



**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

**STATEMENT**

**BY**

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**MINISTER OF JUSTICE**

**SADC meeting of Ministers of Justice and Attorneys-General**

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**[To Be Checked Against Delivery]**

**Honorable Minister of Justice and Attorneys-General of the SADC, Senior Legal Officials, Members of the Secretariat, Officials from the Ministry of Justice, Namibia, members of the media, ladies and gentlemen,**

It is my honor and privilege to welcome you all back to our beloved Namibia for this, our last meeting as Ministers of Justice and Attorneys-General during Namibia's tenure as chair of the SADC. I am especially pleased to welcome you to our beautiful coastal town of Swakopmund. I humbly apologize for the unpleasant weather, which is not what we've ordered, and which has caused some of you to have experienced unfortunate travel difficulties. Not having control over the elements of nature however keeps us humble and humane.

We reconvene this meeting a time when Namibia is about to hand over the chairmanship to the United Republic of Tanzania. The SADC Council of Ministers is relying on us, the legal think-tank, to come up with recommendations that will enable Summit to take decisions that are in the best interest of our sub-regional integration framework and plans. In this light, we have to deliberate on the issues at hand with the diligence and dedication expected of us.

It is a regrettable fact that we, as SADC Member States, still lack the dedication that is required to give new impetus to our legally binding instruments, i.e. our SADC Protocols. As the legal think-tank, the Protocols that are of cardinal importance to us are:

- The Protocol Against Corruption of 2001;
- The Protocol on Extradition of 2002;
- The Protocol on Legal Affairs of 2000;
- The Protocol on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters of 2002;

It is my hope, and I believe this hope is commonly shared by all of us, that we will be able to overcome the challenges that we still face in cooperating with each other with ease and less bureaucracy in order to achieve our common objectives faster and more efficiently.

Our people are suffering as a result of slow cooperation mechanisms amongst each other and we are all guilty of this. Let us think of those who cannot speak for themselves and those who rely on us to take decisions that will ensure that their rights are promoted, protected and fulfilled. In this regard, I look forward to the responses provided to the questionnaires, which were disseminated by Secretariat for discussion during this meeting.

Colleagues, our agenda indicates that we will focus our discussions on the following topics as mandated:

- Consideration of the Recommendations from the Report on the States Parties' Answers to the Questionnaires on the Implementation of the SADC Protocol on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters and Protocol on Extradition
- Draft Agreement Terminating the Memorandum of Understanding Establishing the

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- Harmonisation of Authentication Procedures
- Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Civil Judgements
- Draft Protocol on Industry
- Draft Protocol on the Inter-State Transfer of Sentenced Offenders
- Draft Amendments to Annexes I, II and III to the Protocol on Trade
- Draft UNIVISA Agreement
- Draft Guidelines for Drafting SADC Legal Documents

As said earlier, it is important that we come up with submissions on these drafts as finalization thereof will greatly contribute towards the fulfillment of the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP), which is the development and implementation framework guiding the Regional Integration agenda of the SADC and which will come to an end in 2020. This integration agenda aims at providing a clear strategic direction with respect to SADC programmes, projects and activities in line with the SADC Common Agenda and strategic priorities, as enshrined in the SADC Treaty of 1992.

In addition to this, Colleagues, I also have the pleasure to invite you all to a side-event that is scheduled to take place during or preceding our lunch hour today in the dining hall. The programme will be disseminated in a short while. It will be an informal event during which I will talk about the need for adequate legislation to ensure Child Online Protection and the need for a SADC Declaration on the protection of People with Albinism. This year marks the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and that was also the first UN Convention signed by Namibia after our independence. As the justice cluster, we have a significant role to play in ensuring the safety of our children, hence this initiative. We will be joined by Mrs. Rachel Odede, the UNICEF country representative for Namibia, who will also give us some enlightening remarks on this topic. Regarding People with Albinism, it is my humble view that as States we have to do all we can do stop victimization and stigmatization of our brothers and sisters with albinism. None of us are immune to this problem and it is our collective duty to dispel all myths and fears regarding this condition. We have submitted our concept note on the matter to the Secretariat as requested and I look forward to our discussions on this topic.

The objectives of the **Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism** are to:

- Ensure that the correct **milestones** are being achieved, as planned;
- Act as an **early warning system** in cases where targets are not likely to be achieved;

- Provide **regular information** to all stakeholders on progress of the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan and an informed basis for any reviews; and
- Ensure the **continuous sharpening and focusing of strategies** and assist in the mobilisation of appropriate interventions.

**Regional integration expands markets and input sources, better allocating resources across the region and accelerating economic growth.**

Regional economic integration is one way countries achieve national interests—only in concert with others. It expands national markets to the region. Like globalization, it can be thought of as an alternative to international embeddedness—or how one relates to the rest of the world. But unlike globalization, regional integration is geographical, and in some cases political. It is stronger institutionally than globalization, as rules tend to be tighter and peer pressure can be more intense.