



COMMUNIQUÉ
SADC PARLIAMENTARIANS' FORUM
ON THE ENERGY CRISIS
IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, 27-29 MAY 2008,
LUSAKA, ZAMBIA



PREAMBLE

1. We the Chairpersons and representatives of Energy Portfolio Committees of Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland and Zambia meeting under the auspices of the SADC Parliamentary Forum in Lusaka, Zambia from the 27th – 29th May 2008 to review the energy crisis in Southern Africa and propose measures to mitigate and overcome the negative impact of the crisis on the socio-economic development and welfare of the people.
2. The meeting also afforded an opportunity to affirm and strengthen our oversight role of the energy sector at national and regional levels. The meeting was officially opened by Hon. Kenneth Konga, MP, Minister of Energy and Water Development, Zambia, who outlined SADC road map in addressing the energy crisis and the initiatives Zambia is undertaking in this regard.
3. Also in attendance were the Hon. David Matongo, the Vice Chairperson of the Trade, Development and Integration (TDI) Committee of the SADC Parliamentary Forum and Dr. Kasuka Mutukwa, the Secretary General.
4. The meeting also benefited from expert presentations from the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP), the Regional Electricity Regulators Association (RERA), ESKOM, Renewable

Energy Efficiency Institute (REEEI) and other regional energy experts. Members also shared experiences from their respective countries and had an opportunity to visit the Kafue Gorge Hydropower Station the largest power station in Zambia.

WE NOTE WITH CONCERN THAT

5. whilst SADC governments were warned of the impending power shortage more than ten years ago no proper preparations were made to avert the crisis;
6. existing power infrastructure is old and in urgent need of refurbishment and that no major new infrastructure have been developed in many years;
7. despite the huge energy potential in the region most of it remains untapped;
8. very little was done to diversify from the conventional energy sources to the abundant renewable and other non-conventional sources (e.g. solar, wind, gas, mini-hydros, etc);
9. despite having signed and ratified a comprehensive SADC Energy Protocol of 1996 it is evident that its provisions has not been domesticated and adequately implemented as the road map that could have guided the development of the energy sector;
10. the oversight and representative role of parliamentarians continued to be marginalized on the implementation of regional protocols and programmes;
11. the total installed electricity/energy capacity in the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP) is about 55 000 MW and the available or effective capacity is only about 47 000MW;
12. access to electricity in rural areas of the region where over 70% of the population lives is on average below 5% and

- current power shortage undermines efforts to increase this access;
13. the crisis exacerbates the burden on women and children in the provision of energy;

WE THEREFORE COMMIT AND RESOLVE THAT:

14. all parliamentarians must demand that they be continuously appraised by the Executive of the measures that are being implemented to resolve power shortages at the national and regional levels with specific programmes, timelines and investment commitments. This should include reports on the implementation of the SADC Energy Ministerial Task Force (EMTF) resolutions;
15. the establishment of a regional parliament, which is now long overdue, could ensure oversight and monitoring of SADC programmes and protocols for the benefit of the citizens;
16. parliamentarians will review the state of energy legislation, policies and programmes with a view to promote harmonisation at regional level;
17. the most viable and sustainable approach to addressing the energy crisis and escaping vulnerability is to deal with the challenge as a region rather than as individual countries;
18. energy is a development imperative and we urge our governments to prioritise reliable and equitable provision thereof;
19. energy Ministers and key role players must regularly inform parliamentarians about measure to address the crises and the energy sector in general;
20. energy efficiency and demand side management (DSM) measures be implemented as a matter of priority;

21. rural and peri-urban electrification initiatives must be accelerated and the current power shortage should not be allowed to impinge progress in this regard;
22. to promote and support the development and deployment of renewable energy and sustainable development initiatives;
23. principles of cost reflective electricity tariffs should be applied together with pro-poor measures;
24. promote policy and legal framework to attract private investment in the energy sector;
25. while rebuilding people's confidence in their governments efforts in the provision of energy services, mobilise our communities to participate in energy saving measures;
26. request our respective Parliaments and committees to deliberate on the energy crisis and its impact on the people;

IN CONCLUSION WE

27. profoundly thank the Speaker and the National Assembly of Zambia, the Government of the Republic Zambia and its people for hosting the Forum and hospitality enjoyed;
28. express great appreciation to the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) and the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) for their financial support towards the hosting of this regional meeting;
29. acknowledge with gratitude the technical support of the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP), the Regional Electricity Regulators' Association (RERA), ESKOM, ZESCO, Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Institute (REEEI) and other regional energy experts and
30. urge the SADC Parliamentary Forum to continue facilitating exchange of information and knowledge on energy issues.

Issued at Lusaka, Zambia, Thursday, 29 May, 2008