

MEETING OF SADC PARLIAMENTS

27 – 28 June 2003

Communiqué

1. A meeting of SADC Parliaments was convened to consider the transformation of the SADC Parliamentary Forum into a regional parliamentary assembly for the purposes of accelerating contributing to the regional integration of SADC. The meeting was hosted by the Parliament of South Africa from 27 to 28 June 2003 in Cape Town, South Africa.
2. The meeting was chaired by the Chairperson of the SADC Parliamentary Forum, Hon. Speaker Ntlohi Motsamai and was attended by the Presiding Officers and parliamentarians from Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Also present were the Secretary General of the SADC Parliamentary Forum and senior parliamentary officials.
3. The meeting recalled the history of the SADC Parliamentary Forum, particularly the approval of its establishment by the Summit of Heads of State and Government in September 1997 in Blantyre, Malawi. It was noted that the **eventual** transformation of the Parliamentary Forum into a regional assembly with legislative powers was envisaged both by Summit and in the constitution of the Parliamentary Forum. The meeting concluded that the time for such a transformation is now, as the SADC Parliament will constitute one of the building blocks of the Pan African Parliament.
4. The meeting also recalled commitments on the same as outlined in the Strategic Plan of the Parliamentary Forum and Communiqués of the 13th and 14th Sessions of the Plenary Assembly held in November 2002 in Grand Gaube, Mauritius and in April 2003 in Livingstone, Zambia, respectively.

5. Among other matters, the meeting considered some of the possible objectives, role, powers, functions and nature of the proposed parliament and made recommendations for incorporation in a future protocol.
6. The meeting agreed on the need for further consultations at national level in order to consolidate consensus on the important role of the SADC Parliament.
7. The meeting further called on SADC to amend the SADC Treaty to provide for the early establishment of the SADC Parliament and for SADC Parliaments to expeditiously draft a protocol outlining the nature, composition, powers, functions and procedures of the Parliament, among other matters to facilitate consultations among the other SADC organs.
8. The regional meeting determined that the Pan African Parliament would play a major role of linking major issues of concern to SADC to those of the continent. Consequently, formal links between the regional assemblies and the Pan African Parliament should be established.
9. Having regard to the centrality of the Pan African Parliament in the building of an effective African Union facilitating the full participation of the peoples of the continent in the Union, the meeting called for the expeditious ratification of the Protocol on the establishment of the Pan African Parliament.
10. The meeting of SADC Parliaments warmly welcomed the offer by South Africa to host the Pan African Parliament for which all members affirmed their support.

***Done at Cape Town, South Africa
28 June 2003***