

**THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA  
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND EAST AFRICAN COOPERATION**



**HANDOVER STATEMENT**

**BY**

**HON. PROF. PALAMAGAMBA JOHN KABUDI, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
AND EAST AFRICAN COOPERATION OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA  
AND OUTGOING CHAIRPERSON OF THE SADC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS**

**AT**

**THE OPENING OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING**

**13<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST, 2020**

**Hon. Verónica Natani el Macamo Dlhovo, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of Mozambique and Incoming Chair of SADC Council of Ministers,**

**Honourable Ministers,**

**(Your Excellency) Dr. Stergomena Lawrence Tax, Executive Secretary of SADC,**

**Deputy Executive Secretaries,**

**Excellencies Ambassadors and High Commissioners,**

**Members of the Diplomatic Corps,**

**Representatives of Regional and International Organisations,**

**SADC Senior Officials,**

**Delegates from the SADC Member States,**

**SADC Secretariat Officials,**

**Members of the Media,**

**Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I feel privileged in my capacity as the Outgoing Chairperson of SADC Council of Ministers to welcome you all to this virtual Council of Ministers meeting. I wish to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Ministers for taking time out of your busy schedule to participate in this important

meeting. Your presence in this meeting reaffirms your commitment to the work of the Council and SADC at large.

**Honourable Ministers**, this meeting is being held few weeks after the passing of the 3<sup>rd</sup> President of the United Republic of Tanzania, His Excellency Benjamin William Mkapa. On behalf of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, I would like to thank my fellow Ministers for the messages of condolences you sent to us during this difficult time of grief. The Late President Mkapa was a seasoned diplomat who was well known for his commitment to the liberation and development of Africa. Throughout his lifetime, he championed principles of peace, self-reliance, good governance, Pan-Africanism and the transformation of the lives of the people of Tanzania and Africa. During and after his Presidency, he made a remarkable contribution to the welfare of SADC. Indeed, Tanzania, SADC family and Africa have lost one of the luminaries of self-determination and the true son of the Community and the African continent at large. May his soul rest in eternal peace.

**Honourable Ministers**, a year ago, in August 2019, in a similar occasion, I, on behalf of United Republic of Tanzania assumed the Chairmanship of SADC Council of

Ministers for a year. This was 15 years after Tanzania won the SADC trust to Chair the Council. I accepted that great honour with a deep sense of pride and humility, and equally with a sense of determination to serve the common interests of the SADC family.

**Honourable Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen;** as we all know, during Tanzania's Chairmanship, most countries and without exceptions including the SADC family faced and is still facing a public health emergency of international concern caused by COVID-19 pandemic. Despite some signs of easing, the magnitude, complexity and severity of the pandemic has been unprecedented.

As I hand over this great task to Hon. Verónica Nataniel Macamo Dlhovo, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of Mozambique, I am happy to inform that we have been able to maintain unity as our common objective in the Community. During this time, the ability to maintain enduring cohesion, solidarity and the spirit of working together has become more vivid and instrumental to SADC than ever and it has enabled our community to promote its interests and address challenges we are facing as a family.

Achievements we registered as a Community would have not been possible without the hard work and commitment of all of us. Allow me on your behalf to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to H.E Dr. John Pombe Joseph Magufuli, President of the United Republic of Tanzania and Outgoing Chairperson of SADC for his able leadership that has helped the Council and SADC Community as a whole to fulfil its objectives.

I wish also to thank the SADC Executive Secretary, H.E Dr. Stergomena Lawrence Tax and the entire Secretariat for their invaluable effort in organising this meeting, their tireless efforts in coordinating and spearheading our regional integration agenda during these challenging times. I am so pleased by their flexibility and professionalism that has been able to guide us for the whole year. Without such a strong Secretariat, my Chairmanship would have been difficult.

**Honourable Ministers**, it would be a sheer selfishness if I will not acknowledge your commitment and the commitment of Sectoral Ministers in spearheading the work of the Community despite the challenges brought by Covid-19. As we will correctly remember, the idea to meet virtually emanated from the advice of the Ministers of Health who met virtually on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2020. Since then,

the Community has continued holding virtual meetings according to its calendar. We have since then held more than twenty Council and sectoral Ministerial meetings.

At this juncture, allow me **Honourable Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen** to qualify my remarks by highlighting some achievements registered during one-year period service to the Community.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the SADC family was able to promote intra-trade in the SADC Region and beyond by developing Regional Guidelines on Harmonisation and Facilitation of Cross Boarder Transport of Goods operations across the Region. The implementation of these Guidelines ensured the seamless flow of trade in the region, even as we also mitigate the negative health impacts of COVID-19. Through our collective resolve, the region remains better saved.

**Honourable Ministers**, I am pleased to note that during our Chairmanship, the formulation of the Post 2020 Agenda was finalized, culminating in the draft SADC Vision 2050 and Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) Blueprints. The Post 2020 Agenda builds on the achievements and lessons of the inaugural regional strategic plan, the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan - 2005-2020, and also re-

orient the SADC regional vision 2050 to speak to the continental developmental Agenda 2063.

The Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan - RISDP 2020-30 provides a coherent and comprehensive ten-year development agenda on social, economic, peace, security, political and governance issues. It also outlines the global, continental and regional context around which the Strategy was developed and covers key issues ranging from poverty, inequality, climate change and the environment. It reflects on developments in technology and the geopolitics of migration. I am glad to note that, this meeting will be considering these strategic documents.

**Honourable Ministers,** as we handover the Chairmanship, Industrialisation remains at the core of the SADC integration agenda premised on the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap 2015 -2063. No doubt, our region has made some progress in the economic integration of the region. However, and in line with SADC objective to promote sustainable and equitable socio-economic growth and development, more need to be done on SADC industrial development initiative. With the current crisis, SADC gets an opportunity to advance industrialisation, economic diversification and

intra-SADC trade as “new economies” or new industries emerge, for example, the pharmaceutical industries and other relevant industries. It is therefore crucial for all Member States to provide an enabling environment that nurtures and promotes business development.

**Waheshimiwa Mawaziri,** tunayashukuru maamuzi ya Mkutano wa 39 wa Wakuu wa Nchi na Serikali wa SADC kwa uamuzi wa kukifanya Kiswahili kuwa lugha rasmi ya nne ya Jumuiya yetu. Kiswahili ni lugha ya ukombozi iliyotumiwa na wapigania uhuru kama lugha ya mafunzo na mawasiliano wakati wa kupigania uhuru kusini mwa Afrika. Hivyo basi, ikiwa ni lugha rasmi wa Umoja wa Afrika na lugha rasmi kwa baadhi ya mataifa ya Afrika Mashariki na Kati, kupitishwa kwake na Jumuiya yetu kama lugha rasmi kulipokelewa kwa mwitikio chanya na tumekitumia kishwahili kwenye mikutano rasmi ya SADC. Ni imani yetu kuwa SADC itaendelea kukienzi kishwahili na nchi wanachama wa Jumuiya yetu zitaiingiza na kutumia kishwahili katika mitaala ya shule na vyo vikiu.

***[Honorable Ministers, we are grateful that at the 39<sup>th</sup> Summit of Heads of State and Government of SADC adopted Kiswahili as the fourth working language of SADC. Kiswahili is a language of African liberation which was used by African freedom fighters in their training and***



***communication during the liberation struggle. Being an official language of the African Union and a national language as well as lingua franca in some east and central African countries, its adoption as SADC Official language was positively received and it has since then being used in our official meetings. It is our belief that SADC will continue to embrace the language and member states will introduce the same in their universities and schools curricula].***

**Honourable Ministers,** as we grapple with complexities and the severity of the COVID-19 pandemic on lives and livelihoods, in the course of the year, the region's resilience and preparedness were tested by several climatic challenges which threatened food security and destroyed infrastructure. These multiple hazards have highlighted the importance of cooperation and coordinated response, as well as the need to come up with innovative mechanisms to strengthen resilience, preparedness and responsiveness for disasters including pandemics, epidemics and related hazards.

**Honourable Ministers,** in our collective efforts to consolidate peace, stability and democratic governance in our SADC Region, since our meeting in August 2019 in Dar Es Salaam three (3) Member States, namely:

Botswana, Namibia and Mauritius held elections. In that regard, allow me to congratulate Governments and the friendly people of these three SADC Member States for holding credible and peaceful elections and for upholding SADC democratic principles. It is in the same vein, I wish to inform this august Council that the United Republic of Tanzania will also hold general elections in October this year. As is customary, Tanzania will hold free, fair, transparent and participatory elections as it has done since 1958.

As I hand over the Chairmanship of the Council to my sister, **Honourable Verónica Nataniel Macamo Dlhovo**, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of Mozambique and Incoming Chair of SADC Council of Ministers, I am confident that she will continue to successfully advance SADC's agenda and regional integration principles and values despite the challenges our family is facing. This year marks 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the establishment of our Community. I am sure under your able leadership our Council will as always take lead in directing the region towards fulfillment of SADC Vision 2050, which foresees peaceful, inclusive, competitive middle to high income industrialized region where all citizens enjoy sustainable socio-economic well being,

justice and freedom, which the founders of our Community dreamed of.

**Honourable Ministers**, the handover we are witnessing is held in challenging times when the Covid-19 Pandemic has taken lives, disturbed our economies but relevant to this occasion it has denied us access to the beautiful city of Maputo, which I am certain every one of us would have loved to visit and stay. As I pray the COVID-19 to spare our Community and allow us to meet in Maputo in the future, I wish to submit to this Council that despite the fact that this hand over occasion is a symbolic act it has gone down to history and demonstrated SADC's ability to move in unison as a family and is capable of addressing challenges no matter their magnitude, complexity and severity.

**Ilustre Presidente e Querida Irmã**, desejo assegurar-lhe o meu comprometimento pessoal e o do Governo da República Unida da Tanzânia durante o seu mandato como Presidente deste Conselho. Desejo-lhe boa saúde e que tenha muito êxito, e acredito que continuará a desenvolver o excelente trabalho realizado pelos seus antecessores na consecução dos princípios e objectivos fundamentais da nossa Comunidade.

***[Honourable Incoming Chair and Dear Sister, I want to assured my personal commitment and that of the Government the United Republic of Tanzania during your tenure as Chair of this Council. While wishing you continued personal good health and success, I believe you will continue to build on the excellent work done by your predecessors in realizing the cardinal principles and objectives of our Community].***

**Honourable Ministers,**

As I conclude, I would like to once again express my appreciation on behalf of the Government and the people of the United Republic of Tanzania for the support and cooperation received from you Honourable Ministers and the SADC Secretariat during my tenure as a Chair of the Council of Ministers.

I wish this meeting fruitful discussions and deliberations as we usher SADC region towards deeper integration and prosperity and as well as our SADC Family under the able leadership of the Republic of Mozambique sails through this year which goes under the theme “40 Years building peace and security, and promoting development and resilience in the face of global challenges”.

**Thank you very much!**

**Merci beaucoup!**

**Muito obrigada!**

**Asanteni sana!**