



**REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA**

**KEY NOTE ADDRESS**

**BY**

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KHAMA  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA**

**AT THE SPECIAL SADC MINISTERIAL WORKSHOP  
ON WATER AND ENERGY**

**20<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2016, AT 0900HRS, GICC**



**Honourable Ministers from SADC Member States;  
The Executive Secretary of SADC, Dr. Tax and your  
Deputies;  
Your Excellencies, Heads of Diplomatic Missions and  
International Organisations;  
Senior Government Officials from SADC Member States;  
International Cooperating Partners;  
Heads of Civil Society Organisations;  
Distinguished Guests;**

**Good morning to you all.**

1. I am pleased to welcome you all to this important Workshop.  
I take special note and appreciate your presence at this meeting, and trust that having made Botswana ***"Our Pride and Your Destination"***, your stay will be memorable.
2. As you may be aware, we have planned a series of workshops to address serious issues confronting our region. This Water and Energy Workshop is now the second to be held. I am happy to note that the first Workshop on Food Security and Poverty Eradication was successfully held recently and came up with recommendations to be put before the SADC Summit in August.

3. The convening of these Workshops was prompted by the eminent social, economic and environmental challenges that the SADC region is experiencing, which range from acute water and energy shortages, extreme drought that has adverse impact on the region's food security, as well as the increasing depletion of our wildlife resource.
4. I therefore, found it fitting that as the current Chair of SADC, we should convene these Ministerial Workshops, which provides an important platform to collectively dialogue with the aim of identifying short, medium and long term solutions to the current challenges.
5. It is therefore my hope that this joint Energy and Water Ministerial Workshop will objectively examine the issues related to water and energy challenges.
6. An opportunity therefore exists to jointly review the impact of the climate change induced cyclical droughts and propose response measures. A further reflection and evaluation should be dedicated to stock taking on the progress and challenges in the implementation of the priorities in the Energy and Water Sector Projects as contained in the 2012



## SADC Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan (RIDMP).

7. The SADC Region is facing a number of multiple challenges related to energy and water availability, delivery, access and affordability with crippling effects on our economies. For example, indicators have revealed that access to electricity in rural areas is below 10% in most Member States and that the overall electricity access for the region stands below 40% compared to 44% for Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) region.
8. There is no better performance in the water sector. Alarming, the SADC 2015 figures indicated that out of the over 292 million SADC region's population, 60% has access to safe drinking water while only 40% has access to adequate sanitation facilities. This less enviable record is a serious indictment on the region's efforts to roll-out water and sanitation infrastructure services. The Regional Infrastructure Master Plan estimates were that, in order to support regional development by 2027, there is need to increase the current 14% of the stored water resources to at least 25%.

9. These figures indicate that the Region has to muster greater political will in order to ensure delivery in accordance with priorities of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 6, 7, and 9 on increasing access to safe water and sanitation, access to affordable clean energy and infrastructural development for industrialisation of our Member States.
10. Clearly, there has to be better approaches to the challenge of delivery and implementation of the otherwise well conceived water and energy infrastructure projects across the region.
11. It is, however, pleasing to note that, efforts are in place to address the recurring implementation challenges. You may be aware, of the Energy Ministerial Task Force (EMTF) established in 2004 with the purpose of providing impetus to the implementation of power projects and addressing the power crisis in the SADC Region.
12. In the same vein, the Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan (RIDMP, 2012) contains a pronounced water sector programme to support the development of water resources infrastructure with its 34 approved projects. We should, therefore, endeavour to do

more and compel action on the plans that are so well set out and articulated in the regional strategic framework documents.

13. The proposed phased approach to the implementation of the SADC Regional Strategic Action Plans provides an excellent opportunity to respond to the regional water challenges. In addition, the Regional Climate Change Adaptation for water, if fully implemented, could assist the region's preparedness to deal with floods, drought and other climate change induced phenomena.
14. It is also important that we broaden our discussions to the existing Energy, Water, Food nexus. Invariably, the inter-linkages in the energy, water and food sectors cannot be overemphasised, and require efficient management of demand and supply to ensure proper correlation.
15. We have all observed how the decrease in water availability has had adverse impact on the production of food in this region. The prolonged dry spells experienced in some member states largely affected crop production during the 2014/15 rainfall season with a 21% decrease in cereal production from 2015-2016. In the same vein, other



countries experienced extreme weather events like heavy floods that wiped out crops, worsening the region's food insecurity situation.

16. A key message to our deliberations today, should therefore be about the realization that Energy and Water are critical ingredients to the SADC Region's efforts aimed at advancing economic development, regional integration and poverty reduction strategies.

17. The overall objective is to ensure access to reliable electricity and water supplies as key drivers of our respective national economic activities. Reducing transaction costs in the energy and power sectors could positively spur growth of our investment, trade and industry necessary for enhancing the economic and social wellbeing of our respective communities.

18. As already alluded to, the SADC Infrastructure Development Master Plan is a strategic framework document which guides the implementation of efficient and cost-effective regional trans-boundary infrastructure networks in an integrated manner in various sectors. These include mainly water, energy, transport, tourism, meteorology and

telecommunication, which constitute SADC's Regional Infrastructure Development Programme. Therefore, if the status of energy and water supply services situation in the Region does not improve, the SADC Industrialization Strategy and Roadmap could remain a pipe dream.

19. It is my earnest hope that at the end of this Workshop, the meeting will adopt an Action Plan which will detail activities to be undertaken in order to mitigate challenges being faced in the implementation of the Energy and Water Sector projects.

20. The activities in the Action Plan should aim to address, among others, the following;

- i. How the SADC Region is addressing the impact of the current drought on the energy and water sectors;
- ii. How the Region can comprehensively address the energy and water insecurity of the Region and what immediate and short term remedies are available;
- iii. Why the SADC Region continues to find itself unprepared for these extreme events and how we can best plan for resilience;
- iv. How the Region can develop an optimal energy mix, incorporating all forms of energy, including cleaner



energy technologies and sources, bearing in mind that those nations who rely mainly on cleaner energy technologies and sources seem worst hit by drought events and what role can the inter-basin water transfers play in this regard; and

- v. How the impact of drought on the energy and water sectors affects food security in the Region.

21. I strongly believe that if the recommended Action Plan is implemented rigorously, the SADC Region will become more resilient to drought, thus advance the agenda for industrialisation and poverty reduction, embracing the nexus approach in planning and projects design.

22. I wish to conclude by declaring this special Ministerial Workshop on Energy and Water Crisis in the Region officially open.

23. Thank you.



