



**INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT
BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL
OF THE SADC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM
MS BOEMO SEKGOMA**

**AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING
OF THE 54TH PLENARY ASSEMBLY SESSION
OF THE SADC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM**

**HOSTED
BY THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF MAURITIUS
NOVEMBER 2023**

SALUTATIONS

- **Hon. Pravind Kumar Jugnauth Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius, Our Guest of Honour;**
- **Hon. Roger Mancienne, President of the SADC Parliamentary Forum and Speaker of the National Assembly of Seychelles;**
- **Hon. Sooroojdev Phokeer, G.C.S.K., G.O.S.K. Speaker of the National Assembly of Mauritius;**
- **Hon. Regina Esparon, Chairperson of the SADC Parliamentary Forum Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus;**
- **Hon. Speakers and Heads of delegations of Member Parliaments present;**
- **Hon. Ministers and Members of Parliament of Mauritius;**
- **Chairperson of Rodrigues Regional Assembly;**
- **Ms Boemo Sekgoma, Secretary General of the SADC Parliamentary Forum;**
- **Members of the Diplomatic Corps,**
- **Distinguished participants;**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**

It is with singular Honor and humility that I deliver this statement during this 54th Plenary Assembly Session of the SADC PF in my capacity as Secretary General.

This statutory meeting is the last one on the Forum's calendar this year. It concludes a productive year and marks, the end of the Forum's 2019-2023 Strategic Plan. I am pleased to state, that, this Strategic plan has been successfully implemented, with the full support and active engagement of all our stakeholders and member parliaments.

Hon Prime Minister, please allow me to highlight some of the achievements that make Mauritius the envy of many. These achievements resonate with values that we cherish as a Forum.

1. Mauritius is admired widely for her thriving economy and ranks high on the democracy indices.
2. In many countries, the right to health is not justiciable, however, in this country, it is pleasing to note that Mauritius provides free health-care to all her citizens.

3. Similarly, the right to education is also facilitated by free transport for students, even on the “Metro Express”!
4. In the area of social protection, basic foodstuffs are subsidized by the Government. This ensures access for all, including the vulnerable.
5. Furthermore, that senior citizens of Mauritius are provided special protection through monthly pensions.
6. We fully associate with these measures, which we believe are well meaning and ensure that the citizens of Mauritius are well cushioned in their daily lives.
7. I probably speak for many, when I say, that we are privileged to be here. As a tourism destination, Mauritius is simply breath-taking. The country’s white sandy beaches, its sky-blue lagoons, and its charming landscapes make the country a world-renowned destination.

Lately, Mauritius made headlines after claiming its sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago which was retained by the then colonial powers before independence.

We congratulate Mauritius for having the boldness and bravado to fight for its territorial integrity. We encourage Mauritius to continue the relevant progressive steps through all lawful means available until the sovereignty issue is permanently solved.

We celebrate the above because the SADC PF stands for democratization and socio- economic development, and human rights. This is evidenced by our various resolutions that relate to human dignity and decency. As such, we are thrilled to be holding our 54th Plenary Assembly here in Mauritius.

Hon Prime Minister, please permit me to conclude by extending my sincere gratitude to the National Assembly of Mauritius, under the exemplary leadership of Hon. Sooroojdev Phokeer, G.C.S.K, G.O.S.K, for graciously and effectively hosting this august Assembly. Our gratitude also extends to the Office of the Acting Clerk.

For the record, the National Assembly of Mauritius is one of the Member Parliaments of the SADC-PF with a lean staff count, yet it performs effectively in organizing regional events of this magnitude. This institutional feat by the National Assembly of Mauritius stands as a

testament of the potential and efficiency of this wonderful nation.

Thank you for your kind listening.