary Assembly is invited to further note that agricultural products and products emanating from the agro-industry also form part of goods which can be traded under the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which can contribute to improving intra-trade within Africa, and reducing the trade deficit with other regions.
- 1.5. Furthermore, farming and its by-products can also be a source of renewable and clean energy which would assist to alleviate the energy deficit in Sub-Saharan Africa and reduce the region's continuous dependence on fossil fuels while averting rising inflationary prices due to the Russia/Ukraine conflict and other reasons. According to the FAO, solar-powered irrigation in Rwanda and biogas digesters to help keep milk fresh in Tanzania¹ are success stories on how farming can assist to generate clean energy that caters for farming needs and other purposes. In addition, wind and solar farms are commonly located in the vicinity of agricultural pastures where the

¹ <https://www.fao.org/fao-stories/article/en/c/1412108/>

grounds are exposed to abundant wind and sun. In the next ten years, agriculture can therefore be a panacea to both food and energy security in Southern Africa, provided early investments are progressively made in the coming years by a reprioritisation of Government agendas.

1.6. DECISION

The Plenary Assembly is requested to note the above SADC regional Outlook in 2023 which motivated for the theme of the 53rd Plenary Assembly to be framed as “**Modernising Agriculture to Address Food Insecurity and Unemployment in the SADC region: the role of Parliaments**” and to acknowledge that Parliaments should be at the centre of reform and oversight initiatives to catalyse the modernisation of agricultural techniques and output for the direct benefit of SADC citizens.

2.0. HOSTING OF THE 53RD PLENARY ASSEMBLY

- 2.1. The Plenary Assembly is requested to place on record its sincere thanks to the Parliament of the United Republic of Tanzania, led by Hon Speaker Dr Tulia Ackson, for graciously accepting to host the 53rd Plenary Assembly Session.
- 2.2. The Plenary Assembly is further invited to convey its gratitude through the Host Speaker, Hon Dr Tulia Ackson to Her Excellency, Samia Suluhu Hassan, President of the United Republic of Tanzania, for accepting to officially open the 53rd Plenary Assembly Session. The Plenary is further requested to place on record its gratitude to the Government and people of the United Republic of Tanzania for the warm hospitality enjoyed by all delegates to the 53rd Plenary Assembly Session.

3.0. UPDATE ON THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE SADC-PF

- 3.1. EXCO invites the Plenary Assembly to recall that the 42nd SADC Summit of Heads of States and Government convened from the 17th to 18th August 2022 in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo to, inter alia, review the progress made on the transformation of the Forum into a SADC Regional Parliament. On that occasion, it was highlighted that the next legal steps to proceed with the transformation would be the signature of the Agreement to Amend the SADC Treaty by Member States, followed by the signature and ratification of the Protocol on the SADC Parliament.
- 3.2. EXCO further invites the Plenary Assembly to consider that the current status quo is that 8 out of 16 SADC Member States have signed the Agreement Amending the SADC Treaty, whilst 12 signatures are necessary to give legal effect to the Amendment. The SADC Council which met in March 2023 has advised that only once the Amendment has come into operation that the Protocol may be finalised and the process of signature and ratification of the Protocol may be initiated through the facilitation of the SADC Secretariat. Currently, the SADC-PF Secretariat is currently working in tandem with the SADC Secretariat to ensure that the legal instruments

follow scrupulously the policy of the SADC organs and the core functions of the Forum are retained in the draft Protocol under preparation.

3.3. DECISION

The Plenary Assembly is requested to note the above developments and to approve that:

- (a) the Forum continues working with the SADC Secretariat to reflect the Forum's functions as earmarked in the approved Roadmap to the transformation proposal; and
- (b) that further lobbies be conducted by the Forum with Heads of States and Government, Ministries of Foreign Affairs and other relevant stakeholders to ensure progress in the signature of the Amendment to the SADC Treaty.

4.0. UPDATE ON THE SADC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM AND ITS SUCCESSORS TRUST

- 4.1. As the Plenary Assembly will recall, the establishment of the SADC Parliamentary Forum and its Successors Trust was approved by the 50th Plenary Assembly of the Forum and amendments were subsequently brought to the Constitution of the Forum to, inter alia, establish the Trust as an organ under Article 10(1).
- 4.2. The EXCO is pleased to advise the Plenary Assembly that the Trust Deed has been duly registered with the Master of the High Court of the Republic of Namibia after it was signed by the three First Trustees in Windhoek, Namibia in the presence of a Notary Public. In accordance with the agreed language requirements and alphabetical order of Member Parliaments, the First three Trustees were nominated by the Parliaments of Namibia (English), Angola (Portuguese) and DRC (French).

The names of the Trustees are indicated in the Table below:

PARLIAMENT	NAME OF TRUSTEE	OCCUPATION	GENDER
Angola	Hon. Aia-Eza Nacilia Gomes da Silva	Chairperson of the Parliamentary Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs at the National Assembly.	Female
DRC	Hon. Andre Leon Tumba Mukendi	Member of Parliament	Male
Namibia	Hon. Professor Peter Hitjitevi	Speaker of the National Assembly	Male

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4.3. DECISION

The Plenary Assembly is requested to note the above developments and to approve that:

- (a) the Trust be allowed to work independently in accordance with the trust law prevailing in Namibia and to resource mobilise on behalf of the Forum as beneficiary;
- (b) that the appointed Trustees, are to henceforth conduct the proceedings of the Trust pursuant to their powers and functions under the registered Trust Deed.

5.0. DOMESTICATION STRATEGIES LED BY THE FORUM

- 5.1. As the Plenary Assembly will recall, the domestication of regional normative frameworks continues to be a crucial issue which inter-parliamentary organisations such as the Forum face in the 21st century. With the uncertain economic climate, protectionism is gradually pushing countries to adopt conservative policies which impede on the harmonisation of legal norms at the international level. Protectionism is a school of thought which encourages countries to consider only what works for themselves irrespective of changes on the international plane or international commitments taken. Due to sovereignty protectionism, many countries have pulled out of international treaties or have left international organisations which share a common developmental purpose.
- 5.2. Organisations such as the SADC Parliamentary Forum are directly concerned with the issue of protectionism vs domestication, especially since the Forum develops regional normative legislative instruments in the form of Model Laws which have persuasive value for its Member Parliaments.
- 5.3. In this respect, the Forum needs to continually innovate to develop tools and partnerships to ensure that domestication strategies are engaged with a greater momentum. Some of these domestication strategies which have been recently implemented are highlighted below:
- 5.3.1. A Scorecard is being developed for the recently adopted Model Law on Public Financial Management (PFM). In this regard, Terms of Reference have been formulated for the Technical Working Group to be revived to oversee the work of the Consultant appointed to develop the Scorecard. The Scorecard is in process of finalisation with regular oversight from the PFM Technical Working Group.
- 5.3.2 The SRHR, HIV and AIDS Governance Project (2019-2023) is coming to an end. In this respect, the Forum will submit a new project proposal for a 3-

year period to Sweden with focus areas which includes gender equality and sexual gender-based violence, universal health coverage, comprehensive sexuality education, early and unintended pregnancies and safe abortion, and the advancement of democratisation and human rights. This is in line with the Strategic Plan of the Forum (2019-2023) to pursue gender equality in Southern Africa and prevent discrimination especially for key populations.

5.3.3 A benchmarking meeting was held with the inter-parliamentary organisations of the main Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in Africa in February 2023 to discuss harmonising norms around key governance themes such as gender equality, SRHR, anti-corruption, public financial management, among others. Knowledge tools in the form of Principles and Guidelines on human rights and anti-corruption were pre-tested and validated with national Parliaments. Workshops and regional trainings were also conducted with MPs and staff of Parliament on the themes of political participation of women, democratic accountability and the African continental free trade area in the period February-March 2023.

5.4. DECISION

The Plenary Assembly is requested to approve the continued strategy of the Forum to collaborate with Parliaments and relevant stakeholders and pursue domestication of legal norms through targeted projects and initiatives that aim to enhance the socio-economic landscape in SADC in line with the Forum's Strategic Plan.

6.0. UPDATE ON SOUTH-SOUTH GLOBAL COOPERATION

6.1. The Plenary Assembly is invited to recall that the Forum has been collaborating with the authorities in Venezuela for some time now, through electoral observation and other initiatives to share peer experience, cross-learn and explore areas of cooperation across the Latin America- Southern Africa geographical axis.

6.2. In this respect, some MPs from the Standing Committee of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources (FANR) participated in a working session in the Republic of Venezuela from the 29th March to 4th April 2023. The objective of the meeting was to interrogate energy and agriculture issues, which areas are directly relevant to the theme for the 53rd Plenary Assembly Session of the Forum. It was an opportune occasion for MPs of the Forum to appreciate how that country was dealing with various issues in the agriculture and energy sectors, which were of interest to the SADC region, especially as the SADC region is itself wrought with similar issues in energy insufficiency, food insecurity, climate disasters, the drying up of oil reserves, to cite but a few.

6.3. A few outcomes from the working session included the prospect of forging collaborative agreements and friendship associations between Venezuela and the national Parliaments under the umbrella of the Forum with the aim of

keeping alive the momentum garnered through this strategic south-south cooperation.

6.4. DECISION

The Plenary Assembly is requested to note the above developments and approve that initiatives for south-south cooperation be further explored in line with the Forum's mandate to pursue inter-parliamentary networking, in particular with countries across the atlantic ocean in Latin America such as Mexico, Venezuela, Bolivia etc, which share similar socio-economic priorities as SADC nations.

7.0. UPDATE ON RESOURCE MOBILISATION INITIATIVES

- 7.1. EXCO invites the Plenary Assembly to note that several initiatives have been conducted by the Forum to resource mobilise in view of implementing thematic related Programmes and Projects.
- 7.2. In this regard, on the margins of the 67th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in March 2023, the Forum met with US stakeholders involved in development cooperation around the world to explore possibilities of resource mobilisation for projects on gender equality, public health and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Forum met with representatives of the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the US Department of State (Bureau of African Affairs), and the US Agency for International Development (USAID), among others, to introduce the Forum and relate its main intervention areas in the fields of advancing human rights, corporate governance and strengthening democracy in Southern Africa. It was highlighted that contrary to other regional organisations, the Forum is an apolitical organisation which includes both Government and opposition MPs and is ideally poised to advance democratic accountability and engage on good governance and anti-corruption frameworks.
- 7.3. The role of the Forum in setting normative legal benchmarks for the region, in the form of Model Laws, was also highlighted, including the avenues for dissemination of such benchmarks to Member States, and their continuous monitoring through the Forum's dedicated oversight organ. In this vein, the partners welcomed the presentations made by Forum representatives and expressed their appreciation since some of them had never appreciated the work of the Forum in advancing democracy and human rights and had in fact ignored its existence.
- 7.4. The outcome of this exchange with US partners was that many were impressed with the Forum's robust mandate, and also its achievements in Model law-making and domestication. They consequently undertook to explore further partnerships with the Forum and its Member Parliaments.
- 7.5. In addition, the Forum also met with the Indian Embassy in April 2023 to explore possible capacity building collaboration in ICT and other areas where India is has played a pioneering role. The Indian Embassy expressed its willingness to assist the Forum in the future, highlighting that currently, the

country's funding priorities are more directed to individual countries instead of regional organisations. The Embassy would thus be keen to consider bilateral arrangements for capacity building with individual countries with the facilitation of the SADC-PF.

7.6. DECISION

The Plenary Assembly is requested to approve that resource mobilisation initiatives continue to be explored with the US cooperating partners, the Indian Embassy and other partners which share similar objectives as the Forum in development cooperation.

8.0. PROPOSAL TO HOST THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN REGIONAL HUB (SAHUB) UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE FORUM

- 8.1. EXCO invites the Plenary Assembly to recall that the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the National Assembly of Zambia agreed, by MOU in December 2019, that the Southern Africa Regional Hub (SAHUB) be hosted by the National Assembly of Zambia. The Hub was set up with a view of empowering national Parliaments to embrace ICT innovation and digitalise their services. This represented the outcome of the e-Parliament Conference 2018 held in Geneva, whereby the IPU Centre for Innovation in Parliament (CIP) announced a partnership between the IPU and parliaments to support parliamentary innovation through the enhanced use of digital tools. It was highlighted that digital tools were time-saving and they helped to surmount physical barriers, thus bringing countries together and making inter-parliamentary collaboration come to life.
- 8.2. The SAHUB is critical to assist the Forum and other national Parliaments to upgrade their digital platforms and move meetings online during the COVID-19 period. Today, the SAHUB represents a valuable asset for the region, with a membership of Southern African states which mirrors that of SADC-PF. Be that as it may, since the MOU between the IPU and the Parliament of Zambia has expired on the 31st December 2021, the SAHUB is technically without a host.
- 8.3. In this respect, it is proposed that the Forum considers hosting the SAHUB on a permanent basis. At the same time, given that the Forum has also embarked on initiatives to capacitate national Parliaments on ICT innovation, the hosting of the SAHUB will bring renewed impetus and technical expertise to its efforts. The hosting of the SAHUB will also augment the ICT skills available under the umbrella of the Forum and further refine the Forum's ICT processes as it envisions to transform to a SADC Regional Parliament.
- 8.4. The IPU has already approved that the SAHUB be hosted by the SADC-PF and this update will be surfaced at the forthcoming IPU Session to take place in Luanda, Angola later this year.

8.5. DECISION

The Plenary Assembly is requested to approve that the SAHUB be hosted at the Forum and that resource mobilisation be undertaken to fund the hosting so that same does not affect the Forum's core budget.

9.0. UPDATE ON THE FORUM'S RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

- 9.1. EXCO invites the Plenary Assembly to recall that a Risk Register is now in place at the Forum with regards to which strategic and operational risks of the Forum are being closely monitored. In this respect, staff of the Forum contribute to the reporting process with a centralised database maintained for all existing risks.
- 9.2. The Plenary Assembly is requested to note that there are no eminent operational risks existing at the Forum at current date. One identified risk is that of the finances of the Forum which do not leave the scope to conduct all statutory activities physically, and that this is being remedied by conducting some events virtually or through donor support where possible. The lack of finances also imply that no recruitment can be envisaged currently and that positions are to be filled by secondment. The Plenary Assembly is requested to note that the Director of Parliamentary Business and Programmes, which was a position approved to be filled by secondment by the Plenary Assembly, has now assumed duties at the Forum's Headquarters in Windhoek.

9.3. DECISION

The Plenary Assembly is requested to note the above and to approve that the Risk Management Framework of the Forum be continuously monitored with rigour so that the Forum does not meet with any operational or strategic impediments in the medium to long term.

Mr President, I beg to move.

ANNEXURE 1

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2022 TO 2024

1. Hon. Speaker Roger Mancienne – *President* – Seychelles (Chairperson)
2. Hon Marie Joanne Sabrina Tour *Vice President* – Mauritius
3. Hon. Mduduzi M. Matsebula, *Treasurer* - Kingdom of Eswatini
4. Hon. Pedro Sebastião - Angola
5. Hon. Speaker Phandu Tombola Chana Skelemani - Botswana
6. Hon Nadine Mangabu Luabeya – DRC
7. Rt. Hon. Speaker Tlohang Sekhamane - Lesotho
8. Hon. Speaker Christine Harijaona Razanamahasoia - Madagascar
9. Hon Rachel Zulu - Malawi
10. Hon Esperança Laurinda Francisco Nhiuane Bias - Mozambique
11. Hon Phillipus Wido Katamelo - Namibia
12. Hon. Speaker Prof. Peter Hitjitevi Katjavivi – Namibia – ex officio
13. Hon Speaker Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula – South Africa
14. Hon. Speaker Dr Tulia Ackson – Tanzania
15. Hon. Regina Esparon, RWPC Chairperson - ex-officio
16. Hon Princess Kasune -Zambia
17. Hon. Speaker Adv. Jacob Francis Nzwidamilimo - Zimbabwe

Institutional Memory Members until December 2023

18. Hon. Speaker Carolina Cerqueira - Angola
19. Hon. Darren Bergman, MP *Former Treasurer* – South Africa
20. Hon. Selemani Jumanne Zedi, MP- Tanzania
21. Hon. Speaker Nelly Mutti – Zambia
22. Hon. Dought Ndiweni, MP - Zimbabwe