

OFFICIAL OPENING REMARKS

By

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On the Occasion of

*The Official Opening of the 3<sup>rd</sup> PIDA Week*

On

11 December 2017

*The Dome, Swakopmund, Namibia*

- His Excellency, the President of Namibia, and Vice Chairperson of SADC
- Honorable Ministers responsible for Infrastructure from the Continent
- Your Excellency Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy AUC
- Excellency Chief Executive of the NEPAD Agency
- Your Excellencies, High Commissioners and Ambassadors present here today
- Representatives from International Cooperating Partners, Regional, Continental, International Organizations and other Implementing Agencies;
- Colleagues from the Media;
- Distinguished delegates, invited Guests, ladies and Gentlemen
- All Protocol Observed;

I would like to express our gratitude to you, Your Excellency, President Hage Geingob, and your Government and the people of Namibia for agreeing to host this important Event of the commemoration of PIDA Week here in the beautiful coastal city of Swakopmund.

We are indeed honoured by your presence, mindful of your busy schedules, but still took time out to participate in this auspicious occasion, which is clear testimony to your commitment to continental integration, cooperation and poverty reduction. The legendary

hospitality extended to all of us since our arrival in this beautiful city of Swakopmund and the facilities that have been put at the our disposal has no doubt provided the needed conducive environment for us all of us to conduct our business.

***Your Excellency;***

***Ladies and Gentlemen;***

I wish to extend to you and all the distinguished delegates, warm greetings from Dr Stergomena Lawrence Tax, the SADC Executive Secretary who would have wanted to be with you in person but due to other SADC agenda, she has delegated me to represent the Secretariat at this important forum.

Allow me to also recognise the efforts by the PIDA Implementing Partners-NEPAD Agency, African Union Commission, African Development Bank and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa-in preparing and financing this event. I wish to further recognise the support by other Development Partners-DBSA and GIZ for their contribution in various forms towards making this event a success.

***Your Excellency;***

***Ladies and Gentlemen;***

In January 2012, African leaders adopted the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) and its Priority Action Plan (PAP), prioritizing continental infrastructure programmes to address Africa's infrastructure deficit. The role of infrastructure development as articulated in PIDA is underscored by the AU Agenda 2063 as the means to facilitate regional integration, industrialisation and intra-regional trade including the movement of people, goods and services in the continent.

The PIDA PAP is programed for implementation into phases: the first with milestones to 2020 (i.e., implementation of US\$68bn priority

investment plan); and the second with milestones to 2040 – with investment in infrastructure development estimated over US\$300bn. Achieving the 2020 milestones requires that we speed up on PIDA implementation, hence the need for acceleration.

You will recall that the Dakar Financing Summit of 2014 identified the following challenges in the implementation of PIDA Projects:

- Lack of participation by private sector in infrastructure investment;
- Lack of bankable projects to be considered for investment by the private sector;
- Lack of capacity by the public sector to prepare projects to bankability; and
- Lack of financing by the public sector to prepare projects to bankability.

### **So what has been the SADC Response?**

Responding to the identified challenges and working with the NEPAD Agency, SADC has taken a multi-pronged approach to accelerate the preparation and implementation of PIDA Projects in the region, thus unlocking the Region to facilitate regional integration:

#### **1. The Corridor Approach**

The SADC Secretariat has embarked on an ambitious agenda of setting up Multi-Modal Development Corridors. The SADC PIDA Acceleration Programme on the Beira and North South Corridors was initiated in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe in June 2016 culminating into the signing of the corridor governance instruments for both the Beira and North South Corridors in Beira, Mozambique in July 2017.

The agenda set for these corridors is beyond just trade and transit facilitation. The scope includes industrialization, infrastructure development in the fields of transport, energy, ICT and water, trade and regional economic development and integration. Spatial economic development along the corridors and their zones of influence are core and central to the corridor strategy. The corridor states wish to use the corridors as anchors and transformative

catalysts to regional economic development as prioritised under the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) of SADC. This approach will be replicated to other corridors within the SADC region.

## **2. Project Prioritization and Project Pipeline Formation**

Within these two corridors (Beira and North South, projects have been analysed for Public Private Partnership (PPP) suitability and their impact on regional integration. A consistent methodology and algorithm has been developed to rank projects and form a project priority pipeline. Consultation with the private sector to determine which project form the pipeline and also to gauge their appetite in investing in the projects through Project Pre-Market Sounding and Private Sector High-level Roundtables is done.

## **3. Capacity Building**

Working in collaboration with the NEPAD Agency through the PIDA Capacity Building (PIDA CAP) Programme, SADC Secretariat is allocated an annual budget since May 2016 to support project preparation to bankability and corridor development. This budget has been used to leverage financing from other development partners such as JICA and GIZ (One Stop Border Post Programmes), DBSA and World Bank PPIAF (project preparation) and SADC 3P (PPP advisory).

***Your Excellency;***

***Ladies and Gentlemen;***

While fast-tracking is important, we should remember that infrastructure development requires sustained efforts from all stakeholders to maintain the momentum of implementation. Sustaining this momentum requires that in addition to political will, other necessary enabling conditions are availed. These include the necessary policy, legal and regulatory environment to facilitate private sector participation and investments.

We should also remember the important role infrastructure can play in job creation hence the theme for this 3<sup>rd</sup> PIDA Week. Infrastructure development needs to be focused on inclusive approaches that take into account the entrepreneurship and employment needs of young people, empowering them to be active players in the infrastructure sector.

It is therefore our call that we should never doubt the commitment of African and International business leaders to come together with the public sector to provide direction on Africa's infrastructure priorities, using the PIDA Week as the platform for discussions.

Before I conclude my remarks, I wish to congratulate you, Your Excellency, for the leadership role demonstrated by the Government of Namibia for opening up Namibia and designating Namibia as an International Logistics Hub within the continental Presidential Infrastructure Championship Initiative, connecting Namibia with its neighbouring Member States. I am also aware of the strides taken by the Government of Namibia in consulting her neighbouring Member States of Angola, Botswana, DRC, Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe for collaboration during the development and implementation of the proposed projects.

In the Region, we are also alive to the fact that, the Namibian Government has provided land to the Governments of Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe to establish their Dry Ports in Walvis Bay. This is indeed a clear testimony and commitment of the Government of Namibia to the SADC Regional Integration Agenda.

It is a true reminder of what our Principals Heads of State and Government have signed up for in the Protocol on Transport, Communications and Meteorology. The Protocol requires the SADC Member States to apply principles of a) **the right of freedom of transit** b) the right of landlocked Member States to **unimpeded access to and from the sea** c) **the reciprocal right of coastal Member States to unimpeded access to and from landlocked Member States** and d) **equality of treatment** of nationals and passenger service providers of Member States with regard to the provision, access and use of infrastructure and immigration and clearance procedures. It is in application of these principles,

consistently and uniformly, during the formulation of our policies and regulations and applying the same during enforcement, that we will go a long way to improving the efficiency of our regional corridors.

**Your Excellency, Honourable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentleman!**

Let me end my remarks by underscoring the need for Partnerships as the main strategy to implement regional as well as continental infrastructure. It is our believe that shared ownership is a core attribute of successful partnership. Prioritizing the projects of regional and continental programmes at the national level is therefore a critical link in the implementation of the regional and continental initiatives. It is when regional and continental projects are treated as national priorities that complementary funds are likely to be raised by regional and continental organizations for their implementation. Let's therefore focus our efforts to establishing and strengthening these partnerships. As your Secretariat we remain committed to supporting and coordinating such initiatives.

***I Thank You very much for your kind attention.***