

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY PRESIDENT RAMAPHOSA AT THE
38TH SADC SUMMIT
17 AUGUST 2018 WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA

Your Excellency, Dr Hage Geingob, President of the Republic
of Namibia,

Your Majesty, King Mswati III of the Kingdom of eSwatini,

Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,

Your Excellency President Paul Kagame of the Republic of
Rwanda and Chairperson of the African Union,

Your Excellency Mr Moussa Mahamat Faki, Chairperson of the
African Union Commission,

Honourable Ministers,

SADC Executive Secretary,

Excellencies, Ambassadors and High Commissioners,

Representatives of the Regional and International
Organisations, Senior Officials from the SADC Member States,

SADC Secretariat Officials

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a great privilege for me to welcome you to the 38th
Ordinary Summit of the SADC Heads of State and
Government. It is a particular honour to do so on SADC Day,
the 17th of August.

This day marks 26 years since we signed the Treaty that established our organisation – a treaty that I had the privilege to sign on behalf of the African National Congress.

Let me express my gratitude to my brother, His Excellency President Hage Geingob and the people of Namibia for the warm reception and gracious hospitality accorded to all of us. I wish to thank you, Your Excellencies, for the guidance and support you accorded South Africa since our country took over the Chairship of SADC last year.

It has been an honour to work with fellow Member States in advancing all areas of the SADC agenda. Let us continue to work in unity to do more for our people, together with our people.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

The year 2017/18 marked the third year of implementation of the Revised Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan 2015-2020.

While we recorded significant achievements in the implementation of programmes across all priority areas, there are still areas that require our urgent attention.

As regional leaders, we have a responsibility to prioritise the needs of our people and find lasting and sustainable solutions to poverty, inequality and underdevelopment. That is why the 37th SADC Summit held last year in Pretoria adopted the theme of “Partnering with the Private Sector in Developing Industry and Regional Value Chains”.

Member States were urged to operationalise the theme through implementation of projects in the focus areas of agro-processing, mineral beneficiation, energy and pharmaceuticals.

Members States were also called upon to work to develop skills and create mechanisms for the involvement of the private sector.

South Africa hosted the second SADC Industrialisation Week during 2017, which created a platform for targeted engagement with the private sector and deepened the focus on key investment opportunities in the region.

The Industrialisation Week that was recently held in Windhoek is a further testimony to our collective efforts to strengthen public-private partnerships within our region. Over the period of our chairship we have been able to secure more than \$500 million of committed productive investments by South African companies in each of the priority value chains across the region.

The investments cover forestry, agriculture and agro-processing, fertilisers, mining and mineral processing, and pharmaceuticals. They reflect South Africa's commitment to moving from a trade-based to an investment-led development strategy for the region. The previous Summit directed the Secretariat to facilitate the establishment of a regional Natural Gas Committee to promote the inclusion of gas in the regional energy mix.

The Terms of Reference on the Working Group for the Inter State Natural Gas Committee were approved, culminating in the signing of a Statement of Intent on Cooperation on the Development of Regional Gas Market and Infrastructure during the joint meeting of SADC Ministers responsible for energy and water in June 2018

There have been a number of concrete initiatives over the last year that now form part of the SADC work programme:

■ The framework model on the control and management of the Fall Army Worm is being rolled out with the Food and Agriculture Organization. Capacity building workshops have been held in Mozambique, Madagascar and Zambia.

■ A programme to develop capacity in industrial policy making has been initiated, with South Africa hosting a SADC Industrial Policy for Policy Makers training programme in September 2017 as a pilot initiative.

■ The SADC Integrated Regional Electronic Settlement System has gained significant momentum, establishing a firm platform for increased intra-SADC trade and investment and further strengthening regional financial integration.

■ The SADC Energy Foresight and Assessment Study in support of the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap is underway, with data having been gathered from six of the member states.

■ A SADC Engineering Needs and Numbers study is close to completion. It aims to obtain a better understanding of the engineering capacities in the SADC region to allow for better planning and implementation of infrastructure programmes.

■ As part of World Food Day, a model has been developed for regional food security. The model will be launched during this year's World Food Day in Namibia.

■ Progress has been made in addressing tuberculosis in the mining sector across 10 SADC countries. More than 10,000 claimants received payment and one-stop service centres were opened in Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique and Eswatini, thereby increasing access of ex-mineworkers to decentralised services.

■ The shared procurement of essential medicines and

commodities in SADC has been identified as a priority with the aim to establish an autonomous non-profit organisation called the SADC Pooled Procurement Services.

- The Medicines Regulatory Harmonisation project is focusing on establishing and strengthening regional and sub-regional networks of regulatory authorities.

- The implementation of Phase III of the SADC Roam-Like-At-Home Initiative began in October 2017. This entails the development of a harmonised cost model for wholesale and retail roaming tariffs to be used by all national regulatory authorities in SADC.

- A task team was appointed to work on a framework to operationalise the SADC Declaration on the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Your Excellencies,

Over the years, SADC Member States have acknowledged that the private sector should play a leading role in creating jobs, driving trade and industrialisation and fostering regional integration.

We therefore need to ensure that we create a conducive environment for business to thrive, and to deepen our engagement with the private sector. Collaboration with the private sector is important not only in designing SADC regional strategies and initiatives, but also in identifying impediments to greater regional economic integration.

The ability of SADC countries to establish a competitive industrial sector and promote greater industrial linkages has been hindered by the lack of infrastructure in areas such as energy, transport and communications. Regional cooperation in the development of infrastructure will lower transaction costs, enhance regional markets and make production and exports

more competitive.

Investment in infrastructure must therefore be a central priority. Through our joint efforts, the region has now established a healthy pipeline of bankable projects, which we now need to see through to completion.

The region remains peaceful and stable, underlining the value of the successful mediation and conflict prevention strategies undertaken by Member States in collaboration with the SADC Secretariat.

We should continue to be guided by adherence to democratic values and practices, good governance and credible and regular national elections. The consolidation of democracy and the elevation of the rule of law across the region is a sign of the improved effectiveness of our regional institutions and mechanisms. Parliamentary democracy is at the centre of our collective mission to give expression to the will of the people. Our colleagues in the SADC Parliamentary Forum have indicated their readiness to transform the Forum into a SADC Parliament.

The establishment of a SADC Parliament is therefore a matter to which we need to give due consideration. With the expiration of both the Regional Indicative Strategic Plan and the Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ by the end of 2020, SADC needs to begin formulating a long-term vision and a strategic plan, in line with the decision of the June 2012 Summit.

It should identify where the region wants to be by 2050, and should direct our resources and mobilise our people towards the achievement of our shared goals. We should aim to have the strategy presented at our Summit in 2019.

Your Excellencies,
Our region offers a young demographic, a growing consumer

class and great opportunities for industrialisation.

We need to harness the youthfulness of our region to develop our human capital, speed up economic growth and foster sustainability. There are an increasing number of young entrepreneurs who are exploring a range of business possibilities.

We need to support them by promoting the development of small businesses, creating vocational training programmes and preparing them with the skills they need for a rapidly changing economy.

Key to realising this is the introduction of regional centres of excellence and specialisation which can equip the youth with skills and expertise. The growth and diffusion of digital technologies is another key area which SADC needs to promote to secure the future of its people.

The digital economy is an increasingly important driver of economic growth and can play a significant role in accelerating development, enhancing productivity of existing industries, cultivating new markets and industries, and achieving inclusive, sustainable growth.

Many countries are increasingly embracing innovation and using information and communications technology to deliver public services and involve people in decision-making processes.

The ICT sector is powering growth and change in areas such as banking, retail, health, education and entertainment. While the economic potential associated with the digital economy is undoubtedly significant, not all countries are equally equipped to capitalise on such opportunities.

It is therefore critical that digital cooperation should be an important part of our regional integration agenda. Progressing towards a digital economy is a critical step in the region's path to sustainable development.

A regional strategy for a digital economy would include the promotion of digital innovations and technologies, sharing experiences on e- Government, promoting e-commerce, promoting regional digital payments, strengthening broadband infrastructure, building cloud computing infrastructure and moving towards a digital single market.

Excellencies,

In conclusion, I wish to acknowledge the role played by the SADC Executive Secretary, Dr Stergomona Lawrence Tax, her Deputies and the staff of the SADC Secretariat for their dedication and commitment in ensuring that SADC continues to pursue its mandate.

SADC continues to cherish the collaboration and support of our international cooperating partners, who continue to make a significant contribution towards sustainable development in our region.

I wish to thank Your Excellencies for the confidence you placed in South Africa during the period of our Chairship.

When we took the baton from our predecessor, His Majesty King Mswati III of the Kingdom of eSwatini, we chose a theme that builds on the foundation laid by previous Chairs.

I have no doubt that with His Excellency Hage Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia, at the helm of our organisation, the SADC integration agenda will be advanced even further.

I wish all of us very productive deliberations. It gives me great pleasure to hand over the Chairship of SADC to his Excellency,

Dr Hage Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia.

I thank you.

Issued by The Presidency

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