



SADC PF

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FAREWELL

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Curtain draws on 38th SADC PF Plenary



Delegates to the 38th SADC PF Plenary Assembly Session.

Staff Reporters

SWAKOPMUND- The 38th Plenary Assembly Session of the SADC Parliamentary Forum ended yesterday with calls for Parliamentarians to draw lessons from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) so that they can effectively support the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the world's new universal development framework.

Mr Neil Boyer, Senior Advisor with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Namibia and one of the experts that made presentations at the start of the Plenary, told delegates that the SADC Region and the African continent were "off track" with respect to the achievement of some of the eight MDGs.

"On the goal related to poverty, we are off track as a continent. We have not achieved the global goal of halving poverty," he said, adding that rising inequalities, unemployment and unplanned urbanization were perpetuating poverty. On an encouraging note, Boyer said the continent was on track towards achieving universal primary education. "We are also on track on gender equality and the empowerment of women. We find that the percentage of girls enrolled in higher education increased from 0.3 percent in 1990 to 0.92 percent in 2012."

Also heartening was the increase in female representation in decision making bodies such as the SADC Parliamentary Forum, with countries that include Namibia and South Africa doing well in that regard. Significant progress had been noted with respect

to reducing and combating HIV and related diseases, particularly tuberculosis thanks to the rolling out of life saving HIV medication which has significantly prolonged the lives of people infected with HIV. The ripple effect was that lives of people affected by HIV who include caregivers and loved ones, had also improved.

"However we do have significant challenges on health MDGs. We know that we are off track on the reduction of child mortality although by less than 55 percent and infant mortality fell by 40 percent. We still have major challenges in child mortality which is linked to access to water, sanitation, nutrition and poverty," he said.

According to Boyer, another lingering challenge was related to maternal health, with major challenges associated with safe births, access to family planning and contraception in many countries. Additionally, the continent is still grappling with adolescent pregnancies.

"Our data suggests that we have 289 maternal deaths per 100 000 live births whereas the global average is 210 maternal deaths per 100 000 live births." Boyer said there had been sluggish progress on ensuring environmental sustainability although in some countries access to potable water had improved.

"We still have major challenges in ensuring adequate sanitation and in the global partnership for development. On the issue of external assistance, we find that very few countries have adhered to the global commitment of 0.7 percent of income for development purposes." He concluded that from a continental perspective, there had been notable progress on MDGs related to education, gender equality and combating HIV. Unfinished business was in poverty, infant and child mortality, maternal mortality, access to sanitation, conservation and increasing contribution to global merchandise exports.

"As we transition from MDGs to SDGs, we are optimistic that we will make

substantive progress with your support as Parliamentarians responsible for oversight," he said. Speaking on the same theme, Mr Nandi Mazeingo, the National Development Advisor with the National Planning Commission of Namibia, spoke about the link between MDGs and SDGs. He explained that the SDGs, which are 17, had been formulated to deal with the unfinished business of MDGs. He said the African continent had not been involved in the formulation of MDGs which had failed to focus on African priorities. However, the continent had actively participated in the formulation of SDGs and had come up with an African Common Position. Namibia and South Africa represented the SADC Region in the discussions that culminated in the adoption of SDGs.

"Through the Agenda Africa 2063 we were able to reach consensus on global challenges, priorities and aspirations and to emphasize the principle that we adopted in Rio sustainable development in 2012. The next development agenda brings the three dimensions of sustainable development on board. There is consideration for the environment, economy and social issues," he said.

He concluded by saying that the SDGs strive to ensure that economic growth creates jobs, given that under MDGs much of the economic growth was in capital intensive sectors in which more machines than people were being used. The National Assembly of Namibia and the SADC PF co-hosted the Plenary, which drew participation from 12 National Parliaments of SADC. The Parliaments of Tanzania and Seychelles were not represented due to recent and upcoming elections.

[Due to insufficient space in this issue, the article on "Curtain draws on 38th SADC PF Plenary" and all the Bulletins produced during the Plenary will be posted on the Parliament Website: www.parliament.na]

Speaker Katjavivi happy for hosting the 38th SADC Plenary Session



Hon. Prof. Loide Kasingo, the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Namibia

Staff Reporters

Host Speaker, Hon. Prof. Peter H. Katjavivi who has been on the ground from when delegates started to arrive ensuring the successful hosting of the Plenary said

the Plenary Session has gone well as planned. He shared his views yesterday during an interview with the member of the editorial team.

“We are absolutely happy in the way how meetings were conducted. A number of motions have been adopted and they are in the process of being finalized according to the arrangements of the Executive Committee,” he explained. He said, at 39th SADC PF Assembly Session, Parliaments will have an opportunity to evaluate the outcomes of the Plenary and take stock of the implementation of motions adopted during the just ended Session. This exercise will enable Parliaments to evaluate on how far they have gone.

The Speaker said, though it was his first time as Speaker to host the Session, he was grateful that the National Assembly was on top of everything with regard to the arrangements. He said he will convene a meeting with his staff to

identify things that the National Assembly have done well and not done well.

One of the observers to the Plenary, Hon. Prof. Loide Kasingo, the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Namibia and one of the former Vice Presidents at the Pan African Parliament said, she was impressed by the quality of discussions during the Plenary. She was happy that issues of global warming that affects the entire world were being discussed by the MPs.

The Deputy Speaker said she is hopeful that one day the SADC PF will transform into a Regional Parliament with more powers. She commended the Plenary for discussing very important motions on Teenage Pregnancies and on matters related to Gender Based Violence that are common in the Region.

Plenary adopts the Report on Teenage Pregnancies

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The 38th Plenary Assembly Session considered and adopted the Report of the Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus on Teenage Pregnancies. The report emanates from the Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus on Teenage Pregnancies meeting held in Cape Town, South Africa, from 24-25 August 2015.

The meeting was attended by representatives from Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The theme for the meeting was “Early and Unintended pregnancy among adolescents: Policy and Legal Barriers”.

Moving the motion, Hon Candida Celeste Da Silva of Angola said that early and unintended child pregnancy is one of the persistent challenges that the world continue to grapple with. She revealed that available statistics shows that, if anything, the situation is getting worse. “According to World Health Organization, about sixteen million girls aged 15-19 years and some one million girls under fifteen years give birth every year, most

low and middle-income countries. For most part, these early pregnancies are unintended and preventable,” she pointed out.

Hon Da Silva said, early and unintended pregnancy was one of contributing factors to teenagers being out of school. “The statistics are even more alarming when one considers that babies born to adolescent mothers face substantial risks of dying than those born to older women, with infants deaths fifty percent higher among babies born to mothers under twenty years of age than those born to women in their twenties”, she explained.

Seconding the Motion, Hon Thulisile Dladla of Swaziland related that adolescents are less likely to receive proper medical care while pregnant, and more likely to attempt unsafe abortions, resulting in preventable deaths. She said, “Let us also be mindful that early pregnancy is clear evidence of the fact that adolescents are engaging in unprotected sex, which puts them at risk of contracting various STIs, including HIV”. She called for the establishment of youth-friendly Sexual Reproduction Health facilities and services that are

equitable, accessible, acceptable, appropriate and effective. Hon Dladla proposed that measures be taken by SADC Governments to deal effectively with the serious stigma and discrimination towards pregnant or childbearing girls in schools and communities which is still prevalent. She appealed to the Plenary Assembly Session to take a proactive leadership role in understanding the Sustainable Development Goals better, in monitoring delivery and creating a legislative framework to facilitate attainment of these international frameworks to which Governments have committed themselves.



Hon. Candida Celeste Da Silva of Angola, presenting the Report on Teenage Pregnancies

Speakers Offer Vote of Thanks at the Welcoming Dinner



Hon. Gladys K. Kokorwe, Speaker of the Parliament of Botswana gives a vote of thanks.

Both Hon. Prof. Peter H. Katjavivi, Speaker of the National Assembly of Namibia and Hon. Gladys K. Kokorwe, Speaker of the Parliament of Botswana offered a vote of thanks at the Welcome Dinner, hosted at Swakopmund Entertainment Resort, on the night of 23rd November 2015.

The two Speakers thanked the management, administration and staff of the venues that have hosted the various 38th SADC PF Plenary Assembly Session events, staff of the Namibia National Assembly, the Secretary-General and staff of SADC PF Secretariat, staff of other participating

Staff Reporters

Parliaments in the region and supporting institutions, officers, men and women of the Namibian Police Force and other security agencies partaking in safeguarding VIPs and the venues, as well as the drivers provided by the Namibian Government to meet the needs of the event. They also thanked the editorial team of the Namibian Parliament, which has been producing Newsletters on a daily basis for the event as well as feeding the main national news media houses.

Hon. Kokorwe praised the meticulous effort put into the preparations that foresaw the successful event and appreciated the Namibian Government for offering alternative office space while SADC PF Secretariat offices are undergoing renovation. On his part, Hon. Prof. Peter H. Katjavivi, thanked the sponsors of the event including Namibia Breweries, Namibian Beverages, Rossing Uranium Limited, Benguela Sea Products, Langer-Heinrich Uranium Mine, NamPort, Tunacor Fishing Company, Merluis Group of Companies, Hanganana Fishing, Etosha Fishing and, NovaCambios Exchange Namibia Limited and reiterated his call for closer cooperation and collaboration amongst SADC Parliaments if the region is to expeditiously achieve its ultimate goal of regional integration and transformation.

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