



Ministry of Mines & Energy
"promoting Namibia's mineral, geological and energy resources"

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY THE MINISTER OF MINES AND ENERGY,
HONOURABLE TOM K. ALWEENDO**

**38th Joint Meeting for Ministers responsible for Energy and
Ministers responsible for Water**

Senior Officials Meeting

Safari Hotel

Windhoek, Namibia

24 May 2019

Programme Director: Hon. Kornelia Shilunga, Deputy Minister of Mines and Energy, Namibia;

Honourable Ministers from SADC Member States;

Dr Thembinkosi Mhlongo, Deputy Executive Secretary responsible for Regional Integration, SADC Secretariat;

Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Senior Government Officials;

Implementing Partners;

International Partners;

Distinguished guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good morning to you all.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to Namibia. Your distinguished presence at this event, is highly appreciated as it is a clear testimony of the importance you attach to regional cooperation. As region we are faced with challenges such as severe shortages of water and that of

energy and the impact of climate change. Some of these challenges cannot be tackled effectively by individual members but rather need a collective effort to address them.

We need to ensure that decisions that we are taking are changing the lives of our people in addressing the energy and water issues and subsequently the overall Sustainable Development Goals.

Considerable efforts have been made on energy and water programmes and projects since the start of our regional cooperation. Let me highlight a few:

- (1) The continued strengthening of the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP) which has enabled a competitive electricity market in the region to flourish;
- (2) Establishment of domestic Energy and Electricity Regulators as well as the Regional Electricity Regulators Association (RERA) that provides a platform for effective co-operation between regulators;

- (3) The establishment of the SADC Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (SACREEE) to promote market adoption of sustainable energy technologies and services, and
- (4) Introduction of independent power producers that injected much needed private capital investment to expand our generation capacity;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

We acknowledge the progress that has been achieved so far but in the same vain we are challenged with security of supply in the energy and water sectors.

It is evident that demand for water and energy is increasing and will continue to increase in line with our developmental strides but also due the ever changing climatic conditions.

The impacts of climate change are becoming more evident and detrimental as seen by the recent cyclones, flooding and prevalent drought in the SADC region during the past rainy seasons.

The effects of extreme climatic conditions threaten our livelihoods; water, energy and food security in the region.

Honourable Ministers,

Our security of supply is threatened.

Threaten in the sense that aging fossil fuel plants have come to the end of their lifespan and need to be decommissioned.

Financing for fossil fuel plants has dried up or comes with stringent conditions attached. The age of an environmentally conscious consumer coupled with availability of alternative technologies necessitates us as leaders to make more radical sustainable choices to bring in new and sustainable infrastructure as well as upgrade our existing infrastructure.

If global warming is to be kept below 2° Celsius, an integrated approach is needed to face our challenges. We need to stay abreast not just on regional trends but also international trends to prepare us for the future.

It is crucial that we as a region focus on the following:

1. Energy framework

Reviewing of our regional energy framework to reflect the current challenges and opportunities that will guide the region's energy future. It is therefore imperative that we structure the development of the energy sector in such a way that it yields the maximum development benefits, not only for the current generation, but also those following into our footsteps tomorrow and thereafter. I therefore urge the SADC Secretariat to put all their efforts in concluding the revision of the Protocol on Energy of 1996, the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) and the Regional Gas Master Plan, amongst others.

2. Regional Projects

I am glad to note some progress in the regional projects being undertaken and coordinated by our regional implementing organisations and individual member states. These include the short-term measures including rehabilitation of old plants and building of new power

generation projects to add more than 17,800 MW to address the overall generation deficit in order to achieve power supply adequacy by 2022. I am pleased to note that 62% of this new generation will be from renewable energy sources. The Cross-border Interconnector Projects are being prioritized to enhance security of supply and increase power trading in the region. Please help me express our appreciation to the Cooperating Partners who are assisting in funding the preparation and implementation of the interconnector projects.

3. Private Sector

It is crucial that the private sector plays an active role in addressing the future electricity needs of the region. This will alleviate the funding burden from Government, relieve the borrowing requirements of our National Utilities and introduce generation technologies that were not previously considered as part of the core generation options, but yet could play a vital role as part of the future electricity supply options, in particular off-grid, embedded or distributed

generation and small-scale renewable projects. However, it is crucial that I point you to the fact that electricity is no longer a luxury and it is crucial that the electricity we generate is affordable because our people must have access to affordable electricity. I therefore encourage the independent power producers (IPPs) to employ efficient generation technologies that ascertain a win-win situation where the IPP gets a return on its investment and at the same time the customer is supplied with affordable power.

Director of Ceremonies, Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, under the chairmanship of Namibia, SADC has adopted the theme; “Promoting Infrastructure Development and Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development”. I am glad to inform that active engagement with the youth has commenced with Youth Dialogue Forum held on the side-lines of the launch of SACREEE on 24 October 2018 under the theme, “Empowering the Youth through CleanTech and Innovation”, the Global Water

Partnership (GWP) – Southern Africa held a Youth Forum on the Water Energy Food nexus in March 2019 and the GWP has henceforth adopted the SADC Youth Water-Energy-Food Innovation Network. At the same time SACREEE together with IRENA are supporting renewable energy entrepreneurship support facility primarily targeting the Youth and Women in the SADC Region to enhance their capacity to develop and manage sustainable clean energy businesses.

As the youth are the future of our nations their involvement in the planning processes and implementation of infrastructure cannot be over emphasised.

I therefore urge all our implementing partners to involve the youth in all the activities.

SACREEE was established to assist member states in promoting renewable energy. The benefits of SACREEE to the SADC region are enormous including cleaner and

sustainable energy generation, contribution to industrialization and employment creation as well as youth empowerment, to mention but a few. In that vein SACREEE is already implementing several notable projects with the support of development partners including, the European Union, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), Africa Renewable Energy Initiative, European Union, the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) and UNIDO. Just last week SACREEE held the 1st SADC Industrial Energy Efficiency Conference here in Windhoek in support of the implementation of the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap 2015-2063.

The pending signing of the SACREEE Inter-Governmental Memorandum of Agreement (IGMoA) by all Member States has severe opportunity and credibility costs. It has become a question of survival for the institution. Several funding commitments of development partners have been lost and no legally binding partnerships could be signed. Due to the

absence of long-term contractual arrangements, it is difficult to recruit and retain senior experts at the Centre. The Austrian Development Agency and UNIDO have indicated their intention to withdraw their support by June 2019 if no progress is made in operationalization of SACREEE. I therefore implore you Honourable Ministers to prioritise the signing of the SACREEE Inter-Governmental Memorandum of Agreement to empower this Centre to execute its mandate without hindrance.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

The African Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI) was launched at COP21 in Paris 2015 and endorsed by all African Heads of State and Government through the African Union. AREI aims to enable Africa to quickly move to modern distributed energy systems that are renewable, smart and able to both feed industry and reach people currently without adequate access to modern energy services. The Initiative seeks to achieve at least 10 GigaWatt of new and

additional people-centred renewable energy generation capacity by 2020, and universal energy access and the addition of at least 300 GigaWatt by 2030.

Since its launch in December 2015 AREI, significant progress was made. The Governing Instruments were approved at the fifth Board meeting in January 2018, and at the Board meeting held in July 2018 in Nouakchott, Director of the IDU, a citizen of Niger was appointed. The Independent Delivery Unit (IDU) functions as the secretariat of the Board and the implementing agency of AREI. With the assistance of the IDU, five regional consultations were held to ensure awareness of AREI by all countries, to build ownership and basis for broad-based participation in each country. Namibia (as representative of Southern African region) through the Ministry of Mines and Energy hosted on 29-30 November 2018 the fourth AREI Regional Consultation, for the Southern African Region.

At the 7th Board of Directors' Meeting held on 10 February 2019, the Board decided that the African Development

Bank would relinquish its role as host of the IDU and Trustee and that new hosting and trustee arrangements shall be put in place. Namibia has expressed her interest to host the Independent Delivery Unit. I would like to ask the Southern African countries to support our candidacy.

In conclusion,

In view of the energy challenges faced by the SADC member states, energy security is crucial for the region to achieve its goals of industrialisation and sustainable growth. We need to recognise the fact that any shortage of electricity supply will have a serious and negative impact on our industries, investment attraction, growth and job creation.

It is said that a plan without action is a dream; and action without a plan is a nightmare. Let's therefore continue to implement our plans and strategies with dedication and urgency in the interest of our citizens.

With these few remarks, I declare the meeting officially open.

Thank you.
