



**KEY NOTE ADDRESS**

**BY**

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**ON**

**THE OCCASION OF THE  
JOINT ICT TRANSPORT INVESTMENT FORUM**

**20 OCTOBER 2016**

**ESIBAYENI LODGE, MATSAPHA**

**KINGDOM OF SWAZILAND**

- Director of Ceremonies, thank you so much;
- A very good morning, bom dia todos, bonjour, Salibnani Lonke;
- Hon Pastor Damini, Minister of Works and Transport, Kingdom of Swaziland, and Chairperson of the SADC Committee of Ministers responsible for Transport and Meteorology;
- Hon Dumisani Christopher Ndlangamandla, Minister of Information, Communications and Technology for the Kingdom of Swaziland, and Chairperson of the SADC Committee of Ministers responsible for ICT;
- Dr Ibrahim Mayaki, Chief Executive Officer of NEPAD and his delegation;
- Mr Patrick Dlamini, Chief Executive Officer of DBSA and his delegation ;
- Permanent Secretaries and Senior Officials from the Member States and SADC Regional Bodies here present;
- Colleagues from the SADC Secretariat;
- Ms Lynette Chen, CEO of the NEPAD Business Foundation;
- Representatives of our International Cooperating Partners;
- Distinguished Investors and Members of the Private Sector;
- Invited Guests;
- Distinguished Delegates;
- Ladies and Gentlemen;
- All Protocols Observed;

I am profoundly honoured and indeed humbled, to be accorded this opportunity to stand before your good selves this morning, to address this High Level ICT and Transport Investment Conference being held here in Matsapha, Kingdom of Swaziland.

I would like to Take this opportunity to welcome you all to this Investment Forum. I wish to pay tribute to His Majesty's Government and the people of the Kingdom of Swaziland for agreeing to host this all important Forum which seeks to showcase some of the priority ICT and Transport projects which constitute a minefield of investment opportunities in the area of infrastructure.

Allow me to take this opportunity to extend my profound appreciation to our key partners that have come to the party to render assistance to the SADC region to prepare transport and infrastructure projects, especially the those that have been elaborated by the PIDA Acceleration Programme ably supported by the NEPAD Secretariat, and other partners that include the European Union, GIZ, DBSA, ADB, among others. This Forum that has brought together investors, captains of the private sector, financial institutions, and Cooperating Partners is indeed a commendable initiative with significant contribution to SADC objectives, in particular the realization balanced and sustainable development for mutual benefit of SADC citizens.

I am indeed honoured and privileged, to be accorded this opportunity, to share with you some perspectives around SADC investment options, within the framework of the SADC Industrialization Strategy 2015-2063 and the SADC Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan. Investment in these areas requires concerted efforts, individually and collectively, while bringing Private Sector on board as a major player, through local and foreign investments.

Today's Investment Forum which is being convened, under the theme ***“Transport and ICT in Support of Industrialisation; Enriching Nations - Enhancing Integration”***, with the main purpose of providing an opportunity for an exchange of vital information on investment and views between SADC, the private sector, including potential investors

and financiers in order to mobilise investments and financing towards SADC projects. It is my hope that, going forward, we can continue to establish a sustainable partnership between SADC governments and the private sector, thereby boost investment into the SADC region, whilst also branding the region as an *“investment destination of choice”*. This Forum provides an opportunity for SADC to communicate its policies and strategies aimed at creating an enabling environment for investment, besides a pipeline of projects amenable to private sector investment.

### **Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen;**

The SADC Free Trade Area which was launched by our Heads of States in 2008, now offers a *“zero rated tariff regime”* to 100% of all goods produced across the region with 13 Member States participating in the SADC FTA. The SADC Free Trade Area offers an integrated market, free of internal tariffs among SADC Member States, with a combined GDP of US\$ 686 billion (2014) and combined population of 294 million (2014). The market has been further expanded with the launch COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Free Trade Area in June, 2015, in Sharm el Sheikh, Arab Republic of Egypt, which offers an integrated market of 26 countries with a combined GDP of US\$1.300 trillion (2014), combined population of 625 million people, which is 57% of Africa’s population.

In 2010, SADC Governments also agreed to addressing barriers to investment by launching a Regional Action Programme on Investment. The Programme. aims to, among others, enhance the attractiveness of the SADC Region as an investment destination.

### **Honourable Ministers, Our Distinguished Partners :**

Allow me to share with you issues and perspectives around the issue of industrialization, which is currently at the epicenter of our regional cooperation. The strategy reflects the crucial need for the region to

leverage its abundant and diverse resources, especially in agriculture and mining, to accelerate industrialization through beneficiation and value addition. The SADC Industrialization Strategy and Roadmap 2015-2063 having been finalized is available on our website, and speaks to the African Union “**Agenda 2063**”, as a continental blueprint. In our view, this is a historic achievement. AS we speak, the Action Plan on Industrialisation, which identifies the projects for investment in this area is being finalized. We have resolved to build on this momentum and use the Strategy and Roadmap to transform our economies, to enhance economic growth, and thus create the much needed jobs to eradicate poverty, as we seek to fulfill the key tenets of our developmental covenants with the people of the SADC Region.

The Implementation of strategic core regional infrastructure networks and services is critical in leveraging industrialisation, enhancing trade facilitation, and promoting investment, trade and thus accelerating and sustaining regional economic development, especially transboundary infrastructure, which today focuses on transport corridors and regional interconnection of broadband ICT infrastructure. All these are very critical in facilitating seamless trade in goods and services, and movement of business persons and all these are areas where the region requires investors.

### **Our Private Sector Partners, Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen;**

The SADC region recognizes the important role played by the private sector as an engine room of growth and an agent of development. In this regard, the Industrialization Strategy, while recognizing the important role of the state in providing a conducive policy and regulatory environment for the private sector to thrive, calls upon the private sector to play a leading role in industrialization, through investments. We are the first to acknowledge that our partnership with the private sector is

underpinned by the “*profit motive*” and is the basis of survival of all prosperous nations.

While cognizant of the fact that investors have typically favoured natural resources, we are delighted to note that of late, there has been a substantial shift from the extractive industries, and the continent is seeing growing investment in other sectors. There is no doubt that as we speak, SADC and the private sector, through the NEPAD Business Foundation already share a common vision. We are committed to maintain this investment momentum for Africa and the SADC region to prosper economically.

In this regard, I wish to implore investors and the private sector to explore investment opportunities in the SADC region and take full advantage of the conducive business environment which the region has to offer. I am convinced that the dialogue we are entertaining here today will go a long way in enlightening our investors of the opportunities in the region. For the SADC region, the year 2016 is a watershed, with our resolve to shift from rhetoric to action.

### **Honourable Ministers, Invited Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen**

Allow me to pay tribute to the colleagues from the SADC Secretariat, NEPAD Secretariat and the NEPAD Business Foundation, and other related stakeholders for putting the technical preparatory side together, and bring this event to where we are today. In the same vein, allow me to express our appreciation to the Local Organising Committee for the excellent logistical arrangements made for this all important dialogue.

Once again, I would like to thank you all abundantly for taking time out of your busy schedules to attend this forum.

On that note, I wish you fruitful deliberations.

I thank you all for your kind attention, and God bless you all.