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SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS
OF THE FORUM ON
MAINSTREAMING REGIONAL INTEGRATION AND SADC LAW
IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS
HELD ON 28-29 MAY 2009
MAPUTO, MOZAMBIQUE



1. INTRODUCTION

1. The Southern African Development Community (SADC)'s Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) and a Strategic Indicative Plan of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security (SIPO) are the two key plans that provide frameworks for deepening regional integration in the sub-region. These plans call on member States, with collaboration of development partners, to introduce a structured approach to align national policies and programmes to these two regional integration blueprints.

2. Accordingly, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa-Southern Africa Office (ECA-SA) and the Eduardo Mondlane University (UEM) held a joint Forum on '*Mainstreaming Regional Integration in National Development Plans* from 28-29 May 2009 in Maputo, Mozambique. The purpose of the Forum was to review the process of domesticating the regional integration agenda in terms of costs and benefits and the status of implementation; examining the enforcement and the monitoring mechanisms; critically evaluating constraints to a faster domestication of regional integration at both national and sub-regional levels; developing mechanisms to speed up the execution of projects to support regional integration efforts at national levels; and proposing national institutional structures and systems required for implementing, monitoring and evaluating the regional integration agenda.

3. The Forum also reviewed the draft *Framework on Mainstreaming Regional Integration in National Development Plans* and made recommendations to refine it for adoption by member States. The Framework proposes benchmarks, performance indicators and a monitoring mechanism to track adherence to commitments by all stakeholders.

2. A SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

4. AWARE of the origins of the regional integration movement in the sub-region, including the need to overcome the small-country and small-population situations, and the imperative to have a stronger voice at international negotiation forums;

5. COGNIZANT of the various continental and regional protocols and treaties establishing the regional economic communities, and the various undertakings to mainstream the continental and regional protocols to accelerate and deepen continental and regional integration;

6. AND CONVINCED that the ultimate objective of regional integration is to improve welfare gains of citizens, accelerate development and eliminate poverty.

7. Participants thus RECOMMENDED as follows:

❖ Member States should conduct in-country studies to ascertain the best approach to accelerate policy and institutional domestication of regional integration. These studies

should guide them on how to harmonize their legal systems with regional legal instruments, the manner and speed of how much of their sovereignty to attribute to the regional institutions, what their regional integration priorities should be, and how to coordinate their own actions with the rest of the region.

- ❖ Member States should re-energize their efforts of generating resources to ensure the sustainability and regional ownership of integration process, and to rely less on foreign sources with their conditionality.
- ❖ Member States should always bear in mind that full regional integration unavoidably embodies the ceding of some national sovereignty to a foreign institution. Therefore, they should be prepared for this and work to strengthen regional bodies such as the SADC Secretariat to make them more effective.
- ❖ Member States should spare no effort in meeting regional integration challenges as they pertain to physical infrastructure to facilitate physical integration, trade liberalization, fulfilling financial obligations, and enrolling the private sector and civil society as partners.
- ❖ To ensure political commitment and participation of all levels of the society in the regional integration agenda, member States should effectively communicate the various stages of regional integration process, highlighting its implications, especially the benefits, and hold national referendums to entrench a participatory approach to the process. An inclusive process should take on board the inputs of the civil society, including traditional governance structures and faith-based organizations, in making and implementing regional protocols and treaties.
- ❖ Member States are urged to ensure that the judiciary and national parliaments are fully engaged in giving legislative and democratic oversight over the regional integration process, including ensuring popular participation of all citizens directly or through their representatives. In addition to the Judiciary, the activities of SADC National Committees should include the parliamentarians as well.
- ❖ Member States are strongly advised to consider implementing the African Union suggestion regarding the establishment of the ministries of regional integration to oversee the overall implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the regional integration agenda.
- ❖ In crafting regional protocols and treaties, member States should consider specifying the roles and duties of each member States with regard to the implementation of those regional instruments.
- ❖ Member States should consider some forms of sanctions against those member States who fail consistently to fulfill their treaty obligations.
- ❖ Member States should help in capacity enhancement of universities and other research institutions to enable them to carry their task of generating regional integration research outputs.

- ❖ Peace and security is a prerequisite for regional integration. Member States should at all times ensure that this foundation is in place, including through the unfailing search for national consensus on policy-making and entrenching good governance.
- ❖ To facilitate a seamless integration of regional laws, member States are encouraged to follow the rulings of regional courts, such as the SADC Tribunal, and use such rulings as precedence in their own decisions.
- ❖ On the proposed *Framework for Mainstreaming Regional Integration in National Development Plans*:
 - The ECA Secretariat, University of Eduardo Mondlane (Centre of Studies on Regional Integration and SADC Law) and other partners should refine the Framework and ensure policy coherence. In addition to the setting up of institutional structure and the actual process of mainstreaming regional integration in national plans, the framework should also provide options on operationalizing it. It should contain allocation of responsibilities among member States, taking into account each member state's capacity. This specification will prompt member States to act more speedily.
 - The language in the framework should be aligned with that used in the regional legal instruments and as provided for in SADC's Treaty.
- ❖ ECA-SA should provide leadership in retaining the services of the Group to be known as 'Friends of ECA-SA and CEDIR-UEM' and a Think Tank to participate and advise SADC and its member States on matters relating to domestication of regional integration. And that, ECA-SA should as soon as possible come up with modalities for the functioning of the Think Tank by among others establishing a portal for e-discussion.
- ❖ ECA-SA should support universities in the SADC region in providing technical advisory services including short-term lectures on regional integration directly or through the Centre of Studies on Regional Integration and SADC Law at the UEM as one practical way of mainstreaming regional integration in the university curriculum.

3. CONCLUSIONS

8. Member States are requested to consider and adopt the Forum's recommendations. Member States are further requested to facilitate the implementation of the recommendations at national levels.