



**THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF SEYCHELLES**  
**COUNTRY REPORT BEFORE THE 54<sup>TH</sup> PLENARY ASSEMBLY OF THE**  
**SADC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM**  
**22<sup>ND</sup> TO 26<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2023**  
**PARLIAMENT HOUSE, PORT LOUIS**  
**REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS**

**INTRODUCTION**

Honorable delegates,

It is with great honor and privilege that we present the Country Report for Seychelles on the resolutions of regional importance and concern, as brought forward in the various reports submitted by the SADC PF Executive Committee, Standing Committees, Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus, and the Regional Parliamentary Model Laws Oversight Committees. These reports encompass a wide range of critical issues impacting the SADC region, including but not limited to democratization, governance, human rights, human and social development, gender equality, trade, industry, finance, investment, food, agriculture, and natural resources.

As a member state of the SADC PF, it is imperative to address and implement these resolutions to contribute to the overall development, stability, and prosperity of the region. We pledge our unwavering commitment to engaging with our regional partners on these matters and working collaboratively to achieve the goals set forth in these reports.

We look forward to the deliberations and discussions at the 54<sup>th</sup> SADC PF Plenary Assembly and extend our gratitude to all member states for their dedication to the advancement of the SADC region.

**RESOLUTIONS ON THE SYMPOSIUM ON THE THEME: “*Modernizing Agriculture to Address Food Insecurity and Youth Unemployment in the SADC Region: Role of the Parliaments*”.**

**RESOLUTIONS ON HUNGER AND FOOD INSECURITY SITUATION IN THE SADC REGION, CHALLENGES FUELLING FOOD INSECURITY, MAJOR INTERNATIONAL GOALS AND AFRICA AGENDA, INVESTMENTS AND PERFORMANCE OF THE MALABO COMMITMENTS, AND ENVIRONMENT THAT CAN ATTRACT THE YOUTH TO INVEST IN AGRICULTURE**

**REPORT ON SADC PF RESOLUTION IN REGARD TO FANR IN SEYCHELLES**

Agriculture is one of the historical pillars of our economy. As a small Island developing State, although classified as high middle- income country. Seychelles will continue to remain a vulnerable country on account of its existential and inherent geographical specificities amongst others.

Making the administrative style of governance sustainable socio-economic development pathway. As a World Trade Organization member, Seychelles agricultural policy and food security strategy are based on a balanced modality imports and local production to ensure food security resilience and affordability.

In saying that, we have numerous challenges just like many SADC countries which hinder in a way the process and progress that we all want to see in Agriculture. To state a few is availability of land and the capital required by farmers to develop their land to meet the demand of the country.

Our specificities and small population of 100,000 people scattered on three main islands amongst the 115 islands forming part of our territory well connected by sea and air. The food supply chain is not an issue between islands. Most of the houses have access to energy and water supplies.

Our primary school curriculum is specially designed to introduce agriculture and environment protection from an early age. This is with the hope of awakening the interest of our youths to the importance of food production and environmental protection as the cornerstones fundamental to sustainable development. We have specialized modern post-secondary agricultural school where young adults can follow both theory and practical agricultural modules, diplomas, and the possibility to a university degree in any agricultural field internationally.

There are possibilities for young farmers to get credit facility to venture into agricultural activities, especially those investing in modern agricultural technologies, that do not require much land space to produce. Credit facilities are accessible through commercial banks or the Development Bank of Seychelles with low interest rates. There is an agricultural land scheme pilot project in implementation for young top graduates who want to take up farming.

The 10% discretionary budget allocation as per the Malabo convention commitment is being progressively targeted through budgetary allocation, foreign grants, and technical assistance. The balance of production locally and food importation is being carefully managed to ensure that the cost of living. Nevertheless, the cost of production is high, and this tends to make the agricultural products much higher locally than those imported.

Gender parity in agricultural activities in Seychelles is a non-issue. Women are free to choose agriculture, they are treated the same way as men and with equal opportunities to access the services, related to agriculture freely.

The National Assembly of Seychelles have different committees which have overlapping oversight roles to ensure that commitments made, and targets set are met. The different committees are:

- Public Finance and Accounts committee,
- Government Assurance Committee,
- International Affairs Committee,
- Food Security and Sustainable Development Committee
- Women's Committee

The following committees amongst others can submit bi-annual or annual reports to the committee of the whole assembly. Committee members can table motions and summon ministers or senior government officers in plenary to answer questions or in public hearings. They work together to do oversight on the government commitment regarding different ministries and Ministry of Agriculture has not been left behind. We have a specific committee known as the Food Security and Sustainable Development Committee (FSSD). They are dedicated to monitor the agricultural development in Seychelles and submit their report to the NAS which then are forward to government.

In conclusion, I can say that we are trying, although in a differentiated approach, to meet the Malabo commitments. Having said this, whilst analyzing our situation, do take note of the dimension of our vulnerability status and the challenges of our specificities.

## **RESOLUTIONS ON THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS IN PROMOTING GENDER AND CLIMATE JUSTICE AGENDA IN THE SADC REGION**

### **RESOLUTIONS ON LEVERAGING SOCIAL MEDIA TO ADVANCE WOMEN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN THE SADC REGION RESOLUTIONS ON LEVERAGING SOCIAL MEDIA TO ADVANCE WOMEN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN THE SADC REGION**

The Government of Seychelles has demonstrated its commitment to safeguarding the privacy of individuals by presenting a bill before the National Assembly of Seychelles. This proposed act seeks to enshrine the right to privacy, as outlined in Article 20 of the Constitution, and to facilitate responsible and transparent information exchange by private and public entities. Additionally, the bill addresses various aspects concerning the processing of personal data, emphasizing the importance of protecting individuals' rights in the digital age."

The bill, once passed, will establish comprehensive measures for the protection of individuals' personal data, in line with international data protection standards. It aims to regulate the collection, storage, and use of personal information by public and private organizations, promoting accountability, transparency, and ethical handling of data. By addressing these crucial aspects, the proposed legislation seeks to create a secure and trustworthy environment for data processing, ultimately fostering public trust and confidence in the management of personal information. Additionally, the bill will address the establishment of a regulatory framework and enforcement mechanisms, underscoring the government's commitment to upholding the right to privacy and ensuring a responsible and fair approach to data management. This proactive step reflects Seychelles' dedication to staying abreast of global best practices in data protection and advancing its citizens' rights in an increasingly digitalized world.

### **RESOLUTIONS ON ACCELERATING THE DOMESTICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF SADC MODEL LAWS ON CHILD MARRIAGE AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE: GOOD PRACTICES, CHALLENGES AND WAY FORWARD**

Another success in that area is that Seychelles has enacted the Domestic Violence Bill, which is a remarkable achievement towards promoting gender equality and addressing issues of domestic violence within the country.

The Domestic Violence Bill will come into effect soon and is set to mark the onset of orange day, a day dedicated to raising awareness about violence against women and girls.

The implementation of this bill signals Seychelles' commitment to addressing and preventing domestic violence and marks an important step towards protecting the rights and safety of women and girls within the country.

We are hopeful that this legislation will contribute to a safer and more equitable society for all individuals within Seychelles and demonstrate to the SADC PF the importance of prioritizing gender equality and addressing gender-based violence within the region.

We look forward to working collaboratively with the SADC PF to continue promoting and implementing measures to combat domestic violence and advance the rights and well-being of women and girls across the region.

## **RESOLUTIONS ON STRENGTHENING SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS (SRHR) IN THE CONTEXT OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND EMERGENCY SITUATIONS**

In May 2023, a collaborative multi-Stakeholder meeting under the theme “Stronger Parliamentary SRHR Engagement- A lens on HIV AIDS Response in Seychelles”, was officially opened by the President of the SADC PF and Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Roger Mancienne. The meeting, which was being held under the second phase of the SADC PF Governance Project sponsored by the Swedish Government, provided an opportunity to reflect on the successes and challenges experienced during the past four years and to also conduct a SWOT analysis on Lost to Follow-up with HIV/AIDS patients.

The objectives of the meeting were the identification of the prevalence and magnitude of “Lost to follow-up” (LTFU) in Seychelles, the factors that contribute to and the problems associated with LTFU, and the avoidance and managing of LTFU. The meeting was attended by the SADC PF Secretary General Ms. Boemo Sekgoma, Members of the Parliamentary Committee on Communicable Diseases, HIV/AIDS and SRHR, Members of the Women Parliamentary Caucus and various local stakeholders and participants affiliated with the Governance project locally.

In October 2023, Members of both the Committee on Communicable Diseases, HIV/AIDS & SRHR and the Women’s Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) hosted a joint outreach activity which forms part of the National Assembly’s series of activities commemorating its 30th Anniversary. The Committees met with both students and lecturers of the National Institute of Health and Social Studies (NIHSS). The sensitization workshop was a much welcomed one for the school as all participants listened intently to presentations on the mandate, role, purpose, composition, and responsibilities of the two Committees. Their respective Terms of Reference, oversight functions of Members and the collaborative work with stakeholders were also discussed in depth.

Two issues that came out very strongly during the deliberations were the alarming rate of teenage pregnancies in general in relation to the availability of contraceptives, specifically NIHSS students who fall pregnant. Students inquired about efficient awareness and education for the former and showed concerns for those who abstain from following the school's programme in its entirety when becoming pregnant because of fearful beliefs that some elements of the programme may not be suitable for them. Members were asked to shed light on these issues, especially to affirm that pregnancy is not a sickness and that students can continue with their educational programmes.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the submission of the country report before the SADC PF Plenary Assembly serves as a critical step in monitoring Seychelles' progress on important regional issues such as food security, gender equality, and sexual and reproductive health and rights. By actively participating in the resolution process, Seychelles demonstrates its commitment to advancing the goals of the SADC region and working towards a more prosperous and equitable future for all member states.

Furthermore, the country report provides an opportunity for Seychelles to showcase its efforts and accomplishments in addressing these important issues, as well as identifying areas for improvement and collaboration with other SADC member states. By engaging with the Plenary Assembly, Seychelles can contribute to the exchange of best practices and innovative solutions that can benefit the entire region. It also demonstrates Seychelles' commitment to transparency and accountability in fulfilling its obligations within the SADC framework. The submission of the country report is not only a means of tracking progress but also a reaffirmation of Seychelles' dedication to the collective advancement of SADC on issues of paramount importance.

Thank you!

Obrigado!

Merçi!