



SADC MEETING

OF MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR AND SOCIAL PARTNERS

**HORIZON DECENT WORK: ADVANCING
CONNECTIVITY, COHERENCE AND INCLUSIVITY**

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**CAPE TOWN INTERNATIONAL
CONVENTION CENTRE, SOUTH AFRICA**



labour

Department:
Labour
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

2018 MEETING OF SADC MINISTERS FOR EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR AND SOCIAL PARTNERS

2 March 2018

Cape Town, South Africa

“Horizon Decent Work: Advancing Coherence, Connectivity and Inclusivity”

We, the SADC Ministers for Employment and Labour and Social Partners, having met in Cape Town on 1-2 March 2018, to contribute to an integrated future for the region, by exploring ways and approaches for fostering collaboration to reduce unemployment, inequality and poverty through employment policies that will facilitate inclusive economic growth for all Member States:

1. Welcome the Union of the Comoros to the SADC family, as announced at the 37th Ordinary SADC Summit in August 2016, and commit to closely work together within the context of the SADC Employment and Labour Sector (SADC-ELS);
2. In pursuance of regional integration and leveraging on synergies, seek to establish a conducive and harmonious labour market within the region;
3. Pledge that in order to advance labour rights, connectivity, policy coherence and inclusivity, will continue promoting employment opportunities for our societies and economies that will benefit all our Member States and peoples of Southern Africa;
4. Recognise that cooperation is key to regional integration in all spheres of labour market regulation within state and cross-state issues that underpin the SADC Decent Work Programme and commit to pursuing employment, fundamental principles and rights at work, social protection and social dialogue.
5. Commit to creating an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises in the SADC region by providing conducive legal and regulatory environment, and political stability
6. Commit to the institutionalisation of endeavours aimed at deepening our cooperation through the advancement of knowledge sharing and technical cooperation including tripartite forums for dispute prevention and resolution bodies/ agencies; labour inspection; and public employment services;
7. Acknowledge on-going efforts geared towards enhancing the programme of the SADC-ELS such as the formalisation of the informal economy and portability of Social Security benefits taking into account the ILO Recommendation 204 and the SADC Code on Social Security, respectively;
8. Upholding the principle of inclusiveness, urge Member States to develop and implement inclusive employment policies, strategies and programmes that address the digital divide, rural-urban divide and ensure the participation of people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.

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9. Commit to building on the results of previous meetings and relevant international frameworks, notably the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Programme (RISDP), African Union Agenda 2063 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

We hereby commit to the following policy priorities informed by the Future of Work:

PROMOTION OF DECENT WORK

10. In line with Article 4 of SADC Charter of Fundamental Social Rights and ILO's Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, note the programme of action agreed at 2017 SADC ELS and endorse the recommendations for the establishment of tripartite regional forums on labour dispute resolution, labour inspection and public employment services, to deliberate on issues of mutual interest as well as to continue to share experiences and exchange information on best practices; and
11. Approve the rules on the operation and functioning of the forums with specific emphasis on these being convened annually to consider priority issues of regional dimension.

Promoting Decent Work for sustainable Global Supply Chain

12. In support of the 37th SADC summit's theme: *Partnering with the private sector in developing industry and value chains*, which also covered labour migration issues, and a presentation of a compendium of SADC labour laws by the private sector;
13. Recognize that value chains involve national and regional processes that facilitate investments with potential to increase manufacturing, diffusion of knowledge and technology, and local supplier linkages between Member States;
14. Acknowledge that SADC's international trade and investment flows have grown considerably over the last two decades, but integration into value chains remains low compared with other regions in the world;
15. Further acknowledge the need to address the different decent work deficits associated with Global Supply Chain through collaborative global and regional actions;
16. Work in conjunction with the ILO in increasing policy coherence amongst our Member States as well as in maximizing opportunities and addressing challenges in the promotion of decent work in global supply chains; and
17. Undertake to explore the ratification of international labour standards and their full implementation to complement national legislations and other international commitments such as the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multi-National Enterprises (MNEs) and Social Policy of 2017 in order to address decent work issues in all work circumstances, including cross-border supply chains;

Portability of social security benefits

18. Acknowledge the movement of citizens of our Member States across borders and the accompanying challenges including the portability of migrants' social security benefits. SADC has taken some positive action in this regard and amongst others, the 1998 SADC Protocol on Facilitation of Movement of Persons in SADC is a standing commitment by the region in recognising that people will inevitably move from one country to another;
19. Having adopted the SADC Cross-Border Portability of Social Security Benefits Policy Framework in May 2016, demonstrates our political commitment to make progress towards coordination, harmonization and integration of social protection systems in the region; and
20. Commit to recognizing international standards pertaining to migrants and, more importantly, standards pertaining to the portability of benefits as well as extension of social protection to non-citizens who contribute to our respective economies through their labour.

EMPLOYMENT CREATION

21. Recognising the advent of technology has changed the manner in which organisations exchange information and how they share goods and services. Digitalisation has potential to change the face of the workplace of the future, at the same time it offers new opportunities that may be exploited for the benefit of our Member States;
22. Bearing these realities in mind as well as the speed and depth of change which accompany technological revolution and digitalisation, potential to generate new demand in terms of adjustment of skills, agile social dialogue and adequate social protection provision, Member States need to direct their energies towards dealing with the resultant challenges, including issues pertaining to 'decent work deficits' by addressing labour market distortions; and
23. Commit to creating an enabling environment for job creation and prepare our economies and the region for the future in line with the SADC priorities as contained in the SADC Decent Work Programme and the SADC Protocol on Employment and Labour; and
24. Put in place employment promotion policies and build the capacity of governments, employers and workers organisations to meet these new challenges.

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

25. Recognising the challenge of unemployment and underemployment of youth and the need to adopt relevant policy interventions to stimulate employment and integration of youth in the labour markets;
26. Recognising the relevance of priorities of Goal 8 of the SDGs, African Youth Charter of 2006, and the SADC Youth Employment Policy Framework for improving employment prospects of young people in Africa and the region, respectively. Our policy priorities will continue to facilitate transition from school to work, enhance the quality of employment for the youth

through work readiness programmes;

27. Building on our previous commitments, Member States must give priority to tackling youth unemployment in the region by implementing the SADC Youth Employment Policy Framework;
28. Complementing this through developing coordinated policy and institutional frameworks that promote efficient and effective vocational training and education in the region and skills for the future of work; and
29. Further, ensure that SADC Labour Market Information Systems are implemented to monitor, evaluate and report in order to contribute to the development of employment schemes.

SMME DEVELOPMENT

30. Recognise that a significant proportion of people work in the informal economy, which contributes considerably to the region's gross domestic product (GDP), excluding agriculture. As a result, the informal economy's contribution to our economies plays a vital role in the overall long-term development objectives in the region. Policies and legislation are important in our endeavours aimed at creating a conducive, supportive environment for small, micro and medium enterprises (SMMEs) not only to thrive but also to enable them to formalize and to move up the value chain;
31. Formalisation will create sustainable jobs and also address some of the problems associated with the informal economy. These include amongst others unemployment, underemployment, poverty, gender inequality, and lack of representation and precarious work;
32. Reiterate our intent for Member States to adopt a regional approach to follow-up on the ILO Recommendation 204 on the transition from informal to formal economy in order to enhance the implementation of other regional strategic programmes and plans.
33. Endorse the implementation of the ILO R204 informal economy support project in selected Member States focusing on reconciling and adapting, where relevant, policies and legislation in order to address decent work deficits in the informal economy.

WAY FORWARD

34. As SADC Ministers for Employment and Labour and Social Partners, we commit to implementing key strategic frameworks which include the SADC Decent Work Programme (2016-2019); SADC Employment and Labour Protocol; Revised Indicative Strategic Development Plan 2015-2020 (RISDP) and the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and roadmap (2015-2063);
35. Continue our dialogue on the Future of Work and develop concrete policy actions taking into account the SADC RISDP priorities and the Industrialisation action plan;

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36. Further, reinforce our cooperation with other SADC sectors with regard to exchange and joint policy development on inclusive growth with a particular focus on health and employment, skills development and vocational training, gender equality, reducing income inequalities, promoting labour productivity and managing migration;
 37. Equally collaborate and influence as part of the Africa group, at the ILO on issues of common interest and pledge to strengthen this collaboration to further promote common objectives at other international fora;
 38. Commit to strengthen tripartism and social dialogue through guaranteeing freedom of association and collective bargaining especially in the private sector, public sector and informal sector;
 39. Reaffirm the position that ILO should continue its cooperation with the tobacco industry to promote decent work in the agricultural sector; and call upon Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia to champion this position.
 40. We appreciate the support provided by the ILO and IOM to the SADC Employment and Labour Sector. We look forward to continue our fruitful cooperation with them.
 41. We will present this Declaration to the SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government in Namibia through established SADC channels, for their consideration as they strive to advance coherence, connectivity and inclusivity in pursuit of regional integration.
 42. We thank the South African chairship in steering the meeting and other activities of the SADC ELS and look forward to our next meeting in 2019 under the chairship of the Republic of Namibia.