



# **ACCEPTANCE SPEECH**

**BY**

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC  
OF ZIMBABWE AND CHAIRPERSON OF THE  
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT  
COMMUNITY,**

**HIS EXCELLENCY, DR E. D. MNANGAGWA**

**AT**

**THE 44<sup>th</sup> ORDINARY SADC SUMMIT**

**HARARE**

**17 AUGUST 2024**





**HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT AND  
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ZIMBABWE  
DEFENCE FORCES,  
COMRADE DR. EMMERSON DAMBUDZO MNANGAGWA.**



The First Lady, Amai Dr. A. Mnangagwa;

Your Majesty, King Mswati III, of the Kingdom of Eswatini;

Your Excellency, João Lourenço, President of the Republic of Angola and Outgoing Chairperson of SADC;

Your Excellency, Samia Hassan, President of the United Republic of Tanzania, and the Chairperson of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation;

Your Excellency, Hakainde Hichilema, President of the Republic of Zambia and Outgoing Chairperson of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation;

Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government and Heads of Delegation;

Your Excellency, Chairperson of the SADC Panel of Elders, Former President Jakaya Kikwete;



Your Excellencies First Ladies here present;

Vice President of the Republic of Zimbabwe,  
Hon. Gen. (Rtd) Dr. C. G. D. N. Chiwenga;

Vice President of the Republic of Zimbabwe,  
Hon. Col. (Rtd) K. C. D. Mohadi;

Minister of Foreign Affairs and International  
Trade, Chairperson of the SADC Council of  
Ministers, Ambassador F. M. Shava;

Honourable Ministers and Various Political  
Leaders of the Republic of Zimbabwe ;

Your Excellency, Mr Elias Magosi, SADC  
Executive Secretary;

Your Excellency, Executive Secretary of the  
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa,  
Ambassador Claver Gatete;

Your Excellencies, Heads of Regional Economic  
Communities and International Organisations,  
here present;





Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Senior Officials and Delegates from SADC Member States;

Distinguished Guests;

Members of the Media

Fellow SADC Citizens.

May I express my profound appreciation to His Excellency, João Lourenço, President of the Republic of Angola, for the astute and visionary leadership in steering our organisation, as Chairperson of SADC during the past year.

We heartily congratulate and commend him for ably navigating the various challenges we faced and for ensuring that the integration agenda of our region remained on course.



On behalf of the people and Government of Zimbabwe, I take over the mantle of Chairperson of SADC, with humility and grace. I look forward, Your Excellencies, to your invaluable support, and drawing from your vast experiences and counsel, as we advance our regional agenda for the benefit of our SADC citizens.

Allow me to also acknowledge the dedication and leadership demonstrated by His Excellency, Mr. Hakainde Hichilema, President of the Republic of Zambia, in his capacity as the Chairperson of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation. The Organ remains a critical cog in nurturing, unity, constitutionalism, democracy, and the rule of law as well as peace and security, in line with the founding values, ethos and principles of SADC.

Similarly, I congratulate, Her Excellency, Samia Hassan, the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, on her assumption of the stewardship



over the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation. Rest assured of our full support.

**Your Majesty, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen;**

This year's theme, **“Promoting Innovation to Unlock Opportunities for Sustainable Economic Growth and Development towards an Industrialised SADC”**, brings to the fore the role of innovation in sustained economic transformation and development.

It is a clarion call for our respective countries to leverage the region's human capital, to spur technology and innovation that will leap-frog the modernisation and industrialisation of SADC towards a higher quality of life of our citizens.

To this end, it has become critically important and urgent to harness the potential of innovation to produce goods and services through value



addition and beneficiation of our rich mineral and related natural resources. The peoples of the region fought for our liberation, freedom and independence as well as the economic value of our land and that which is under it. The time is now, we must realise maximum value from our God given rich natural endowments.

The importance of deploying innovative strategies, across all sectors of our economies to accelerate the realisation of our collective development agenda cannot be over-emphasised.

This is more so as the Fourth Industrial Revolution continues to impact and transform the way we operate and execute our work. Our SADC bloc cannot afford to fall behind in the new and fast changing frontier of science, technology and innovation. These aspects are a pre-requisite for increased productivity and indeed the bedrock upon which other parts of the world industrialised and developed.





Let us, therefore, match our aspirations set out in the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap (2015-2063) with concrete and real actions. It is pleasing that the successful SADC Industrialisation Week and Investment Forum provided a public-private engagement platform where participants discussed and shared innovative approaches.

The 7<sup>th</sup> SADC Public Lecture also helped to raise public awareness on the critical role of innovation in promoting and deepening the SADC regional integration efforts.

Stakeholders across the region are exhorted to scale up people to people and business to business exchanges for enhanced synergies and collaboration.

Our institutions of higher learning, the academia, scientists and innovators must equally strengthen linkages to further drive the innovation, modernisation and industrialisation of our region.



In the case of Zimbabwe, we have set up several innovation hubs at all State Universities and related institutions. These have achieved remarkable success in developing a sense of self-belief, skills and competencies. Further, initiatives under the programmes have transformed livelihoods, communities and the economy as a whole, through the production of appropriate goods and services.

The need to ensure that our youth and entrepreneurs, including women, fully embrace the technology and innovation revolution should be one of our key priorities.

Through purposeful collaboration in the ICT sector, we can advance our collective interests as a region, including closing the digital divide.

As the current crop of leaders, we have a weighty responsibility to facilitate a conducive environment



for our citizenry to thrive and do their part for the realisation of the modern and industrialised SADC we all want. No one and no country should be left behind.

**Your Majesty, Excellencies and Distinguished Guests;**

The democracy, independence and freedom being enjoyed by the peoples' of the region were paid for through the sweat, tears and blood of yester-year heroes and heroines as well as sons and daughters of SADC. We have a sacred duty to honour them all by jealously guarding and defending our sovereignty and right to economic self-determination. We are a proud Southern African people with a rich history and a brighter future.

Let us never sacrifice our unity, solidarity or African culture for political or economic expediency. Ultimately, the burden and responsibility to



build our countries and the region as a whole, for sustainable prosperity, lies with us, the great peoples' of SADC.

In Zimbabwe our development philosophy is that *“a Country is built, governed and prayed for by its people”*.

**‘Nyika inovakwa, inotongwa, inonamatigwa nevene vayo/ilizwe lakhiwa, libuswe, likhulekelwe ngabanikazi balo’**. Likewise, our region SADC will be modernised and industrialised by its own citizens, through our individual and collective efforts. Those who seek to help us are welcome, however, they must do so, on our terms, guided by our priorities and respecting our sovereignty.

I, therefore, challenge my fellow citizens of the region to remain unapologetic and confident in who we are, as a people and in our God given





abilities. Through unity and hard honest work, nothing is impossible.

### **Your Excellencies;**

Regrettably, the region continues to experience climate change induced natural disasters which have had far reaching negative impacts on human and food security. In light of the lessons learnt, investments in transformative agriculture and food systems, must be scaled up. Through robust climate mitigation strategies and resilience building mechanisms, we must continually strive to be a region capable of feeding ourselves.

The full operationalisation of the SADC Humanitarian and Emergency Centre must be given due attention. During our wars of liberation, we shared trenches and our countries, to dislodge the racist colonial regimes for the realisation of our independence and freedom. Now, in plenty and in



lack, in good times and bad, we shall continue to stand as one united and indivisible SADC.

In accelerating the modernisation and industrialisation of our countries, the broadening and expansion of our energy infrastructure with particular emphasis on renewables is critically important. As developing countries we contribute the least to global carbon emissions and yet are, the most affected.

In an endeavour to promote the green agenda, my Government is broadening our country's energy mix. This has seen the generation of energy from waste, along with other renewable energy sources. One such facility which converts waste to energy is the Geo-Pomona Waste Management Plant. A visit to the facility has been arranged as part of our programme on 18<sup>th</sup> August, 2024.



**Your Majesty, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen;**

I assume the Chairmanship of SADC, aware of the historic and momentous role played by our Founding Fathers and their vision for a united, independent, integrated, peaceful and prosperous region.

It is indeed most opportune that this 44<sup>th</sup> Ordinary SADC Summit is convening a few days after we commemorated our 44<sup>th</sup> National Heroes Day, on 12 August 2024. We remain mindful that the protracted struggle for the liberation of our beloved motherland, Zimbabwe, would have never been realised without the support of our brothers and sisters in our region as well as other progressive countries from beyond. We are forever grateful.

It is in this unquenchable spirit that Zimbabwe is pleased to invite Your Excellencies and your



esteemed delegations to witness the unveiling of the SADC Liberation Square, which is located within the premises of the Museum of African Liberation. The true story of our rich liberation heritage must be preserved and told to present and future generations, through our own African narratives. For a people without knowledge of their history, origin and culture, are like trees without roots.

Earlier this year, our region was saddened by the passing on, of the President of the Republic of Namibia, His Excellency, Hage Geingob.

He was a liberation hero, visionary statesman and pragmatic leader who served, not only the people of Namibia, but SADC as a whole. A staunch defender of African independence, freedom and non-interference in our internal affairs, his unwavering commitment to justice, dignity and equality will be treasured for posterity. May his soul continue to rest in eternal peace.





## **Your Excellencies;**

It is my humble and sincere hope that the SADC year ahead will enable us to accelerate the implementation of regional projects and programmes. These include those related to cross border energy projects, transport infrastructure development, as well as climate proofing our agriculture and growing our manufacturing, tourism and SMEs, among other critical sectors.

As Member States, let us double efforts through innovation to improve on our implementation scorecard while scaling up the regional industrialisation and integration Agenda. None of our countries must be left behind.

As I conclude, may I once again express my sincere appreciation to you all, for your calls for the immediate and unconditional lifting of the illegal sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe by our detractors. We strongly condemn the use of



sanctions and other coercive measures as a foreign policy tool.

By the same token, allow me to call for the end of the conflict in Palestine and appeal for the respect of UN Resolutions on the Two State solution. Similarly, the independence of the peoples of Western Saharawi is long overdue.

*“Zimbabwe is a friend to all and an enemy of none”*. We firmly believe in dialogue and diplomacy as the sustainable route for the resolution of conflict and disputes.

We, thus, stand ready to play our part for consolidating the peace, unity, security and stability of our SADC region and “Silencing the Guns” on our African Continent.

Going forward, as I humbly assume this Chairmanship of our august Bloc, I want to assure



the people of our SADC region that, Zimbabwe will continue to advance the cherished founding principles, values, goals and objectives, envisioned by the great luminaries and Founding Fathers of our region. *Aluta Continua*; Victory is Certain.

With these remarks, may I, once again, welcome you Your Majesty, Excellencies and Distinguished Guests, and wish you all a productive and fruitful Summit.

*Long live SADC unity, solidarity, independence and Freedom.*

*Long Live African Unity.*

**God bless you all.**

**I thank you.**

**Asante Sana.**

**Muito Obrigado.**

**Merci Beaucoup.**





