

Breakfree



The Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development monthly Newsletter
Investing in people for social and economic justice in Zimbabwe

SADC Summit Special Edition

July-August 2007

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Upcoming events

- September 21 – 24 International Tribunal on the World Bank will be held in India
- October 17-21 Maputo, Mozambique
Contact: zimsocialforum@zimcodd.co.zw
- October 20-22 – IMF-WB Annual meetings
- October 14-21 Week of Global Action Against Debt and IFIs
- October G-20 Meetings

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Editorial

Dear Reader

In all societies, home remains one of the most influential institutions in shaping people's perceptions, aspirations and future. Home is a place usually associated with love, care and reconstruction. No wonder why 'home-based care' is prescribed as the preferred option in most cases of terminal illnesses. The Zambians were saying, "SADC is coming back Home" quoting one of the jingles which appeared on Zambian Television in anticipation of the 27th SADC Heads of State Summit held in Lusaka Zambia on August 17. Indeed, Lusaka was the cradle of regional solidarity in as far as the SADC region is concerned. Lusaka harboured the Liberation Movements that came together to form the Frontline States in the late 70s, and later regional solidarity formations giving birth to the Southern Africa Development Coordination Conference (now the Southern Africa Development Community) in 1980. However, 27 years after SADC was born, the region has experienced depletion in its economy, governance, and regional integration. Coincidentally, the Zambian President Levy Mwanawasa identified one of SADC's major failures early this year when he said that Zimbabwe was like a 'sinking titanic'. In this Issue we will flag out some critical points on Zimbabwe's hyperinflation discussed at the ZIMCODD National Conference on the Zimbabwe's Economic crisis held in Harare on August 1-2. We dedicate the rest of the space to the deliberations of the SADC Peoples' Summit which reveal the appalling state of SADC leadership as Lusaka abrogates its motherhood duties.

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Zimbabwe Debt Statistics

Gross Domestic Product **US\$5.9 billion** (Dec 2006)

External Debt **US\$4, 2 billion** (Dec 2006)

Arrears & Interests **US\$2, 2 billion** (Dec 2006)

Domestic debt **Z\$8 trillion** (May 2007)

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Solving hyperinflation – lessons from Latin America

Ntando Ndlovu & Deniz Kellecioglu (ZIMCODD)

On August 1-2 the Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt & Development (ZIMCODD) convened a national conference on Zimbabwe's economic crisis under the topic: *National Conference on Zimbabwe's economic crisis: Towards a lasting solution*. The landmark conference attracted over 70 participants including renowned economists, academics, politicians, business professionals, Gender and HIV/AIDS activists, government & Labor representatives, civil society practitioners, students and media representatives among others. Among the key presenters was Professor Martin Krause from the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina. His contribution to the Zimbabwe Debate was enriching in understanding the hyperinflationary environment currently experienced in Zimbabwe. Below we extract some relevant sections from Professor Krause's presentation entitled, '*Macroeconomic management for sustainable development: experiences from Latin America*' for the benefit of our readers.

The hyperinflationary environment

The brunt of hyperinflation falls heavily the low income earners and the poor. The hyperinflationary crises usually bring riots with them with people storming into supermarkets, even fighting among themselves for the few goods that are found in the markets. In the meantime, governments fall prey to the '*Olivera-Tanzi*' effect, whereby government expenditures grow faster than their revenues, increasing the fiscal deficit and the need to cover it with new monetary issuing. There is no budget anymore.

The crises also show that hyperinflation has a dramatic impact in the institutional structure of affected countries, showing two main results: governments in charge at the time of runaway inflation were either removed or defeated in elections while those governments that managed to stop hyperinflation had political success in the future.

Policies that will not function

Different governments implemented all sorts of policies aimed at the effects (prices increases) and not the causes (monetization of the fiscal deficit). In the case of Argentina they included:

Price controls: These encountered two major problems: the first was to set prices for all prices of consumer goods, intermediate goods and raw materials in the economy; the second was to adjust them to scarcities and surpluses. Since the first problem made the goal of controlling 'all' prices impossible, government usually set prices for a basket of consumer goods. But that created another set of problems since producers of these products had their prices controlled but not their inputs. Profits margins disappeared and, sooner or later, the products themselves.

Price freezes: These were even more difficult to implement. As different from price controls, a price "freeze" just tries to keep prices as they are at a particular time. Usually it requires every shop to submit lists of prices at that date, but think about supermarkets filling up form with the price of every product in stock.

Both policies, also, demand an army of inspectors, and multiply corruption. Some policymakers argue that price controls or freezes are needed in order to reduce speculation,

but it does not take much time for people to learn and to become cynical with regard to their success.

Attempts to fix *the exchange rate* with the main reserve currency (in Argentina's case the US dollar) created a "parallel" market for foreign exchange. The price of the dollar in this market became the reference price for the indexation of all prices in the economy. *Different exchange rates* for services, travel, capital inflows and outflows, exports and imports only caused price distortions in the market.

Monetary "reforms" that pretended to reevaluate the currency by taking away different *number of zeros*, but with no change on fiscal and monetary policy this was only a change in the unit of account of prices but not in inflation as such.

None of these worked, or they did for a short span of time.

Policies that will function

The specific recipe to stop hyperinflation will certainly vary from country to country, although the need for a *shock of confidence* based on *fiscal, monetary and political reforms* will always be present.

What the experiences in Latin America show is that defeating hyperinflation is no easy task, certain attempts fail, but there were persistent successive moves towards the solution. In all cases the source of the problem was the continued printing of money to cover fiscal deficits, and the solution came when the deficit was controlled and a "shock of confidence" was able to recreate the demand for money. In the case of Argentina the shock of confidence was produced by a newly elected government which raised the expectations of people through the announcement of drastic measures of reform.

Control the fiscal deficit: Unless this is under tight control economic agents are not going to trust any promise of a reduced monetary expansion. The first step to eliminate the fiscal deficit is to secure genuine government revenues. *Regaining trust in the currency* will increase their demand. There is a clear need to reassure people that the currency that lost value on a daily basis will no longer do so in the coming future. Many times, this entails introducing a new (and fully backed by solid reserves) currency plus the reliable independence of the Central Bank and a verifiable elimination of the fiscal deficit.

Communiqué of the CSO conference on the Zimbabwe Economic Crisis: *Towards a lasting Solution*

We, the participants of the Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development (ZIMCODD) *CSO Conference on the Economic Crisis in Zimbabwe: Towards a lasting Solution* held in Harare on 1-2 August 2007, representing various civil society groups, social movements, mass organizations, trade unions, business, academia, noting the following concerns:

- The hyperinflationary environment prevailing in Zimbabwe with inflation reaching 7251% (June 2007) pushing the majority of Zimbabweans into abject poverty, hitting women, children and people living with HIV/AIDS the hardest.
- the worsening poverty levels with more than 80% of Zimbabwe's Population living below the Poverty Datum Line,
- the continued crisis of poor export earnings and negative Balance of Payments,
- The socio-economic policy inconsistencies on the part of government resulting in lack of long term policy framework for example, the Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Social Transformation (ZIMPREST), National Economic Revival Program (NERP) and the National Economic Development Priority Program (NEDPP) only lasting for a few months and failing to achieve any meaningful development and,

Observing that:

- The Zimbabwe economic crisis is complex and of a historical nature owing to years of colonialism and poor policies of the postcolonial state. The country inherited over USD 700 million¹ external debts from the colonial regime and went through a highly consumptive period before adopting an equally destructive Economic Structural Adjustment Programmes (ESAP). As at December 2006, the Official External Debt figures stood at US\$4, 2 billion and US\$2, 2 billion in arrears. Recently, massive domestic borrowing has seen the domestic debt ballooning to 8 trillion as of July 6 (Zimbabwe Independent August 10-16)
- The country also inherited a dual economy biased towards the formal sector at the expense of the informal sector resulting in unequal distribution of resources and the widening of the gap between the rich and the poor.
- Government acknowledges that the economy is in a crisis
- Government is adopting policies and measures to deal with the hyperinflation that have failed dismally in other countries.

We believe that:

- The complexity of the economic crisis, particularly the complexity of fiscal management under the current circumstances requires unorthodox solutions. The state is now a captive state, unproductive and paralyzed by polarized partisan politics.
- The alarming rate of increase of domestic debt and the huge overhang of external debt is never accounted for
- The general deterioration of moral value system leading to rampant corruption is disturbing.
- There is a general absence of a common progressive ideology for the country with splinter ne-oliberal and anti-neoliberal policy projections confusing the economy.

¹ Bond, P. & Manyanya, M, (2002), *Zimbabwe's Plunge: Exhausted Nationalism, Neoliberalism and the Search for Social Justice*, University of Natal Press, South Africa, p.17

We resolved that:

- Prudent economic political and social governance is central to the solving the current crisis.
- A national Debt audit is important to establish the legitimacy of debts owed by Zimbabwe
- A review of public social and economic priorities and the alignment of national budgets to agreed social and economic policies
- Government must stop implementing neo-liberal policies and a shift to people-driven policies
- Government must effectively utilize its human material and natural resources for sustainable development.
- a shock of confidence will be required for Zimbabwe to turn around its economy. That is there is need for a rebirth, a renewal in the country's social, economic and political system to foster legitimacy and confidence in the generality of Zimbabweans.

SADC IS NOT A PRESERVE OF OUR LEADERS

By Susan Mwape

As the 27th SADC Heads of State Summit kicked off at Mulungushi International Conference Centre on August 12-17 in Lusaka, Zambia, the ordinary peoples of Southern Africa converged at the In Service Training Trust of the Natural Resources Development College (NRDC) under the auspices of the Southern Africa Peoples' Solidarity Network (SAPSN) to reclaim SADC for peoples' development and solidarity.

This was the third time since 2000 when the SADC peoples through social movements and civil society organisations have organised themselves to claim a peoples' space within the SADC processes parallel to the elitist annual SADC Heads of State Summit . In 2000 SAPSN convened the Non-Governmental Conference parallel to the Heads of State Summit in Windhoek, Namibia. This was followed by the 2006 People's Summit held under the theme; ***“Reclaiming SADC for People's Development: Assessing the Impact of Neo-liberal Policies on the Peoples' Livelihoods”*** in Maseru, Lesotho. This year the Lusaka Peoples' Summit was held under the banner ***“Reclaiming SADC for Peoples' Development and Solidarity: Let the People Speak!***

Organisers of the 2007 Peoples' Summit together with their Zambian counterparts under the Jubilee Zambia Network said the aim of the Peoples Summit was to lobby leaders from the SADC region to make regional integration a democratically negotiated process, to serve the development needs and aspirations of all the peoples' of the region adding that regional cooperation is challenged by internal and external resistances to people's participation.

Participants of the Peoples Summit expressed disappointment at the SADC Leadership. Over 40 Zimbabwean delegates on their way to the Summit were on August 14 sent back by the Zambian Immigration Department. According to a representative of the conveners of the 'SADC People's Summit', Ms Patricia Kasiamhuru of Zimbabwe from the Southern Africa People's Solidarity Network (SAPSN), expressed extreme displeasure on the deportation of would-have-been participants to the People's Summit. "SADC is not a preserve of the

Leaders, they need to understand that people need space to express themselves and the leaders are obliged to listen.”

Meanwhile, Sara Longwe, a Gender Activist from Zambia said she was awfully ashamed of the act taken by the Zambian Immigration department. “I am tremendously ashamed of this act and if I could or had my way I would have turned into ‘Kanyebele’ an ant. I never thought the day would come when Zambians would do this,” said Longwe.

In her address to the Peoples Summit, Longwe said that Zambia had gone against its very principles and foundation of being a front line state which protected for the independence of its neighbours. She suggested to the other delegates that a special spot be picked out so that a chair can be placed there with a list of names of the people that were detained at the border.

On the other hand, Sitali Muyatwa a representative of the Jubilee Zambia said it is appalling that the Zambia Police refused to give the organizers of the Summit clearance to have a social march. As has been the history of the Summit, after the deliberations participants usually go and submit their resolutions and recommendations to the Heads of State Summit. “Granting this gathering clearance to do the march would have been a sure sign of Zambia’s growth in democracy but these acts show the lack of that growth”, said Muyatwa.

Officially opening the Peoples’ Summit in Lusaka, the SAPSN Secretary General, Mr Joy Mabenge said, “It is disappointing that in a perceived democracy like Zambia people are denied the right to express themselves to their own leaders through a peaceful social march”. He said, “Our Summit is open to all interested stakeholders as they are people centred and people driven – we hope that this can be emulated by the leaders”

(First Published in the *Voice of the People*, a publication of the Southern Africa Peoples’ Solidarity Network (SAPSN) covering the SADC Peoples’ Summit)

Widening the horizons of Socio-Economic Justice in SADC.

By Hopewell Gumbo

The lessons from the deportation of the delegation of 40 people heading for the SADC Peoples’ Summit by the Zambian Immigration Department on August 14 are two fold. One is the need for continued cross-boarder activism and second, the need to refine the strategies of engagement with the increasingly dictatorial governments in the SADC region.



Part of the Zim delegation that was deported & detained at the Chirundu Border Post

Those who attended the Peoples Summit were denied the permit to undertake a peaceful social march and the opportunity to hand over the outcomes of their two-day deliberations to

the SADC Leaders in Lusaka. Meanwhile, at the Chirundu Border Post the deportees went through rigorous interrogation with their personal belongings ranging from cameras to clothing items confiscated by the Zimbabwean security agents. What a coincidence. Banning of demonstrations was a privy of the Zimbabwean Government recently, but the trend is establishing itself in neighbouring and in deed countries in the region and beyond.

As many were wishfully waiting for a positive result on Zimbabwe at the Heads of State meeting, the opposite was happening on the ground, never mind the outcome of the meeting. This means the poor and their social movements in Zambia Zimbabwe, Tanzania South Africa and many more countries have to build strong economic, social and political justice solidarity. There is need to strengthen strategies of engagement and organisational infrastructure within the movements.

There is no doubt that SADC regional solidarity is here to stay. Recent developments do not suggest that we must stop this process but that it is a confirmation of the strength of our movements. The act by the Zambian Immigration Department confirms that we are a force to reckon with. As we move ahead we need to focus on strengthening country to country movements while integrating them into the broader regional and international networks. We have a SADC to win; our lives are not for sale. Another SADC is possible.

SADC Peoples Summit Declaration on Zimbabwe

August 15,

1. We as a broad gathering of social, labor and other movements from across the whole of Southern Africa actively support the call for a broad inclusive national constitutional assembly of all Zimbabweans themselves not just political parties to find their own solutions to their national crisis.
2. We note the shameful failure of the SADC governments within their own structures, at the AU, in the UN to contribute to a definitive resolution to the deepening crisis in Zimbabwe even the so called mediation by specific SADC Governments has failed.
3. We call upon the Governments of SADC to provide all the necessary support to such a national constitutional assembly, which will agree on both the organizational and political constitutional terms within which new fully democratic elections can be held as soon as possible.
4. We further call upon the governments of SADC in which many millions of Zimbabweans are seeking both political refuge and means of livelihood, in the context of the political and economic crisis in Zimbabwe to give them full social support and civil rights and not to neglect or abuse the Human Rights of such people.
5. We as a comprehensive gathering of social forces from the whole the whole of Southern Africa undertake to support our fellow SADC citizens within and through our own organizations at home and regionally; actively engage with the media in our countries to dispel the misinterpretations they carry and engage with the media and

other opinion shapers in our countries to expose the illegitimacy of the current Zimbabwean Regime.

6. We protest strongly against the action of 14 August by the Zambian authorities to prevent our fellow SADC citizens from Zimbabwe to come to Lusaka to join us all in our Peoples' Summit here, as they did in the previous Peoples Summit in Maseru in 2006.
7. We note that there are many other very bad abuses of political, civil, social and economic rights within other countries in SADC as well and we undertake to continue working together in the coming weeks and months to carry out active campaigns of information and advocacy on all these issues as well as on Zimbabwe in particular.

Halt EPAS

By Sarah Ngwenya

THE Peoples' Summit has called upon their SADC Heads of State to halt the signing of the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) in December 2007 when the deadline expires. "Let the people speak," JCTR Father Peter Henriot advised the SADC Heads of States attending the 27th Heads of State SADC Summit in Zambia.

He said that any process must be a people-driven process not to be imposed, because bad effects of such processes normally last over many the years, and the region is already marked by many policies which are not people centered. "The current pace is just too fast, what would be the impact, especially on the small-scale produce agricultural sector where most of our people live, and the potential for revenue losses with impact on social expenditures and hence the need to stop EPAs." Fr Henriot said.

"The choked development is not our own fault. We were pushed into Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) by the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) with disastrous social consequences, later strapped into the High Indebted Poor Countries initiative (HIPC) with constraints to reach Completion Point, despite cancellation of debt for Zambia what are the post-period challenges? More debt, according to what the Debt Sustainability Analysis (DSA) guidelines on human impact. More loans are coming in from China".

Meanwhile, the representatives of the Civil Society Organizations and social movements meeting in Lusaka, Zambia on the occasion of the SADC Head of State Summit are concerned with current press, content of the joint African- EU-AU Joint Strategy. Thomas Deve from Mwelekeo wa NGO (MWENGO) read the communiqué from the CSO's meeting to the press conference held at the Courtyard Hotel on August 14 saying, the strategy is being developed against the background of other parallel presses which have divided Africa into regions that undermine regional integration.

He said that takes away policy space for African governments to defend the livelihoods of their citizens and undermine service provision through forced liberalization. "In December, African governments will head to Lisbon to sign up to a new partnership with European

Union governments, yet very few Africans know about this important upcoming event which will have serious ramifications for generations to come.

Participants deliberated on the proposed African-EU strategy and resolved to use it as a platform to interrogate existing policy frameworks that will continue to undermine socio-economic developments in Africa and be used as a tool after the terms of reference that would enhance the repositioning of Africa as an independent key global player and not as a junior partner of Europe-Africa's engagement that are not driven by demands of the African citizens".

Deve noted that Africa, through its regional economic communities, is already engaged in multiplicity of cooperation framework with the EU, not forgetting the Trade and Development Cooperation Agreement (TDCA) with South Africa for example.



Southern African People's Solidarity Network

COMMUNIQUE OF THE SADC PEOPLE'S SUMMIT

Reclaiming SADC for peoples solidarity and development: Let the People Speak - LUSAKA, ZAMBIA, 15-16 AUGUST 2007

August 16, 2007

We, members of Civil Society Organisations, trade unions, faith based organizations, student bodies and economic justice networks from the SADC region met in Lusaka, Zambia on August 15-16, under the auspices of the Southern Africa Peoples' Solidarity Network (SAPSN), to constitute the SADC People's Summit held parallel to the 27th Heads of State Summit.

We exchanged views on some common trends and issues of concern in the region including the appalling state of governance, democracy and human rights, youth unemployment levels, HI/AIDS trends, poor health service delivery, gender discrimination, land problems, the debt burden, Economic Partnership Agreements and the Zimbabwe Situation.

We noted with concern that years after the adoption of the SADC protocol on human rights, governments in the region continue to violate the rights of their citizens using draconian laws, harassment and torture of opposition leaders and civic society activists, ban on political

rallies, intolerance to dissenting views as well as denial of freedom of expression and association.

We deplore attempts by governments, through introducing NGO bills across the region, to silence the civic organisations' calls for public transparency and accountability.

We categorically condemn the deportation of over 40 Zimbabweans headed for the SADC People's Summit on August 14 by the Zambia government and call on the immigration officials in the region to desist from such repressive acts in the future. Further, we deplore the inability of the SADC to act decisively in solving the Zimbabwe crisis and we support the calls for a national constitutional conference to solve the country's situation.

We observe the lack of true democracy in Swaziland and we support the calls for a new constitutional dispensation in the country.

We are disappointed with the little progress made so far in improving the health sector in the region as we underscore the need for urgent actioning by governments towards meeting the Abuja Declaration of 15 percent allocation of the national budgets to the provision of essential drugs including the Anti-Retroviral Drugs. We call on other governments in the region to emulate the government of Botswana which has met the Abuja target in its budgeting process.

We note the importance of land to the livelihoods of the communities and we deplore the unscrupulous evictions of people from their ancestral land, land privatization, and capitalization of land.

We are concerned that debt repayments continue to deprive the peoples of the region essential services and to hamper sustainable development in the region. Despite the debt relief programs undertaken in some of the countries in the region, SADC governments continue to reel under a chronic debt crisis exacerbated by 'vulture funds'- the so-called predator companies from rich governments which purchase debts owed by poor countries and litigate against the debtor countries with huge costs.

We condemn the legislative and institutional gaps in our countries for addressing internal mechanisms for the debt problems and we call on parliaments in the region to enact legislations around the loan contraction processes and the establishment of institutions that are necessary for effective debt management.

We note with concern the divisive effects of the Economic Partnership Agreements on the region and the neoliberal nature of their content as the December deadline for signing those approaches. We believe that the EPA negotiations are between unequal partners and that the SADC region stands to lose much more than the promised gains in the process.

We deplore the continued marginalization of women and the youth in decision-making processes across the region as we note the reluctance and piece-meal inclusion of women by governments of the region in political, economic and social arenas. We emphasize that women's equal participation form an integral part of any meaningful strategy towards sustainable development in the region and beyond.

On the basis of the above factors we demand:

1. **All SADC governments to adopt and ratify the SADC protocol on human rights and gender; uphold regional integration as a participatory, people-driven and democratically negotiated process; respect the rule of law; allow free and fair elections; and make all constitutional reforms a consultative process.**
2. **All SADC governments and peoples to accept duty to de-stigmatise HIV/AIDS, uphold the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS and empower them to live positively.**
3. **Governments in the region to prioritize the sustainable livelihoods of the rural communities, and equity in the land reform processes.**
4. **Total and Unconditional debt cancellation for all the SADC countries.**
5. **Governments of SADC to Stop EPAS!**

We commit ourselves to continue mobilizing the peoples of the SADC in solidarity with other regions of the continent to contribute to sustainable solutions to the region's social, economic, and political problems; to engage governments at national levels on regional integration, the Zimbabwe problem, Economic Partnership Agreements, adoption of gender sensitive policies, adequate resources for HIV/AIDS, unemployment for the youth and better working conditions for workers; and to forge active partnership with other actors across the region.

ANOTHER SADC IS POSSIBLE!



Gender Protocol Alliance dismayed by leader's inaction

August 18,

The Southern African Gender Protocol Alliance² is disappointed that SADC leaders failed to walk the talk of gender equality at their just ended summit in Lusaka by not signing the Protocol on Gender and Development.

² The SADC Gender Protocol Alliance comprises the Botswana Congress of NGOs (BOCONGO); Federation of African Media Women (FAMW) – SADC; Gender Links (GL); Gender and Media Southern Africa Network (GEMSA); Justice and Peace (Lesotho); Malawi Council of Churches; Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA); NGO Gender Coordination Network Malawi; SAFAIDS; Society for Women and AIDS in Africa Zambia (SWAAZ); Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF); Women in Law in Southern Africa

As representatives of sixteen regional and national NGOs working to promote the rights of women in the region, we are at a loss as to why heads of state failed to seize the moment of the 2007 summit after the draft had successfully passed through all the preparatory stages. This included endorsement by ministers of gender; justice ministers and the Council of Ministers that generally comprises finance ministers from the region.

While we understand that the Protocol has been deferred to next year's summit due to a minority of members feeling that they have not had sufficient time to study the draft, we are concerned that this will slow down the momentum in countries that went to Lusaka ready to take the plunge. In particular, we are concerned that as new rounds of negotiations are opened the Protocol - one of the most specific and time bound anywhere in the world for achieving gender equality- may be watered down.

We wish to stress that from our perspective the targets in the Protocol for the achievement of equality between women and men are non-negotiable. The fact that leaders failed to bite the bullet this year will only increase the pressure for implementation when the Protocol is finally signed.

We will continue to fight for these targets to be met, even before the Protocol is signed. We will also step our efforts to ensure that there are no further stalling or delaying tactics before the Heads of State summit in 2008. No more excuses or technicalities will be accepted or acceptable.

Already in the pipeline for several years now, the Protocol is the one instrument that could finally help Southern Africa to bridge the gap between the rhetoric and reality of gender equality.

What distinguishes the SADC Gender Protocol from all the existing international and regional commitments to gender equality is the number of concrete, time bound commitments to achieving key strategic objectives. Altogether the Protocol has twenty targets: six by 2010, and 14 by 2015.

These targets not only bring together but enhance existing commitments in such instruments as the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); the Millennium Development Goals and the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights. For example, while all these make reference to women's participation in decision-making, only the SADC Protocol gives a bold time-frame of 2015 for achieving this.

The Protocol draws on and seeks to extend good practice in the region. For example, it requires that by 2015 all countries follow the example set by two countries in the region (Namibia and South Africa) by enshrining gender equality in their constitutions and giving this provision primacy over customary law.

(WLSA); Women, Land and Water Rights Southern Africa (WLWRSa); Women in Politics Caucus Botswana; Women's Leadership Centre Namibia; Young Women's Christian Association Botswana (YWCA); Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre (ZWRCN).

All countries will also be required by that year to have comprehensive legislation, services and specialised facilities for addressing gender violence as well as reduce current levels by 50 percent.

The Protocol breaks new ground by requiring that women participate equally in economic decision-making; be afforded access to credit; public procurement contracts and wage employment.

It further sets out targets for implementation, monitoring, evaluation and resource allocation with strong peer review and accountability mechanisms. A summary of the key provisions of the protocol is attached.

For more information call Colleen Lowe Morna on +27 82 651 6995.

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