

# REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**KEY NOTE ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY**

**DR. NANGOLO MBUMBA, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
NAMIBIA, ON THE MEETING OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN  
DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY (SADC) COMMITTEES OF MINISTERS  
RESPONSIBLE FOR ICT, INFORMATION, METEOROLOGY AND  
TRANSPORT**

**SEPTEMBER 27, 2018**

**SAFARI COURT, WINDHOEK**

## **Director of Ceremonies,**

Hon. John Mutorwa, Minister of Works and Transport and Hon. Stanley Simataa, Minister of Information and Communication Technology, Republic of Namibia and our Co-hosts;

Vice Chair of SADC, Honourable Ministers ICT, Information, Meteorology and Transport from the United Republic of Tanzania; Honourable Ministers responsible for ICT, Information, Meteorology and Transport from the SADC Region;

Dr. Thembinkosi Mhlongo, Deputy Executive Secretary- Regional Integration (DES-RI) of SADC;

Your Excellencies, High Commissioners and Ambassadors;

Honourable Laura McLeod Katjirua, Governor of the Khomas Region;

Hon. Muesee Kazapua, the Mayor of the City of Windhoek;

Senior Officials from the SADC Member States;

Representatives for Regional, Continental, International Organizations and our Implementing Agencies;

Captains of the ICT, Information, Transport and Meteorology Industries;

Executive Secretaries from SADC Implementing Agencies;

Media Representatives;

Distinguished Delegates;

Invited Guests;

Ladies and gentlemen,

**Good morning**

1. It gives me great pleasure to address this august Joint Meeting of Ministers of Information Communication Technology (ICT), Information, Meteorology and Transport in our vibrant City of Windhoek, which being one of the most sparkling locations in Namibia, is proud to be your host.
2. You may recall that during the just ended 38<sup>th</sup> SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government, in this very same city under the theme, "Promoting Infrastructure Development and Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development," the Chairperson of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), His Excellency Dr. Hage Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia, pledged his total support and commitment in taking the SADC Regional Integration Agenda to new heights.
3. Therefore, the meeting of this important cluster of SADC Minister's dealing with soft and hard infrastructure such as information communication technology, information, meteorology and transport underscores the need to translate the development wishes of SADC into tangible results which are beneficial to the SADC community. In this regard, infrastructure development forms the backbone of our developmental agenda within SADC. ICT, Information, Meteorology and Transport sectors are all integrally weaved into the intricate spider web of the SADC development

contours and are therefore essential to consolidate and advance SADC's regional integration.

## **Ladies and Gentlemen**

4. I am informed that the objective of the meeting of this SADC Cluster, and particularly of the Committees of Ministers responsible for the mentioned subsectors, here today, is to review the progress which was made, and identify the bottlenecks which are stifling SADC's integration agenda, for resolution.
5. It is true that SADC has registered major improvements in the various sectors of ICT, information, meteorology and transport over the past decades, particularly if we take into account, that much of these advances were registered only after the end of the widespread military conflict in Southern Africa since 1990 to date.
6. For example, I am informed that in the meteorology sector, new satellite technology and climate modelling on super computers are improving Africa's ability to respond to drought, flood, storms, fires and heatwaves. However, more is needed for SADC to better cope with the effects of global warming. Particularly, strategic collaborations and technology with third Parties from the developed and developing

countries are essential for SADC to premise their policy planning on effective prognosis of the weather and other climatic occurrences.

7. In the area of information communication technology, SADC has been integrated with the rest of Africa and Europe, via the West Africa Cable System (WACS), which is an ultra-high capacity fiber-optic submarine cable. This has resulted in access to fast, reliable and effective internet connectivity in the Region. The introduction of internet with its various applications such as google, facebook, twitter and WhatsApp, has fundamentally altered, positively our way of communication in the region.
8. In fact, the internet alone has led to the reduction in communication costs as it has substantially decreased the usage of older and more expensive communication mediums such as personal mails, fixed telephones, faxes and so forth. More-over the introduction of the mobile phone device has redefined the craft of commercial business. Today, business can be conducted from anywhere other than the office, as services can also be provided in a similar manner.
9. Similarly, in the area of information, whereas in the past we had very few sources of information, the dawn of new technology together with the positives also brought negative

externalities such as the proliferation of fake news, group hate speech, and dissemination of pornographic materials, cybercrime and similar undesirable practices.

10. The advent of these ground shifting communication technologies and inventions therefore serve as a challenge for us to ponder on the appropriate policy and regulatory response by SADC governments, as the implications of the wrong usage and application of these inventions can in some cases go diametrically against the acceptable norms and values within our societies.
  
11. Thus, I am happy to note that the Senior Officials and their colleagues have been working tirelessly over the years to forge synergy and coherence of policies and procedures in this area through coordination with various member states in the region. In this regard, I am told that progress has been made through the SADC Harmonise Model Laws on Cyber Security and the setting up of the Computer Incident Response Team (CIRT). These are designed to build capacity within the region by establishing national Computer Incident Response Teams and to create more awareness via outreach programs among our citizens on cyber security issues.

**Ladies and gentlemen**

12. Regarding the transport sector in SADC, although much is still to be done to harmonise the various transport modes such as on air, maritime, roads and rail, I am pleasantly told that SADC has also registered some progress in this area. For example, the Regional Railway Revitalization Initiative (RRI) Pilot Rail Study Project, by the NEPAD Business Foundation commenced with the execution of the North South Corridor Study in February 2017.
13. This programme is of paramount importance as it will help us to correct the imbalanced burden of the 80% regional road usage versus the remaining small portion by rail. We thus need to move rail friendly cargo away from road as the road trucks are accelerating the destruction of SADC's road infrastructure. We hope that during this meeting honourable Ministers, will share information and strategize on the development of a SADC railway revitalization strategy that will help us to industrialise.
14. Moreover, maritime transport is a key sub-sector, with the ports playing a critical role in our transport corridors, and in integrating continental Africa with its islands. I am reliably informed that the Tripartite COMESA-EAC-SADC together with Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) through the coordination of IOC jointly prepared a programme on Enhancing Maritime

Connectivity Project (EMCP) to support the Maritime Transport Sector in our Region.

15. In conclusion, we have good stories to tell about SADC and all of us here must ensure that our citizenry are aware of it, as we continue to build and shape the SADC that we want and contribute to vibrant, stable and flourishing SADC, we must keep informing ourselves, our stakeholders and the Citizens of this region, in order to appreciate the true value of this regional organization called SADC.
16. With these few words, allow me now to officially declare this meeting open and I wish you successful deliberations.

**Thank you for your attention**