



THE CHAIRPERSON
SPEECH BY SEM TOKELY JUSTIN, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY OF MADAGASCAR, NEW PRESIDENT OF THE SADC
PARLIAMENTARY FORUM
LIVINGSTON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2024

Mr. Outgoing President of the SADC Parliamentary Forum,
Speakers of National Assemblies or Parliaments
Ladies and Gentlemen, Heads of Delegation
Ladies and Gentlemen Members of Parliament
Distinguished Invited Guests
Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is with great pleasure that I address you, august Assembly, on the occasion of this 56th Plenary Assembly of the SADC Parliamentary Forum.

I am fully aware of the responsibility that comes with the trust you have placed in me and my fellow Board members to lead our Forum over the next two years.

I would like to thank you for this, and to convey our commitment to working together with all the other member parliamentary assemblies in the exercise of our mandate.

At this very moment, I pay tribute to our elders, to our predecessors who founded this Forum.

Please know that their vision continues to inspire us and light our way towards the ideal of effective integration of our Southern African region.

It is precisely in this spirit that I endorse this extract from the speech made by SEM Andry Nirina RAJOELINA, President of the Republic of Madagascar, at the 44th Summit of SADC Heads of State and Government held in August 2024 in Harare, Zimbabwe: I quote "Together, I am certain that we will succeed in making SADC a more integrated, more resilient region. Together, we will continue to build a more prosperous future for our region. It is with gratitude and pride that Madagascar will assume the presidency of SADC". End of quote

Nevertheless, I cannot continue without first paying tribute to the considerable efforts made by my illustrious predecessor, the Right Honorable Roger MANCIENNE, President of the Seychelles National Assembly, in the service of our Forum.

On reading his report, we can be proud of the work accomplished on important initiatives such as the drafting of various model laws, the progress made in implementing the Health, Sexual and Reproductive Rights and HIV/AIDS (SDSR) project and the progress made in transforming the SADC-PF into a regional parliament, the mobilization of resources for the implementation of various projects, and much more that can be read in his end-of-term report...

However, we still face many challenges: How can the Forum contribute to maintaining peace and security in the east of one of our member countries (i.e. the DRC), the challenges of socio-economic development in each of our countries, the future of our children in a world in upheaval, and the fight against climate change, etc.?

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We already have this culture of dialogue and consultation within the Forum.

This is extremely important in achieving our objectives as defined by our Constitution and Internal Regulations.

During this 2-year term, we'll be working to diversify our partners, increasing our resources to keep moving forward.

In the same vein, I will spare no effort in defending the interests of our region with the support of my fellow board members and yours.

Our ambition is to add a new stone to the regional edifice of our dreams, a Southern Africa at peace, more united and more united towards the development and prosperity of its peoples, whose representatives we are.

I would not be able to conclude my speech without thanking the highest authorities of the host country of this 56th Assembly and the National Assembly of Zambia for the warm welcome and hospitality they have extended to us in the renowned city of Livingstone, the cradle of international tourism in our beloved region of Southern Africa.

I wish you all a safe journey back to your respective countries.

Thank you once again for the confidence you have placed in me.

Long live the SADC Parliamentary Forum,

I thank you for your kind attention.