



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

KEY NOTE ADDRESS AT THE OCCASION OF THE LAUNCH OF THE SADC CENTRE FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY (SACREEE)

By

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SAFARI COURT CONFERENCE CENTRE, WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA

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- Director of Ceremonies;
- Honourable SADC Ministers responsible for Energy
- Development partners
- Captains of Electricity Supply Industry;
- Heads of Energy Regulatory Authorities
- Members of the business community
- Members of the Media;
- Distinguished Invited Guests;
- All Protocol observed
- Ladies and Gentlemen;

On behalf of the Government and People of the Republic of Namibia I wish to extend a warm welcome to all invited guests on this important occasion – the launch of the SADC Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (SACREEE).

It is an honour today to address this important gathering, and I am delighted that the opportunity to launch the Centre has finally come to a realisation. Stimulating discussions have taken place since yesterday with the Public Dialogue Forum, which was focussing on Youth, Innovation and Clean Technology. The roundtable discussions by partners of SACREEE and the SADC Ministers have also highlighted the critical challenges with infrastructure and socio-economic development.

At the same time, opportunities are in abundance especially with sustainable energy as the backbone to address these challenges. Partnership is therefore key to unlocking the economic value brought by renewable energy. At regional level, we have understood the challenges at hand as well as the opportunities out there. That is why SADC, under the chairmanship of Namibia has adopted the theme; “Promoting Infrastructure Development and Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development”. The launch of SACREEE supports the operationalisation of this theme. During the year I look forward for SACREEE to implement the Theme through activities such as public dialogues involving the youth in all the Member States.

Distinguished guest, Ladies and gentlemen,

In 2015, SADC Ministers responsible for Energy Affairs approved the establishment of a SADC Subsidiary organisation to coordinate renewable energy and energy efficiency issues in the region. Namibia agreed and has the honour to host the Regional body.

This was subsequently endorsed by the 35th SADC Council of Ministers in their meeting in 2015.

The establishment of SACREEE came at an opportune time in the region where there is diminishing electricity generation capacities. There are several reasons for the persistent energy crises though sometimes there is surplus in other member states. A number of issues have been raised as to the reasons but I must emphasise that the aspect of sustainability is not sufficiently considered when planning for the future.

The over-reliance on fossil fuels which are finite and traditional biomass has been the status quo for many of our countries. Whilst the region's population is growing at a fast rate, fossil fuels are not going to sustain the region since they are not renewable. Therefore the business as usual of the expansion of existing energy systems based on fossils is not viable. Nuclear energy, despite its limited greenhouse effects is also not a viable solution for the region due to high capital costs and the waste disposal, which has to be carefully handled.

It is my belief that conserving our resources wisely will ensure that energy is available on demand to all our citizens without compromising the ability of future generations to use them. Environmental concerns and the climate dimension has placed conditions that when power is produced, mitigation for emissions have to be in place thus increasing the cost of power produced. The over-reliance on big dams also have its own problems due to the consistent drought and flooding that is affecting our generation of power in the region.

Honourable Ministers, ladies and gentlemen,

The region's energy generation capacity can be sustainable. However it would require commitment through new, smart, ambitious and effective approaches. We are all aware that the energy industry continues to change and evolve. The sector will rely on advanced technologies for reliable and innovative ways to drive the SADC Industrial Strategy and Roadmap. The citizens of the region require an energy sector that will provide reliable and affordable energy to meet their aspirations of a modern and healthy lifestyles.

The SADC's renewable energy resources are huge and underutilised. I believe therefore that the establishment of SACREEE will unlock this potential by providing business focussed guidance on the regional market opportunities and risks. Economies throughout the region need to be provided with tools, models and lessons learned to transform and strengthen their energy sector. SACREEE will ensure that sustainable growth of any renewable power business will require the analysis of the interconnected and grid integration with variable power. I am glad to note that Southern African Power Pool (SAPP) and Regional Energy Regulatory Agency (RERA) are

working together with SACREEE to provide researched models for the amount of renewable energy that can be interconnected to the grid.

Here at home, Namibia has taken big strides in the growth of the renewable energy industry and the involvement of Independent Power Producers (IPPs). Commendable efforts have led to 18 Independent Power Producers that have signed Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) with NamPower to supply 170 MW of renewable energy generation projects by 2020. As at September 2018, 11 renewable energy power plants have been commissioned, and contributes 55 MW to the country's electricity supplies.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have reliably been informed that through the SADC Status Report on Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency in the Region, a number of activities are taking place and there is remarkable growth in the field of renewable energy and energy efficiency in the SADC Member States. I believe SACREEE will be constantly engaging your countries and assisting in the development of renewable energy and energy efficiency systems. Our industries consume a lot of energy and using renewable energy technologies and energy efficient equipment is essential for their competitiveness internationally.

Honourable Ministers,

As you approved the establishment of a regional body to coordinate activities on renewable energy and energy efficiency, I would urge and request your support to SACREEE. No SADC Institution will be relevant and deliver the much needed services to the public that are necessary to fuel our development if it does not get the support to carry out its functions in a sustainable manner. SACREEE needs your support and assistance in embarking on resource mobilisation to assist Member States. It is important that going forward we need to ensure that SACREEE does not continue to depend on external support only; and that we as Member States take full ownership of our institution. As a demonstration of our commitment to SACREEE, I would like to urge all the Member States to speed up the process of signing the Inter-governmental Memorandum of Agreement

I would like to thank the SADC Secretariat for their continued support to ensure SACREEE is in existence as directed by the Council of Ministers. I would also like to thank both the Government of Austria through and UNIDO for their financial support since the establishment of SACREEE. It is my wish that both will continue to be with us to make SACREEE a success. Let me also thank all the sponsors and those who worked tirelessly to see that this day is a success. The role played by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) in supporting SACREEE in its development programmes is commendable and I am hopeful that the partnership continues. I am also aware that the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and

the East African Community (EAC) are also forging partnerships with SACREEE, something that will benefit the regions and the African Continent.

With these remarks, I now declare SACREEE officially launched; and I thank you.
