



REPUBLIC OF MALAWI

**ACCEPTANCE SPEECH BY HONOURABLE EISENHOWER
NDUWA MKAKA, M.P., MINISTER OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI,**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE
SADC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING,**

LILONGWE, MALAWI

FRIDAY, 13th AUGUST, 2021

Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Lilongwe 3.

August, 2021

- **Honourable Verónica Nataniel Macamo Dlhovo, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of Mozambique and Outgoing Chairperson of the SADC Council of Ministers;**
- **Honourable Ministers from the SADC Member States;**
- **Your Excellency, Dr Stergomena Lawrence Tax, Executive Secretary of SADC;**
- **Senior Officials of the Standing Committee here present;**
- **Distinguished Delegates;**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen.**

It is with great honour that I stand before you this morning to formally take over the Chairship of the SADC Council of Ministers from my Dear Sister, Honourable Verónica Nataniel Macamo Dlhovo, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Mozambique, and Outgoing Chairperson of the SADC Council of Ministers, after a remarkable performance during your tenure of office.

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Malawi, and indeed, on my own behalf, I wish to pay tribute to Honourable Verónica Nataniel Macamo Dlhovo, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Mozambique, Government and people of the Republic of Mozambique, for sparing no efforts in championing the implementation of the SADC Regional integration agenda despite the myriad of difficulties posed by COVID-19 pandemic.

My Dear Sister, you have raised the bar higher for all of us, and particularly for Malawi. As the incoming Chair, I feel deeply challenged. The Government of Malawi is, nonetheless, dedicated to sustaining the standards that you have set, and, in this regard, we are counting on the support of all Member States.

In order to ensure continuity of the implementation of Council decisions as well as SADC programmes and projects, the Government of Malawi stands ready to hold regular consultations with your government.

Honourable Ministers, Executive Secretary, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

We are gathered here in Lilongwe amidst a perilous COVID-19 pandemic, which has severely ravaged our economies. We have witnessed regional integration being tested as Member States resort to putting in place stringent preventative measures to curb the spread of the pandemic. As a result, economic activities, including trade in goods and services, as well as free movement of people, have slowed down leading to significant job losses, among others.

However, it is encouraging to note that Member States are fully committed to implementing appropriate measures to control the transmission of the virus, including addressing the challenges associated with unavailability of COVID-19 vaccines.

Honourable Ministers, Executive Secretary, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

The Government of Malawi attaches greater importance to the principles, ideals, values, goals and aspirations of our fore fathers as encapsulated in the SADC Treaty.

We are committed to continue spearheading the implementation of programmes and projects derived from the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) for 2020-2030 as guided by the SADC Vision 2050.

We are also resolved to sustaining the implementation of programmes drawn from the Theme of the Republic of Mozambique for the 40th SADC Summit titled: ***“SADC: 40 Years Building Peace and Security, and Promoting Development and Resilience in the Face of Global Challenges.”***

Honourable Ministers, Executive Secretary, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

Council is taking place at a time no country has been spared in the wake of the socio-economic situation wrecked and decimated by the ravaging COVID-19 pandemic.

We will need to muster as a Region and have coordinated efforts to respond to external shocks that have caused devastating reversals on economic gains achieved by SADC.

This Meeting provides us with a rare opportunity to discuss the socio-economic hurdles in the Region and thrash out workable solutions to rebound our economies on the sustainable path for inclusive and economic growth.

Honourable Ministers, Executive Secretary, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

In light of this, I have no doubt that our discussions will revolve around ongoing programmes, including the SADC Industrialization Strategy and Roadmap (2015-2063), which aims at doubling the share of manufacturing value added in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to 30 percent by 2030 and to 40 percent by 2050.

The emergency of COVID-19 pandemic will not only require us to redouble our efforts in industrialization but also embrace digital technological and knowledge transfer, in order to attain these ambitious goals so as to maximize new market opportunities brought forth by the operationalization of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

I have firm belief that SADC has got capacities and capabilities to surmount the current challenges and bounce back better and stronger on the road to regional prosperity.

Honourable Ministers, Executive Secretary, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

With these few remarks, I feel greatly honoured to preside over this august meeting of the SADC Council of Ministers. SADC remains a pivotal organization with a common vision and purpose of creating an integrated community with harmonized policies in order to deepen economic cooperation and integration for the wellbeing of SADC Citizens.

I strongly count on your support for the Government of the Republic of Malawi to successfully champion the regional integration agenda during its SADC Chairship. We are looking forward to working closely with you all to ensure that SADC takes forward bold steps with renewed determination in its integration agenda.

I thank you for your kind attention.

Long Live SADC!

God bless us all!

Merci Beaucoup

Muito Obrigado

Asante Sana

Zikomo Kwambiri