



SADC PF

38TH PLENARY ASSEMBLY

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WELCOME TO THE PLENARY

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All set for the SADC PF 38th Plenary Assembly Session

Special Correspondent

Swakopmund, Namibia – Speakers of National Parliaments and their delegations from the SADC Region began arriving in Swakopmund, on Tuesday to attend the 38th Plenary Assembly Session of the SADC Parliamentary Forum.

The Plenary Assembly is the highest decision making body of the 14-member SADC PF, that is striving to transform into a SADC Regional Parliament. Speaking on behalf of the SADC PF Secretary General Dr Esau Chiviya, Mr Sheuneni Kurasha, the Programme Manager: Democracy & Governance as well as Parliamentary Business Focal Person at SADC PF, said all was set for the Plenary Assembly Session scheduled to take place from the 16th to the 25th of November, 2015.

He revealed that all SADC PF Member States would be represented save the United Republic of Tanzania and Seychelles due to reasons related to elections.

“The United Republic of Tanzania had general elections on the 25th of October and are, therefore, organizing themselves post elections. Seychelles is going to have presidential elections from the 3rd to the 5th of December,” he explained.

In terms of the SADC PF Constitution, each Parliament sends its Speaker and five other delegates. At least 72 Parliamentarians are expected to attend. Each Parliament also sends support staff. Additionally, the host Parliament can send as many observers as it can.

This Plenary Assembly Session is being held under the theme: **“From Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Towards a Greater Parliamentary Role in the Development Agenda”**.

The theme is relevant and timely given the fact that on the 25th of September, 2015 the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted a new developmental framework from the MDGs whose end date is 2015.

The SDGs outline the developmental framework for the next 15 years up to 2030. One of the things that came out of the review of



L-R: Hon. Prof. Peter H. Katjavivi (Speaker of the National Assembly of Namibia), Hon. Sebastian Karupu (MP, National Assembly, Namibia), Hon. Gary Nkombo, Treasurer of the SADC PF, during the Executive Committee meeting.



Hon. Joseph Njobvuyalema, Vice President of SADC PF(r) addresses the Executive Committee Meeting while Dr. Esau Chiviya (l) looks on.

the MDGs and their implementation was the lack of an institutionalized role for Parliamentarians. Under the SDGs, there is recognition of the important role of National Parliaments in terms of their oversight function, which is important in monitoring and evaluating implementation of SDGs.

Expectations were that this Plenary Assembly Session would give MPs an opportunity to be briefed on the progress and challenges of the MDGs and the focus of the SDGs which have been broadened to include issues related to promotion of just, peaceful and inclusive societies among others.

Turning to the highlights of this Plenary Assembly Session, Kurasha said there would be a symposium where a representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Namibia office and the Association of European Parliamentarians with Africa (AWEPA) will make presentations on the theme.

The SADC Model law on Eradicating Child Marriage and Protecting those Already in Marriage whose development the SADC PF has been spearheading with other stakeholders will be presented to the Plenary Assembly Session for consideration. Plenary deliberations are also expected to touch on climate change.

Also on the agenda are various motions and debates on topical issues including the adoption of the report of the SADC PF Election Observation Mission to Tanzania's general elections and the need for SADC Member States to invest in alternative energy given the prevailing electricity crisis in parts of the SADC Region.

Another motion is expected to call for the development of gender quotas to hasten the process of achieving gender parity and equity. In 2008 the SADC Region adopted the Protocol on Gender and Development. Prior to that there had been related declarations. While there has been progress in some parts of the SADC Region with respect to gender equity and parity, the motion seeks to influence the region's MPs to consider legislative options in this regard.

SADC Parliamentary Forum MPs To Consider New Development Goals

Staff Reporter

The Parliament of the Republic of Namibia has come in support of the ongoing 38th Plenary Session of the SADC PF which is taking place in the picturesque Namibian resort town of Swakopmund.

The Namibian Parliament, which is co-hosting the Plenary with SADC PF, has among other things, made available a fleet of vehicles to transport delegates during the Plenary. It has also provided security and protocol staff. Additionally, the Namibian Parliament is producing a Plenary bulletin to keep delegates abreast of Plenary proceedings.

Host Speaker, the Hon. Prof. Peter H. Katjavivi, has been on the ground from when delegates started arriving ensuring the successful hosting of the Plenary. This is the 6th time that the Plenary Assembly has been held in Namibia and the 3rd time that it is being held in Swakopmund in the 18 years that the Forum has been in existence.

The Secretary General of SADC PF Dr Esau Chiviya, the Deputy President of the SADC PF, Hon. Joseph Njobvuyalema and Hon. Prof Katjavivi will address a press conference, after the official opening of the conference today.

This Plenary will see delegates being briefed about the successes and challenges experienced during the implementation of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), as well as on the new development framework dubbed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Plenary has organised a symposium during which experts from the UNDP, National Planning Commission and AWEPA will address the delegates. The Parliamentary Business Sub-Committee of the SADC PF has already met to be briefed on the arrangements that have been put in place for the successful hosting of the Plenary according to Mr Sheuneni Kurasha, the Parliamentary Business Focal Person at SADC PF.



Executive Committee meeting in session.



Reception tent for delegates at Walvis Bay Airport, Namibia.



Speaker of the Zimbabwe Parliament, Hon. Advocate Jacob F. Mudenda, disembarks from an aeroplane at Walvis Bay Airport, Namibia.

RWPC Meeting Held



Hon. Dr. Becky Ndjoze-Ojo, Deputy Minister of Higher Education, Training & Innovation addresses the RWPC meeting

Members of the Regional Women's Parliamentary Caucus (RWPC) held their meeting at Swakopmund Plaza Hotel in Swakopmund yesterday.

The deputy Minister of Higher Education, Training and Innovation, Dr Becky Ndjoze-Ojo, officially opened the meeting.

Dr Ndjoze-Ojo challenged the region's women to close ranks and work towards the advancement of women and girls in particular, and the development of the SADC Region in general. She said whereas it was a generally accepted fact that "dogs eat dogs," some women were eating other women.

She challenged women not to undermine fellow women in positions of authority, saying some women were suffering from what she described as a "pull her down syndrome". The Deputy Minister said there was need for the region's women to empower themselves academically and to familiarize themselves with important documents that include the constitutions of their countries.

"To what extent do we know our constitutions as women? It's a small book. I always move with it so that I can check which article says what. What is your constitution saying about the rights of women? If you don't know, go and read it," she said.

Speaking at the same occasion, the Secretary General of the SADC PF, Dr Esau Chiviya encouraged members of the RWPC to familiarize themselves with the roles of the RWPC so that they could support the Forum's efforts to transform into a SADC Parliament.

Dr Chiviya hoped that the meeting would go a long way in enabling members of the RWPC to consolidate their positions with respect to the theme of this Plenary Assembly Session.

"The Gender Program, established in 1997, is one of the SADC PF's longest standing Programs. The original mandate which remains today is to work with and support Members of Parliament in order to eradicate gender inequality in the SADC Region, thereby realizing the SADC Gender and Development Declaration."

He said through the RWPC the Gender Program had successfully lobbied various SADC Member States to sign the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development.

"It has also lobbied for equal and active representation of women in political and administrative positions. This is known as the 50/50 gender parity goal of the SADC Gender and Development Protocol."



RWPC members pose for a group photo.

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS

Welcoming Statement

by Hon. Prof. Peter H. Katjavivi
Speaker of the National Assembly
of the Republic of Namibia

Statement

by the Chairperson of RWPC
Hon. Francisca Domingos Tomàs

President of SADC PF Statement

by Hon. Joseph Njobvuyalema,
Vice President of SADC PF

Statement

by Hon. Dr. Itah Kandjii-Murangi,
Minister of Higher Education,
Training & Innovation

Opening Address

by Hon. Cleophas Mutjavikwa
the Governor of Erongo region

Vote of Thanks

by Hon. Themba Msibi
Speaker of
the Kingdom of Swaziland

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