

# SOUTHERN AFRICA DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY (SADC) PEOPLE'S SUMMIT DECLARATION

**SAPSN**



**SADC**  
PEOPLE'S SUMMIT  
**2023** LUANDA

16-18 August 2023

**Justice - Meaningful  
Participation - Inclusion**

**Justiça - Participação  
significativa - Inclusão**



**Angolan Civil Society Organizations members of the TCHOTA platform welcomed various social movements from the Southern African Development Community under the banner of the Southern African People's Solidarity Network, during the People's Summit in Luanda, held between the 16th and 18th of August under the motto 'Justice, Meaningful Participation and Inclusion'.**

Gathered by common accord, the participants to the Luanda Summit,

- Challenged dominant narratives and discourses and discussed the rights, experiences and aspirations of those most affected by neoliberal domination and marginalization in the region.
- Committed once again to the inclusion of all women, men and children of the Southern African Development Community in the decisions taken by Member States through solidarity and collective action for a more just, peaceful and prosperous community for all.
- Collectively agreed to engage and influence SADC Heads of State and Government to promote and support the articulated aspirations and hopes of poor and marginalized groups in the region.

At a time of great promise and global uncertainty, as representatives of Civil Society Organizations, we share with the Heads of State and Government and the people of SADC, our shared reflections, concerns, and recommendations on the prevailing conditions that affect the men, women and children of the Region.

## **CLIMATE JUSTICE**

1 Raising alarm about the disproportionate impacts of the climate crisis on the Region's most vulnerable people as exemplified by Cyclone Freddy which killed over 600 people in Malawi and displaced over a thousand others. We note that human actions, such as the unsustainable exploitation of natural resources and industrialization processes dependent on fossil fuels exacerbate climate change in the region, resulting in increasingly intense cyclical droughts, cyclones, water shortages, climate-related conflicts, and the mass displacement of climate migrants.

- We demand the integration of climate change issues into all public policies.
- We call for greater investment in climate adaptation and investment in human capital mindful of ethics for sustainability and intra and intergenerational justice.
- We urge that all climate risks be considered in decision-making and governance instruments, with special attention to the most vulnerable groups such as the landless, mining affected communities, pastoralists, smallholder farmers, fisherfolk and other groups whose livelihoods directly depend on existing natural resources.

- We call for greater inclusion of communities in the exploitation of natural resources and greater financial support so that communities can contribute sustainably towards achieving the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC).

## CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

Conflicts in Northern Mozambique and Eastern DRC continue and require an increasingly concerted agenda among SADC members. Conflict containment measures must consider the impact of militarism on the lives of communities in conflict zones.

- We demand urgent responses to protect the victims of conflict in these areas and tangible guarantees for the human and humanitarian rights of the affected populations, as well as greater transparency and coherence in relation to the real causes of these resource-driven conflicts.

The Southern African region is considered as one of the regions with the greatest stability, however, these conflicts and the growing militarization of insurgent groups, as well as the phenomenon of terrorism that affects Mozambique must be a constant concern to guarantee effective peace and stability in the affected areas.

## ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Reiterating our shared concerns about the negative impacts of neoliberal economic policies on all countries in the Region, enunciated by unfair austerity measures, excessive taxation, heavy indebtedness, and the reduced capacity of States to provide adequate public goods and services to vulnerable women, children, and men in the region.

- We call for economic growth centered on people and on the fair distribution of resources to modernize local value chains, promote the addition of value through competitiveness and product diversification, with the aim of promoting free and fair trade between countries in the community.
- We urge the leaders of SADC member states to commit to the removal of non-tariff barriers and the swift implementation of the simplified trade regime.
- We call upon leaders of SADC Member States to invest in and improve women's economic empowerment strategies, thereby supporting participation of women entrepreneurs in selected regional value chains and facilitating their 'de-facto and de jure' financial inclusion.

- In the terms of social and economic justice, the leaders of SADC Member States should facilitate the inclusion of the informal sector, smallholder farmers, artisanal and small-scale miners, and cross-border traders, thus materializing the regional and pan-African trade agreements already ratified including the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement and others to be ratified in the future.
- We urge the leadership of SADC member states to endorse and support the call for a legally binding United Nations Tax Convention as well as the imposition of redistributive revenues and wealth taxes to address the resource needs of poor and marginalized groups in all countries of region.
- We demand the strengthening of regional efforts to reduce debt dependency through regional financing mechanisms through transparent and accountable debt management processes as well as a collective call from Southern Africa for legally binding global debt resolution mechanisms.
- We demand equitable distribution of resources across all populations. We need everyone to benefit from the natural resource revenues. Therefore, we call for guaranteed access to good public services including health care, access to water, education for all citizens in the Region.

#### **GENDER JUSTICE AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS**

Considering that in Angola, in particular, and elsewhere, women continue to face informality and extreme poverty, even with all international treaties such as the Maputo Protocol and the Sustainable Development Goals.

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- Gender inequalities must be discussed considering social class issues. In this way, empowerment must be understood as a collective process that embraces the differences between women and girls from different contexts. Therefore, it becomes urgent to improve and effectively guarantee a gender-sensitive general budgets, focused on economic policies that financially empower women and female headed households.
- We demand public policies that reduce inequalities between men and women, remembering that it is the role of the State to improve and monitor programs so that they produce real results in the lives of women and girls in all countries of the community.
- We urge SADC leaders to promote and facilitate the inclusion of women in decision-making spaces, not only through the symbolic integration of gender, but also and above all, in the fulfillment of real and impactful commitments in the fight against gender inequalities.

## HUMAN RIGHTS, GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRACY

Concerned about growing authoritarianism, shrinking civic space and militarism in the countries of the region:

- We implore all SADC Member States to uphold open democracies founded on constitutionalism. Silence on domestic political issues can exacerbate economic challenges, leading to economic migration. We defend the recognition of the fundamental link between political stability and economic prosperity, through the creation of sustainable living conditions for all.

### ZIMBABWE

Bearing in mind the forthcoming Harmonized Elections in Zimbabwe in a flawed electoral environment presided over by a partisan election management body and characterized by unequal access to the media, gerrymandering, draconian laws, a captured judiciary and continued repression of dissenting voices and political opponents.

- We warn of the imminent possibility of a disputed election with no guarantee of a peaceful transfer of power.
- We urge the leaders of member states to recognize the centrality of disputed elections in the crisis of governance in Zimbabwe.
- We demand meaningful interventions to binding the Government of Zimbabwe to strictly adhere to the SADC principles and guidelines governing democratic elections thereby ensuring a peaceful, credible, free, and fair election.
- Furthermore, we urge the heads of member states to compel the election management body in Zimbabwe to release prisoners of conscience in accordance with the country's constitution and human rights treaty obligations.

### KINGDOM of ESWATINI

Ashamed of the continued failure of leaders of SADC member states to take decisive action to resolve the governance crisis in the country, despite numerous fact-finding missions and commitment to facilitate a process of national dialogue led by SADC in Eswatini in solidarity with the masses repressed people from Eswatini we ask:

- Immediate release of prisoners of conscience.
- The repeal of the extinction of political parties.
- The repeal of all repressive laws, including the Sedition and Subversive Activities Act 1938 (SSA) and the Suppression of Terrorism Act 2008.
- The implementation of an inclusive national dialogue process led by SADC with a view to approving a democratic constitution that will enable the holding of free and fair elections under a multi-party dispensation.
- SADC conduct an impartial investigation into the gruesome murder of Thulani Maseko and advocate for justice for victims of political repression in the Kingdom of Eswatini.

## LESOTHO

The People's Summit acknowledges the progress made in Lesotho on reforms. Further the People's Summit notes with hope the dedication of the incoming administration to completing the first phase of reforms. However, we regret the overpoliticization of the reforms process by leaders in parliament who should have long passed at least part of the constitutional amendments. Therefore,

- We call upon Civil society to double efforts to ensure that reforms process is realised as resolved at the annual conference of the Lesotho Council of NGOs 2022
- We Urge political leadership in Lesotho to desist from protracted disagreements ironical to the needs of Basotho and pass reforms.
- We remind SADC of its decision in 2018 to hold those delaying reforms personally and institutionally responsibly and call up it to invoke that if the reforms are dragged any further.

## MIGRATION AND STATELESSNESS

In recognition of SADC States' obligations under various international and regional conventions and treaties to protect the dignity and rights of all persons, including their rights against cruel, inhumane, and degrading treatment and arbitrary deprivation of liberty and commitments made by SADC States, including the “Migration for Southern African Dialogue”:

- We demand harmonization and domestication of all international and regional laws, norms, and standards applicable to the rights of documented persons, including stateless persons and migrants.
- We urge SADC leaders to ensure that persons detained on the basis of their documentation status are treated humanely and, regardless of their immigration status, nationality, gender, ethnicity, race or other status, and receive all applicable legal protection, in accordance with international law, norms and standards; and
- We call upon SADC leaders to implement mechanisms against the detention of undocumented persons, including mechanisms for non-custodial alternatives to detention.

In view of the commitments made by SADC Heads of States in:

1. The SADC Roadmap on the Eradication of Statelessness.
2. The African Charter on Human Peoples’ Rights regarding the right to dignity and nationality under article 5.
3. The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (article 6) & the UN Convention on Rights of the Child (article 7 and 8) regarding the child’s right to birth registration, nationality and preservation of identity.
4. The Maputo Protocol in recognition of the disproportionate impact of statelessness on women and the girl child.
5. The spirit of Pan-Africanism and Ubuntu.

We call on SADC Heads of State to:

- Implement measures to identify and resolve cases of persons with unknown nationality. Measures should include:
  - Introducing facilitated nationality recognition procedures for persons qualifying for citizenship; as well as those who have a strong link to the state but who do not have and cannot obtain proof of their identity or nationality; and
  - Providing legal status, identifying documentation, and facilitated naturalisation procedures to persons who are stateless.
- Implement measures to preserve the identity of unaccompanied and separated children and young persons by:
  - Registering the births of all children born in the territory of the state, regardless of their legal status or that of their parents.
  - Establishing civil registry services in all consular offices in SADC, including birth registration service and issuance of citizenship documents for nationals living abroad.
  - Ensuring regional interstate collaboration to obtain and record identity information and issuance of citizenship documents, passports, and visas where relevant.
- Ensure the prompt adoption and domestication of the African Union Draft Protocol on the Right to a Nationality and the Eradication of Statelessness in Africa.

## NATURAL RESOURCE GOVERNANCE

7 Noting that numerous communities that serve as hosts to mining operations continue to undergo various forms of human rights violations, with their grievances largely ignored and unaddressed. The just energy transition could be just by placing people and the planet at the centre. This would only happen through meaningful consultation, participation, and inclusion of marginalized and vulnerable communities. Communities should reclaim their power and dismantle the capitalist model of mining that undermines their voices and agency.

- There is a need for a regional industrial policy that includes mineral beneficiation and regional clustering to promote investment, trade, and free movement of people among member states. In other words, we should not export our mineral resources out of the continent and 'repurchase them at a higher price.
- Child labour and exploitation must stop, and revenue from transition minerals should be channeled towards sustainable social policies to support children from indigent households to access subsidized education.
- Transparent tax regimes should be promoted to curb corruption, tax evasion and inequalities within and among nations.

- SADC member states must adopt the Grievances Redress Mechanism to address conflicts that could emanate from taxation and mining regimes that do not benefit communities or harmful impacts involving ASM and transition minerals.
- SADC member states must take the necessary steps to establish a specialized tribunal or court that will specifically handle cases pertaining to the social, economic, and environmental impacts of mining activities in the region. This will ensure that all grievances and concerns raised by various stakeholders in relation to mining operations are addressed in a consistent and fair manner, while also promoting responsible and sustainable mining practices that prioritize the well-being of local communities and the environment.

### **SADC REGIONAL INDICATIVE STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Aware of the transformative potential of the SADC Regional Strategic Development Indicative Plan.

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- We encourage the SADC Secretariat to expand the participation of NSAs (Non-State Actors) in through the full operationalization of the Regional NSA Engagement Mechanism and the inclusion of the NSA in regional consultations and working group technicians to document the monitoring, evaluation reports and initiatives regional planned according to described in the RISDP.
- We demand the establishment of a funding mechanism to facilitate the participation of NSAs both at the national and regional levels.
- We urge you States SADC Members to involve NSAs in their countries in proposed NSA Accreditation Guidelines, followed by approval timely presentation of the guidelines at the next meeting of the SADC Council of Ministers
- And we exhorted you States SADC Members to accelerate the operationalization of the Regional Development and Agricultural Development Funds to ensure adequate support for the implementation of the RISDP, particularly in support of small farmers and the systems food diversified nutritious sustainable as well as SRH interventions for adolescents and young people.

### **YOUTH AND STUDENT MOVEMENT**

The future of young people in the SADC region can only be achieved through peace, freedom, justice and respect for human rights. In this regard, we want to emphasize that young people are disappointed with the lack of vision and inconsistency of policies and actions of SADC member states with regard to empowerment, development, inclusion and full participation of young people in decision-making processes.

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Moreover, young people are alarmed by the lack of political will to face the perennial problems that affect them such as the high level of unemployment, inequalities, poverty, mismanagement of migration and climate change, as well as the “usurpation” of the democratic space in the region.

Young people, on the other hand, decide:

- To reveal the importance of full and effective participation of youth and youth organizations at local, national, regional, and international levels in policy, leadership, and decision-making processes.
- To challenge extractivism, demand climate justice and thus the assumption of full ownership of the region's natural resources for people-centered development.
- Demand a quality decolonized education accessible locally and equally accessible in the region;
- Urge SADC leaders to undertake immediate actions to allow the free movement of goods and people in the region as well as the removal of visas to allow true regional integration and development.

**//ends...**

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A panel including Angolan Members of Parliament discusses the state of Democracy & governance in the region

Solidarity message delivered by Fight Inequality-Zimbabwe



A full house listens to a recap of Day 1 proceedings.



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