

Talking Points – SADC Protocol on Industry

Industrialization is a top priority for Southern Africa, where Member States have adopted industrialisation as an overarching objective with a view to focus on how the region can attain industrial development and economic diversification.

In this regard, the SADC Protocol on Industry aims to promote the development of diversified, innovative and globally competitive regional and national industrial bases to enable the Region to achieve sustainable and inclusive industrial development. The implementation of a SADC regional Industry Protocol is expected to strengthen the economies of SADC countries and thus contribute to job creation, skills upgrade and value-added output. The SADC Protocol on Industry will also strengthen the level of industrial development in the region and facilitate the harmonisation of policies and strategies in member states.

Industrialisation and particularly the development of regional value chains, will greatly contribute towards economic recovery, especially in light of the effects of COVID-19; and inject the necessary impetus for deeper integration. This is in addition to strategically positioning Namibia and the whole of the Southern African region to maximize on the benefits that will come with the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area, whose trading commended in January 2021 and which Namibia has signed and ratified. This is even more important in light of COVID-19, which has resulted in shortages of essential goods and which remain a risk in the region. This experience, therefore, calls for the region and our country to invest and embark on concerted efforts to be able to locally produce essential goods such as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), Masks and sanitizers, amongst others.

This Protocol also bodes well with Agenda 2063, a blueprint and Master Plan for structural transforming Africa into the global powerhouse of the future. Agenda 2063 is the continent's strategic framework that aims to achieve its goal for inclusive and sustainable development and continental and regional integration, democratic governance and peace and security amongst other

issues aimed at repositioning Africa to becoming a dominant player in the global arena.

This discussion comes at an opportune time when our SACU Member States has also agreed to focus the SACU Work Programme on industrialisation, development of regional value chains, export promotion, trade facilitation and logistics. The adoption of the Protocol can only provide further impetus into this work.

We therefore welcome and support the adoption of the Protocol.

With that ~~few~~ ~~on~~ few words I support the SADC Protocol