



**REMARKS BY DR. THEMBINKOSI MHLONGO  
DEPUTY EXECUTIVE SECRETARY  
(REGIONAL INTEGRATION)**

**AT THE OCASSION OF THE OPENING SESSION  
OF THE JOINT MEETING OF SADC MINISTERS  
RESPONSIBLE FOR AGRICULTURE AND FOOD  
SECURITY, FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE,**

**7 JUNE 2019**

**WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA**

**Master of Ceremony;**

**Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Water and Forestry- MP.  
Alpheus G. !Naruseb;**

**Honourable Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources MP  
Bernard Esau;**

**All Ministers and Deputy Ministers present;**

**The Executive Director, Ministry of Agriculture, Water and  
Forestry Mr Percy W. Misika;**

**The Executive Director, Ministry of Fisheries and Marine  
Resources, Mr Moses Maurihunngirire;**

**Senior Officials;**

**Distinguished Delegates from SADC Member States;**

**SADC Secretariat Staff;**

**Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen**

**Good Morning**

It is very gratifying and indeed an honour for me to deliver these introductory remarks on behalf of the SADC Executive Secretary, Her Excellency Dr. Stergomena Lawrence Tax. I wish to welcome you all to this Joint Meeting of the SADC Ministers Responsible for Agriculture and Food Security, and Fisheries and Aquaculture.

Today marks another milestone when Ministers are meeting to reflect on their commitment to realise a meaningful contribution of the agricultural and fisheries sectors for attainment of regional food security and regional integration. This Joint Meeting creates an enabling platform to assess and enhance smooth implementation

of regional instruments for betterment of the agriculture and fisheries sectors.

**Honourable Ministers**, you will recall that during your meeting held in June 2018 you considered progress in the implementation of the Regional Agriculture Policy (RAP) and sub-programmes implemented under it. Some of the issues, amongst many discussed included performance review of the livestock, crops, Fisheries in contribution to the food security. You also considered the situation of transboundary plant and animal pests and diseases. Today you take stock of the implementation of the decisions of that meeting.

In your meeting today, you will also review progress on the implementation of the SADC Programmes, Projects and related strategies on Agriculture and Food Security and Fisheries and Aquaculture as they relate and contribute to the Region's top priorities of **Industrial Development and Market Integration** and **Infrastructure Development** to facilitate competitive and diversified industrial development for deeper regional integration and poverty eradication and.

**Honourable Ministers**, the promotion of regional value chains and increasing value addition for agricultural and non-agricultural products including fish and fishery products, are key vehicles for realising sustainable Industrial Development, improving productivity and supply side capacity. The importance of your Meeting therefore, cannot be overemphasized.

In addition, you will consider and approve regional documents, guidelines, programmes and /or projects to achieve the goals and targets of the Revised RISDP through implementation of the Regional Agricultural Investment Plan. Some of the legal instruments to be considered include the Charters for the establishment of the Monitoring Control and Surveillance Coordination Centre (MCSCC) in Mozambique, especially as the significant role played by fisheries and aquaculture sector in the economies of SADC Countries is endangered by the Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing. Others include the Charter Establishing the SADC Seed Centre and the Plant Variety Protection Protocol.

This Meeting further proffers a chance for all Member States that are ready to sign the Charters for the Fisheries and the Seed Centres and the PVP Protocol for Protection of Crop Varieties to do so.

**Honourable Ministers**, as you are aware, the Region has experienced cyclones including Idai and Kenneth, which had devastating impacts on both livelihoods, property and infrastructure especially in Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

In addition to cyclones, the Region was affected by various crops and livestock pests and disease such as Fall armyworm (FAW), *Tuta absoluta* which continue to threaten the efforts and investments made to uplift the Agriculture and Fisheries sectors. The Annotated Agenda and various Reports have been prepared on these issues for your consideration and guidance.

**Honourable Ministers, Distinguished delegates**, in conclusion, I wish to thank the Government and People of Namibia for the hospitality extended to us all. Our International Cooperating Partners (ICPs), for the support and lastly but not least, I want to thank all the delegates present here today and to thank colleagues from SADC Secretariat who worked tirelessly to organize this meeting.

I wish you fruitful deliberations.

I thank you