

Politics Eclipse Infrastructure at SADC Summit



AU Chairperson Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma arriving for the official opening of the 33rd SADC Summit. Credit: Jennifer McKellar.

By Collins Mtika

Ongoing conflicts and political issues in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and other African countries, dominated the recent Summit of SADC Heads of State and Government held in Malawi's Capital Lilongwe.

In her opening address, SADC's new Chairperson, Malawian President Joyce Banda, outlined her plans for the upcoming year.

Banda wants to mould the regional body into a people-centred organisation. This is widely seen as an admission that SADC over the years has alienated itself from the 272 million citizens in the 15 member states.

In the run-up to the Summit, civil society organisations waged a campaign titled 'The SADC We Want', to convince the politicians to change course. Banda also announced shifting the economic focus towards developing the agricultural potential of the region.

The Summit sidelined issues such as HIV/AIDS, incoming elections in ten SADC countries in the next two years and the Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan (RIDMP), adopted in Maputo Mozambique in 2012.

One item that progressed with regards to the roll-out of the

RIDMP, was the establishment of a fund to develop infrastructure in the region over the next 15 years. SADC is looking at the member states to provide \$1.2 billion seed capital for the fund within the next few years.

The \$500 billion RIDMP is touted as a catapult for enhancing regional integration and economic development through inter linked projects in the water, transport, meteorology, power and ICT sectors.

The Summit's final communiqué was dominated by the political stability of member states and other African countries, while only one paragraph was devoted to deteriorating economic conditions in the region.

The SADC-leaders called for the removal of all sanctions Western nations put on Zimbabwe, arguing the country is now stable and peaceful. SADC leaders congratulated 89-year old Zimbabwean president Robert Mugabe on his win, but - awaiting official election monitor reports - stopped short of calling the elections 'fair'.

"On Zimbabwe, Summit noted with satisfaction the holding of free and peaceful harmonised elections ... and congratulates ZANU PF," reads part of the communiqué issued at the end of the Summit.

Zimbabwe's position in the region was further bolstered by the appointment of Robert Mugabe as the next Chair of the regional bloc.

With regards to Egypt, the bloc condemned the removal of the constitutionally elected government and the ensuing loss of lives and property.

"We call on all parties to exercise maximum restraint and begin the process of dialogue and reconciliation and to urgently work towards the return of constitutional normalcy," the leaders said.

They also welcomed the deployment of the SADC Intervention Brigade in the Democratic Republic of Congo under UN Security Council Resolution 2098, to contain the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation in the eastern part of the country.

On the Kampala talks between the DRC Government and M23 rebels, SADC noted 'that the Talks have become protracted and that, at some point, a reasonable deadline should be considered'.

The bloc also commended Madagascar on establishing a special electoral court as a precursor to elections and urged to court to make haste with organising the polls.



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L'opposition au barrage Batoka s'intensifie



The Batoka Dam is expected to generate 800MW of power for Zimbabwe and Zambia, a total of nearly 300MW more than the energy generated by Kariba Dam which is also on the Zambezi river (pictured). Credit: Kristin Palitza/IPS

Por Ignatius Banda

Bulawayo - Il est attendu que la construction du barrage Batoka Gorge, évalué à plusieurs milliards de dollars, une entreprise conjointe entre la Zambie et le Zimbabwe, produise 1.600 mégawatts d'électricité. Mais elle génère un autre type de chaleur puisque l'opposition au projet continue.

Des deux côtés du Zambèze, les critiques ont demandé si le pays a besoin d'un tel projet d'envergure au milieu des plaintes selon lesquelles il y a peu de choses qui montrent que le barrage sera une aubaine pour les économies locales.

En 2012, 'International Rivers', une ONG internationale qui travaille dans la protection des fleuves et des droits des communautés qui dépendent de ces fleuves, a publié un rapport condamnant le projet de barrage, indiquant que sa construction n'a pas pris en considération les phénomènes de changement climatique qui pourraient entraîner une baisse des précipitations.

"L'écoulement du Zambèze devrait diminuer de 26 à 40 pour cent d'ici à 2050", a déclaré à TerraViva, Lori Pottinger, directrice des communications et du programme Afrique de 'International Rivers'.

"Malgré les inquiétudes par rapport aux changements climatiques, la conception et le fonctionnement des barrages Batoka Gorge et Mphanda Nkuwa (au Mozambique) ont été fondés sur des données hydrologiques historiques et n'ont pas été évalués pour les risques provenant des sécheresses et cycles d'inondation plus extrêmes. Cela est irresponsable et pourrait conduire à des projets très peu performants et très peu rentables", a affirmé Pottinger.

Des protestations en ligne ont été également initiées contre ce projet géant avec le lancement en 2012, de la campagne "Arrêter le barrage Batoka sur le fleuve Zambèze", par des activistes zambiens.

"De grands programmes complexes, tels que les projets hydroélectriques sur les fleuves Congo et Zambèze ne stimulent pas les économies locales. Ils dépendent des technologies et savoir-faire importés, et ne créent pas un nombre

significatif d'emplois au niveau local", a expliqué à TerraViva, Peter Bosshard, directeur de la politique de 'International Rivers'.

"En revanche, les projets décentralisés d'énergie renouvelable, tels que l'énergie solaire, éolienne, la micro-hydroélectricité et les foyers améliorés seraient plus efficaces pour atteindre la majorité des personnes en Afrique et en Asie du sud qui ne sont pas connectées au réseau électrique", a souligné Bosshard.

Selon l'hydrologue Richard Beilfuss, ce n'est pas que les questions des changements climatiques qui pèsent contre le projet Batoka.

"Les scénarios du changement climatique modifient non seulement la performance financière des projets hydroélectriques tels que Batoka, mais également les risques financiers auxquels ils sont confrontés. Les changements climatiques entraînent une variabilité significative de la performance économique - réduisant non seulement les valeurs moyennes pour la production énergétique, mais aussi la fiabilité des recettes provenant des ventes d'électricité", a déclaré Beilfuss à TerraViva.

En juin, la Revue des fleuves dans le monde de 'International Rivers', a soulevé l'inquiétude selon laquelle le mur du barrage Batoka, qui devrait être haut de plus de 190 mètres et qui créera un lac artificiel de plus de 50 kilomètres, affectera d'autres activités sur le Zambèze. La revue a noté que "le projet Batoka inondera la gorge (du fleuve) et noiera les massifs rapides qui ont fait des chutes Victoria un endroit excellent de rafting".

Malgré ces inquiétudes, le projet du barrage Batoka, principalement financé par la Banque mondiale, est salué par la Zambie et le Zimbabwe comme la réponse au déficit énergétique de la région.

Les présidents Robert Mugabe du Zimbabwe et Michael Sata de Zambie ont signé le protocole d'accord de la construction du barrage l'année dernière. La construction était prévue pour commencer cette année.

Analysis

Mugabe Not the Only Winner in Zimbabwe

By Rumbi Chakamba

The highly contested elections in Zimbabwe saw President Robert Mugabe and ZANU-PF clinch a landslide victory over the main opposition party MDC-T. But they were not the only winners of the polls.

The elections, which took place on 31 July, saw a significant increase in female representatives in government. This increase can largely be attributed to the work of regional and national gender activists through their campaign, which calls for 50/50 representation of women in government. This is in line with the stipulations in the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development.

The work of gender activists resulted in constitutional reforms that have guaranteed Zimbabwean women 22 percent of the seats in the National Assembly for the next decade. This translates to 60 guaranteed seats for women.

Through the campaign, efforts by both female leaders and civil society resulted in the women of Zimbabwe eventually securing 86 seats in the National Assembly, increasing the number of female representatives from 16 percent in 2008 to 32 percent in 2013.

After the official announcement of the election date in July, the Women in Politics Support Unit (WiPSU) launched their campaign: 'Vote for a Woman, Vote for Peace'. Through the campaign the organisation was able to support all the female candidates contesting in the 2013 election by encouraging men and women alike to vote for women.

According to Moira Ngaru, Chairperson of WiPSU, the campaign's main aim was to even the playing field by providing female candidates with resources such as campaign materials that their male counterparts usually have easier access to through their strong political networks.

Although these campaign efforts and previous lobbying for affirmative action have resulted in positive strides towards equality, Viginia Muwanigwa, the Chairperson of the Women's Coalition is quick to caution that there were also a number of setbacks encountered during the election.

She says a deeper analysis of the figures shows that this time around political parties fielded less female candidates to contest in the election - 13 percent of the total number of candidates were women compared to 15 percent in 2008.

In addition, the majority of female representatives in the National Assembly occupies the 60 seats garnered through affirmative action, while the number of directly elected female candidates actually dropped from 34 to 26, indicating that there is still gender inequality within the various political parties.

The fight for 50/50 representation in government has been hindered by our patriarchy. Through the constitution, Zimbabwean women have a decade to change perceptions and create an environment that encourages equality in governance. Whether this will be enough time to address gender inequality in Government is yet to be determined.



Viginia Muwanigwa chairperson of the Womens' Coalition of Zimbabwe with Moira Ngaru WiPSU chairperson

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Infrastructure Plan Raises Funding Questions

By Kervin Victor

“Nobody has come forward to fund any of the projects we have outlined”, highlighted SADC Deputy Executive Secretary for Regional Integration, Joao Samuel Caholo to TerraViva at the recent SADC Summit of Heads of State in Lilongwe.

His comment illustrates that Africa may be on the rise but remains risky business in eyes of investors, especially when it comes to investing in the long term, as it is the case for infrastructure development.

Mauritius Foreign Minister, Arvin Boolell who attended the SADC Council of Ministers' meeting ahead of the Summit, stressed the bankability of African infrastructure projects to attract investors. “If we want to realise the projects listed in the SADC Infrastructure Development Master Plan, we should be able to raise capital. We can attract funds from Asia or Arab countries, but to do so, projects need to be bankable.”

So how can infrastructure projects in SADC be made bankable and attractive? The Mauritian Minister said that countries must start by ensuring their institutions are effective and transparent, whether it concerns bidding exercises, or simply legal frameworks. Boolell added that ‘these infrastructure projects are crucial because they will improve connectivity, which will bring economies of scale and facilitate movement of people and goods’.

But SADC won't wait indefinitely for foreign investors to come. Joao Samuel Caholo explained that the regional bloc wants to set up its own funding mechanism to kick-off projects earmarked in the Infrastructure Development Plan. A total of 51 percent of the Fund will be financed by member states, 37 percent by the private sector and 12 percent by International Cooperating Partners.

But the seed capital of 1.2 billion – which the member states have to come up with in the next year or so - seems grossly inadequate to meet the financial requirements of

SADC's Master Plan for Infrastructure Development, which runs between 428 and 558 billion dollars over the next 15 years.

The World Bank, in a report titled SADC's Infrastructure: A Regional Perspective, points out that developing and maintaining SADC's infrastructure even over the next decade might be an insurmountable burden for small economies without external assistance.

However, other solutions for infrastructure financing exist, for example through Government Debt Instruments, for the SADC countries. But this usually implies an increase in public debt.

Currently there are just two SADC member countries, namely Zimbabwe and the Seychelles, whose public debt to GDP ratio exceeds the global 60 percent benchmark. Nearly all the other SADC countries still have room to raise capital through a variety of debt instruments. But the psychosis of the global financial and economic crisis which has resulted in over-indebted Western countries has led institutions like the IMF being wary of public debt.

The IMF has already warned two African countries, Ghana and South Africa, on the rising level of their public debt. South Africa's public debt level since the global crisis is considered by the IMF to be a “constraint” on the government, even though the country debt to GDP stands at ‘only’ 41 percent.

The IMF furthermore expresses its fears in its Global Lender's Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Economic Outlook, stating that deteriorating conditions in the world economy could quickly spill over into sub-Saharan Africa and potentially reduce the regional growth rate by up to one percentage point a year. “The impact would be most severe in countries where exports are undiversified and policy buffers low,” the report says. Already SADC leaders voiced concern over the slightly lower economic growth rate in the region over the past year.

Price Fixing Marks SADC Summit

By George Mhango

For some, the SADC Heads of State Summit is an opportunity to make a quick buck, but cutting corners doesn't help Malawi in the longer term, say critics.

In the run-up to the Summit, lodge owners in Malawi's administrative capital Lilongwe increased prices for accommodation by between 40 and 120 percent. In some cases they blatantly cancelled prior bookings in order to offer the rooms at a much higher rate to desperate delegates.

Apart from the hospitality sector, the main culprits are the arts and crafts traders, cultural groups and commercial sex workers. A similar price fixing situation was encountered in 2001 when Malawi hosted the Summit for the first time.

Gift Msiska, a lodge owner in Lilongwe's Area 47 told TerraViva: “The prices have been hiked as a result of the hype surrounding Malawi hosting the Summit. Of course we have to make more money because travelers have no option but to look for accommodation. Such an opportunity only comes once in a while.”

Many rooms that normally cost \$40 have gone up to \$120 and those normally pegged at \$130 now easily go for \$210. James Chitsangire, one of the lodge workers in Lilongwe hinted that the cost of lodging which was pegged at \$8.5 now costs \$14. “To the dismay of many delegates”, he added.

But not everyone agrees with the predatory pricing tactics. The Economic Empowerment Action Group (EEAG) has described the move as ‘daylight robbery’. EEAG chairperson Lewis Chiwalu, said in an interview on Thursday that business operators are losing future business prospects due to what he called “this bad tendency”. “We have to be realistic with our businesses if they are to blossom. There is also a need to look at attracting more customers to Malawi in the longer term,” he said.



SHARING IDEAS ... Delegates from the DRC outside the Summit venue where representatives from the different SADC states rubbed shoulders and shared ideas on the future of the region.

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Flexibilizar as Normas Bancárias Para Expansão na SADC

Par John Fraser/ Michelle Chifamba

Joanesburgo/Harare - Vivian Zivira, de quarenta anos, uma comerciante de produtos agrícolas em Nyanga, na província de Manicaland, no Zimbabwe, diz que muitas mulheres como ela, com terras comunais, enfrentam grandes desafios para obter empréstimos para iniciar projectos geradores de rendimento.

Esta situação deve-se ao facto de os bancos levarem demasiado tempo a processarem os seus pedidos e cobrarem taxas de juros elevadas.

“Esperei cerca de seis meses para ter acesso ao meu primeiro empréstimo porque os bancos queriam garantias, que acabei por fornecer através do meu marido. Deram-me 5.000 dólares a uma taxa de juros de 25 por cento. Apesar de apresentar um registo de pagamentos muito bom, o banco não pôde aumentar o segundo empréstimo,” contou Zivira à IPS.

Os principais banqueiros estão preocupados com o facto de o enquadramento regulamentar nalguns estados da África Austral os impedir de oferecer uma gama completa de serviços a particulares e companhias na região.

Os serviços financeiros eficazes e a preços acessíveis são cruciais tanto para o desenvolvimento das empresas como para os projectos infra-estruturais na Comunidade de Desenvolvimento da África Austral (SADC) – e ainda para aumentar o alcance dos bancos de modo a chegar aos milhões de pessoas que actualmente se encontram fora do sistema.

O Director Executivo do Grupo BancABC, Douglas Munatsi, declarou à IPS que, em termos superficiais, as normas bancárias nos estados da SADC eram semelhantes, porque tinham a sua origem nas directrizes internacionais de Basileia.

A realidade, porém, é que alguns reguladores não aplicam as normas da mesma maneira, relativamente a

questões como a capitalização mínima de um banco,” afirmou.

“Às vezes o processo não é tão transparente como devia ser. Um país pode ter regras de investimento muito positivas, mas as leis laborais podem ser muito rígidas, como aquelas que se aplicam aos expatriados no Botswana.”

Explicou ainda que, se um banco quiser alargar o alcance da sua acção a toda a região, tem de ser capaz de destacar pessoal para os novos territórios, algo que nem sempre é fácil.

“Isto afecta-nos, visto que encontramos competências limitadas nalguns locais, mas apenas somos autorizados a enviar um certo número de membros de pessoal,” advertiu.

Mike Brown, Director Executivo do Nedbank, um dos maiores bancos na África do Sul, concordou que havia contradições.

“O grau da livre disponibilidade de serviços bancários entre os estados da SADC difere em relação aos diversos produtos oferecidos e aos clientes servidos pelos bancos,” disse ao IPS.

“No sector da banca dedicada aos grandes clientes (serviços bancários para as companhias), por exemplo, o crescente comércio entre os países da SADC levou a que os bancos desenvolvessem soluções de financiamento para o comércio a fim de facilitar o comércio intra-regional.

Brown salientou que tem havido progresso “mais limitado” na disponibilização de serviços bancários a clientes comuns – conhecido como banca a “retalho” – devido ao insucesso, até agora, em harmonizar a regulamentação em toda a SADC. Apontou também o controlo cambial como constituindo um obstáculo à expansão.

Brown observou que os trabalhadores migrantes, como os mineiros de países vizinhos que trabalham na África do Sul, precisam de enviar fundos através das fronteiras para sustentarem as famílias nos seus países de origem.

“Apareceram companhias que oferecem soluções transfronteiriças para as remessas de dinheiro. Elas incluem operadores móveis e empresas que transferem dinheiro (como a Western Union e a Moneygram). No entanto, o custo destes serviços ainda é elevado e proibitivo para muitas pessoas – e não são muito utilizados,” alertou.

Para CasCoovadia, Director-Geral da Associação Bancária da África do Sul, não há problemas graves que afectem a oferta de serviços bancários entre os estados.

“A Associação Bancária da SADC tem estado a trabalhar com o Comité dos Governadores dos Bancos Centrais no sentido de desenvolver um sistema integrado de liquidação e pagamentos, que irá melhorar a banca substancialmente em todos os estados,” disse à IPS.

Contudo, avisou que “o enquadramento regulamentar nalguns países ainda é relativamente fraco. As infra-estruturas constituem outro problema, especialmente as telecomunicações. A incerteza política em países como o Zimbabwe constitui outro motivo de preocupação.”

O Director de Operações do FNB África, Leonard Haynes, concordou que uma sólida infra-estrutura desempenha um papel importante na capacidade de um banco disponibilizar os seus serviços, e sublinhou a importância das telecomunicações e da estabilidade da electricidade.

Sugeriu igualmente que a falta de disponibilidade, nalguns locais, “de documentos de identificação pessoal ou formas de identificação idênticas fiáveis torna difícil cumprir as exigências de ‘conhecer o cliente’.”

Traders don't benefit from Summit

By Smanga Kumalo

Traders in Malawi's capital Lilongwe say they haven't benefitted as much as they had hoped from the SADC Summit of Heads of State that was held last week.

Fallis Amon (35) who normally trades near the Bingu International Conference Centre, where the Summit was held, said she believed that the only people that would benefit from the conference were the relatives of politicians.

“I was so content to find out that the Summit will be held in my country, because I thought we would be given the opportunity to trade to the visitors. So I was shocked and disillusioned when the police informed us that when the summit takes place we must not trade near the street,” said a disappointed Amon who generates about \$4 a day from selling bananas.

“This is my spot. Government officials and police make our lives miserable. We were hoping that foreign visitors would come and support our business, so I do not understand why they prevent us from selling. People that are going to benefit are the formal traders and those who are hosted inside the conference venue.”

Pointing at her bananas which lay on the pavement of a busy street she remarked, “They have changed colour and no one will buy them now.” Amon has tried several

times to seek a loan from local banks to start a business but her efforts were fruitless.

Alepher Chikazingwa (21) who trades homemade beer and tap water said she was not benefiting from the Summit because the police prevent access to the delegates. “I still get support from my regular customers and nothing has changed in that regard, but the city has told us to move away from our spots until after the Summit. They have threatened us, saying that if they find us here they will take all our stuff. I hope that after this Summit our country is going to change and we will see some development, because the delegates and visitors have brought money into our country,” says the mother of one.

Tom Mvula (28), who trades homemade sausage and spices, added that the government should have given them a chance to generate some money during the meeting. “The country faces a high rate of unemployment, but the government has tightened the curfew during the Summit.”

Mvula who holds a grade 12 certificate said, “This was the opportunity for us make enough money. We are not engaging in a crime, but trying to make a living. I consider myself lucky in a way because at least some people that work for the government, such as drivers, took my stuff on credit and they will pay me next week.”



Malawian informal traders Fallis Amon (35) and Tom Mvula (28), who trade a few meters from Bingu International Conference believed that people who are going to benefit from the Summit are those who are related to the politicians. Credit: Smanga Kumalo



The project could make a huge difference in sub-Saharan Africa where problems of illegal access to electricity are rife.

Credit: Lee Middleton/IPS

O Maior Projecto Hidroeléctrico em África Poderá Ficar Pelo Caminho

Par John Fraser e Maurice Wa ku Demba

Joanesburgo/Lubumbashi - Há grandes ambições para o maior projecto hidroeléctrico em África, o Inga 3, na República Democrática do Congo, embora os analistas se mostrem cépticos quanto à realização de um projecto tão ambicioso.

O Ministro da Energia congolês, Bruno Kapandji, anunciou em 19 de Maio na capital da República Democrática do Congo, Kinshasa, que o projecto estava a avançar, afirmando ainda que o Inga III iria produzir 4.800 megawatts de electricidade.

O Inga III será construído no local onde há outras duas barragens, na região baixa do Rio Congo, na zona ocidental da República Democrática do Congo.

Os projectos anteriores, o Inga I e II, foram inaugurados em 1971 e 1982, respectivamente. Hoje as duas barragens, que são geridas pela SNEL, companhia nacional de electricidade, só produzem 20 por cento da sua produção inicial devido à falta de manutenção.

O Inga III está orçado em 12 biliões de dólares, estando os custos de construção da barragem estimados em 8.5 biliões. O projecto completo demorará seis anos a concluir.

Como primeiro passo, o Banco Mundial e o Banco Africano de Desenvolvimento irão aprovar um pacote de assistência técnica de 63 milhões de dólares para preparar o projecto. De acordo com os folhetos informativos do Banco Mundial sobre o projecto, 43 milhões de dólares serão provenientes do seu braço concessionário de financiamento, a Associação Internacional para o Desenvolvimento (IDA), e outros 20 milhões de dólares serão provenientes do Banco Africano de Desenvolvimento.

A África do Sul é um parceiro no projecto mas também o seu principal cliente.

Ian Cruickshanks, economista independente, aplaudiu a visão por trás do Inga III, mas manifestou a sua preocupação quanto à sua realização.

“O potencial deste projecto é enorme e extraordinário e pode fazer uma enorme diferença para a África Subsaariana,” disse à IPS.

“Pode fornecer electricidade mais limpa e mais barata do que a que é actualmente produzida nas centrais eléctricas alimentadas a carvão. O rio está lá – basta colocar as turbinas e construir as linhas de alta tensão.”

Cruickshanks calculou que, com uma capacidade de 40.000 MW de electricidade, a produção seria equivalente à saída total de corrente da Eskom, empresa pública de electricidade sul-africana.

“A minha preocupação surge no seguimento do projecto da barragem de Cahora Bassa no rio Zambeze, em Moçambique, que produz electricidade, mas cuja transmissão para os clientes na África do Sul não é eficiente,” avisou. “É um desafio transportar a electricidade ao longo de grandes distâncias.

“Depois, há um enorme problema da segurança no que diz respeito às linhas de transmissão gigantes através da República Democrática do Congo, um país em guerra consigo próprio.”

Andrew Kenny, engenheiro independente e comentador sobre questões de energia, disse à IPS que os projectos regionais eram essenciais para o desenvolvimento do abastecimento de electricidade em África o qual, por sua vez, era essencial para o desenvolvimento.

“As linhas de transmissão que ligam países diferentes são absolutamente indispensáveis. Uma vez que a procura efectiva na maior parte dos países africanos é tão pequena, muitos projectos geradores de electricidade podem fornecer mais energia do que o país necessita, pelo que o excesso deve ser encaminhado para os vizinhos que dela precisem,” defendeu.

“O Grande Inga apenas é possível se for um projecto regional que forneça electricidade a muitos outros países. O mesmo acontece com a grande central eléctrica a carvão que o Botswana estava a considerar.”

No entanto, avisou que um grande projecto em Inga iria exigir financiamento de muitos biliões de dólares.

Simon Schaefer, analista sénior de pesquisa e estratégia junto da Frontier Advisory, disse à IPS que partilhava a preocupação sobre a possibilidade de realização de um projecto tão ambicioso numa região instável de África.

“Penso que o projecto Inga III tem de ser visto no contexto alargado da situação política do país e da região,” declarou. “A República Democrática do Congo está muito fragmentada internamente. Resta saber se o governo em Kinshasa exerce realmente um controlo/poder efectivo sobre todas as zonas do país.”

“A situação política da República Democrática do Congo é instável e o país tem sido descrito muitas vezes como um estado falhado. Outros problemas importantes da República Democrática do Congo são a corrupção desenfreada e a falta de instituições credíveis. Todos estes factores não constituem um ponto de partida ideal para um projecto de muitos biliões de dólares com perspectivas de investimento a longo prazo.”

No Bidders for SADC Infrastructure Plan

By John Fraser and Collins Mtika

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has had to revisit its founding treaty to develop a mechanism for initial funding for its ambitious US\$500bn Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan (RIDMP), in the wake of cold shoulders from western nations and multilateral finance institutions.

However, development experts have questioned whether SADC is sufficiently mature to handle ambitious projects.

"Nobody has come forward to fund any of the projects we have outlined. I have been to Japan, USA and UK among other countries," SADC Deputy Executive Secretary for Regional Integration Joao Samuel Cahol told TerraViva.

"What is holding us back as SADC is our inability to fund our own priorities and programmes. Therefore, a sustainable funding mechanism had to be established if we are to show that we are committed and progressing."

The RIDMP aims to deal with the region's deficit in road, rail, ports, power, communication, water infrastructure and meteorology.

"SADC has the potential and we are asking for the goodwill of all member states. Let them put the seed money," said the outgoing Executive Secretary.

Modelled on the European Investment Bank and other regional funding ventures, SADC countries will initially pump US\$1.2 billion into the SADC fund. Of this, 51 percent will be contributions from member states, 37 percent needs to be financed by the private sector and 12 percent by international partners.

SADC contributions will be done over a five-year period starting 2013 based on the country's affordability, institutional capacity and other criteria, which the outgoing Deputy Executive Secretary was reluctant to divulge.

"If after five years a country fails to pay its contribution its shares will be recalled and distributed among the complying states so that the 51 percent shareholding by African states is maintained," Cahol said.

However, a member state will still be able to access funds for its development projects as espoused in the RIDMP.

Professor Eltie Links, the Chair of 'Doing Business in Africa' at South Africa's University of Stellenbosch Business School, told TerraViva that "SADC as a regional body would have to think about the objectives and the management of a new financing arm.

"The fact that the region comprises a number of countries with varied levels of development makes it essential that some or other form of assistance be given to economies that are suffering in the development sphere. This, however, can only be afforded if there is sufficient economic and financial muscle in the regional body."

He said there is no doubt about the need for more infra-



SADC will have to demonstrate its ability to manage large-scale funding and projects. Credit: Servass van den Bosch

structure development in the region, but development aid channelled through SADC "will always be at the cost of the bilateral support given by these same (donor) countries to the region's needy countries. This aid funding pool has always been finite."

And he suggested that donors will need to be convinced that SADC is now at a stage where it can handle multi-billion dollar projects.

"SADC's record as an institution that is well organised and governed has been questioned in the past. To the extent that these perceptions of a body with challenges in governance still persist, it will not get the type of support needed for a project financing arm.

"It will also have to demonstrate the ability to administer and manage such funding and projects; something it has not been able to prove beyond any doubt."

This view was echoed by the CEO of the Frontier Advisory consultancy, Dr Martyn Davies, who argued that the SADC secretariat should not be the body that seeks to fund projects, and should instead focus on coordinating and bringing projects to the point of bankability.

"SADC, unfortunately, does not do enough in harmonising pursuits toward regional integration, and needs to do more of the basics toward promoting the facilitation of trade and capital flow in the region," he told TerraViva.

"Donors regularly work with SADC, but the more important engagement should be with big business, and this is currently insufficient. There needs to be greater communi-

cation from SADC as to its role and also outreach to and engagement with business in order to better implement these goals."

Trade consultant John Mare agreed that initially SADC should play more of a coordination role.

He told TerraViva no new institution is needed as "there are already too many others - but SADC can help shape bankable projects and relate them to SADC priorities.

"There is need for better capacities inside SADC to work on such projects and, especially, a greater need for coordinating mechanisms between all stakeholders at national and regional levels

"A key challenge is to improve SADC coordination with other regional organisations in which many SADC members are also members.

"It is crucially important that this happens - and the tragedy is that SADC is said to have more capacity than many other regional organisations in Africa.

"There are many potential projects in Africa, but what is missing are driving mechanisms for these projects and for projects such as sustainable agriculture which can link into the infrastructure ones."

Martyn Davies agreed there is no shortage of projects, but suggested "the challenge lies in fostering cooperation between the respective governments and bringing the projects to bankability.

"I have never seen a good project that cannot get funding when politics is aligned."

SADC Gender Agenda in Slow Gear

By Emelda Mwitwa

As SADC countries press on towards the 50-50 target for gender parity in decision making positions, many countries in the region are still off-target.

Only South Africa, Seychelles, Mozambique, Tanzania and Angola are on course to meet the 2015 target, and this is at a parliamentary level only, it transpired at the Heads of State Summit that was held 17- 18 August in Malawi.

With about 10 elections due in SADC between now and 2015, the question on the lips of many is whether there will be dramatic change to make member states meet the target.

SADC member states have shown progress towards gender parity in some areas of governance, but are lagging behind when it comes to the goal of having 50 percent women in decision-making positions in public and private sectors.

"The goal of reaching 50 percent representation and participation of women in political and decision making structures by 2015 remains a major challenge in all SADC member states," a statement released by civil society at the

SADC Summit says.

Gender Links Chief Executive Officer Colleen Lowe Morna said only about five countries would attain 40 percent women's representation in all spheres of decision making in the next few years.

In an interview with TerraViva, Morna said countries that have specific quotas for women's participation in parliament, have a higher chance of increasing women's representation. "Unless countries come up with such special measures, we are not going to change the situation," she said.

She said a quota system helps because it gives women the confidence to acquire experience and be able to contest future polls without persuasion. Morna justifies her argument by saying that the Seychelles notably raised the number of female parliamentarians - from 29 percent to 45 percent - in their 2012 election because of the quota system that is in place in the country. Quotas have also worked

for Tanzania and Zimbabwe in recent elections.

"We don't advocate quotas forever and ever, we just want to use it as a temporary measure to level the playing field. My plea to the Heads of State is: let's get out of this conference with drastic measures, otherwise we might just be lucky to reach 30 percent by 2015," Morna said.

Council Chairperson of the African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) Emma Kaliya urged member states that are lagging behind in the 50-50 campaign to review their constitutions in line with the SADC protocol on gender.

Kaliya said even her own country, Malawi, which is going to the polls next year has not yet done the required constitutional amendments despite signing the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development.

She said governments in the region also need to allocate more resources around the SADC protocol to meet the 2015 targets.

What is the lowdown on Gender in SADC?

By AC. Lumbu Lailay Bush

Launched on August 14, 2013 at the Crossroads hotel in Lilongwe, Malawi, the SADC Gender Barometer calls on the governments of SADC member states to implement 28 provisions of the Gender Protocol by 2015.

Gender Links and the Southern African Gender Protocol Alliance that compiled the Gender Barometer, urged the SADC Leaders to address issues related to gender and women's empowerment where these have been neglected. The Alliance also wants to examine the structural barriers to gender equality and the progress made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

According to the Barometer several sectors still face challenges most notably in the areas of constitutional and legal rights.

Five of the 15 SADC member countries still have restrictive chapters in their constitutions that limit the empowerment of women. According to the report of the Alliance, the constitutional court in Lesotho, for instance, recently passed a verdict preventing daughters of chiefs to inherit from their fathers, highlighting patriarchal values deeply embedded in

the community.

In terms of women representation in Government, presently Madagascar and Zambia have the lowest rate of women representation in the region.

In addition, the proportion of women parliamentarians in Zimbabwe after the promulgation of the new Constitution remains low despite the efforts of gender activists who want to enforce the law on local elections in line with paragraph 17 of the Constitution which stipulates that: "both genders should be equally represented in all institutions and government agencies at all levels". So far these efforts have been unsuccessful, the activists say.

On the education front, very few SADC countries have met the objectives of ensuring equal access to education on primary, secondary and tertiary levels. The Barometer indicates, for instance that in the Democratic Republic of Congo, only 36percent of girls attends high school.

In the health sector, in 13 out of the 15 countries, women have a disproportionately higher rate of HIV /AIDS prevalence than men.



Men 4 Women @ SADC Summit

By AC. Lumbu Lailay Bush

A group of men calling themselves Men for Gender Equality Now (MEGEN) campaigned for speedy implementation of the SADC Gender Protocol at the Heads of State Summit in Lilongwe.

The group believes that the fight for gender equality is an issue that affects the whole community and not only women. MEGEN feels that it is important to include men, often the violators of women's rights, in the discussion from the outset.

"The Purpose of Men for Gender Equality Now is to involve men in gender issues because involving the culprits of violence against women in the discussion could lead to significant progress.

"We are not saying that men are not having their rights violated by women, but it is mostly men who are violating women's rights." The Malawian National Executive Member of MEGEN David Odali said.

"Sometimes it is better to use a thief to catch another thief," Odali said, indicating that it can be useful to have men promoting gender equality, as well as campaign against gender-based violence, among their peers.

The involvement of male gender activists did not leave other women organizations present at the Summit unmoved. Colleen Lowe Morna, the Chief Executive Director for Gender Links for Equality and Justice told TerraViva that the involvement of MEGEN is a great contribution in the fight for gender equality.

Likewise, Dr Cheryl Hendricks, Professor of Politics at the University of Johannesburg said she supports the involvement of MEGEN in the battle to prevent gender-based violence.

"I appreciate men contributing to achieving gender equality, because it almost always the men who are perpetrating violence. If they do not change their attitude and don't have other men showing them that the current practice of treating women is not ok, we will not go very far."

Swazi Election No Issue for SADC



Prime Minister of Swaziland, Barnabas Dlamini, arriving at SADC Summit 2013. Credit: Jennifer McKellar.

By Phathizwe-Chief Zulu

Like a bird that escaped the fowler's snare, Swaziland has successfully eluded the SADC and international community's attention at the recent Heads of State Summit in Lilongwe, Malawi. This despite a growing chorus calling for international pressure on the country's autocratic monarch King Mwsati III to allow multiparty democracy.

Just after the contested elections in Zimbabwe, all eyes are on Swaziland which on 24 August will hold primary elections in preparation for the final national polls on September 20th which will be monitored by SADC and other international observers.

Southern African People Solidarity Network (SAPSN) General Secretary, Collins Magalasi, dismissed the Swazi polls as 'a window dressing exercise to buy time and delay genuine democratic reform' in the last absolute monarchy in Africa.

"There is no political change that we can expect as a result of these elections," Magalasi told TerraViva. "Because the traditional system in place supports the King, he still wields enormous power over the courts, parliament and the executive."

Magalasi, interviewed at a side event of civil society dur-

ing the 33rd Ordinary Summit of SADC Heads of State and Governments, said unless the country implements the SADC Protocol on Elections, the power of the people will always be undermined.

Executive Director of the SADC Council of NGOs, Boichoko Dithlake said the problem in Swaziland is that civil society is divided among itself, as NGOs do not agree on the status of the monarchy in a new democratic dispensation.

"But none the less", he asserts "political parties should be allowed to participate and contest for power".

"SADC and the international community are silent on Swaziland because they have no economic interests like they have in Zimbabwe," said Dithlake, adding: "But once the crisis reaches a critical point, they will try to intervene. Not to address the problem but to manage the situation, just like they do in Zimbabwe."

Magalasi is of the view that Swaziland needs a mass movement that will make it difficult for government to zero in on individuals that it can intimidate. "The people should be united in the goal of realising democracy in Swaziland," said Magalasi.

Summit At a Glance ...



Malawian cultural groups and traders were in attendance as dignitaries arrived for the official opening of the 33rd SADC Summit.

Aumenta A Oposição Contra a Barragem de Batoka

Par Ignatius Banda

BULAWAYO - Prevê-se que a construção da Barragem do Desfiladeiro de Batoka, avaliada em vários biliões de dólares, um empreendimento conjunto entre a Zâmbia e o Zimbábue, produza 1.600 MW de electricidade. Mas está a gerar um outro tipo de calor uma vez que continua a oposição contra o projecto.

Em ambas as margens do Zambeze, os críticos perguntam se o país precisa de um projecto desta envergadura no meio de queixas de nada provar que a barragem irá trazer benefícios para as economias locais.

No ano passado, a International Rivers, uma ONG global que trabalha na área de protecção dos rios e dos direitos das comunidades que dependem nesses mesmos rios, emitiu um relatório a condenar o projecto da barragem, indicando que a sua construção não levava em consideração o fenómeno das alterações climáticas que poderia conduzir a uma redução da precipitação.

“Prevê-se que o escoamento do Zambeze diminua entre 26 a 40 por cento até 2050,” disse à TerraViva Lori Pottinger, Directora de Comunicações e do Programa para África da International Rivers.”

“Apesar das preocupações sobre as alterações climáticas, a concepção e operação da Barragem do Desfiladeiro de Batoka e da Barragem de Mphanda Nkuwa (em Moçam-

bique) baseiam-se em registos hidrológicos históricos e não foram avaliadas em relação a riscos de seca e ciclos de cheias mais extremos. Isto é irresponsável e pode resultar em projectos pouco económicos e de baixo rendimento,” disse Lorringer.

Também foram lançados protestos em linha no ano passado contra este gigantesco projecto, com a campanha “Parar a Barragem de Batoka no Rio Zambeze” levada a cabo por activistas zambianos.

“Projectos grandes e complexos como as centrais hidroeléctricas nos rios Congo e Zambeze não estimulam as economias locais. Dependem de tecnologia e know-how importados e não criam um número significativo de empregos a nível local,” disse à TerraViva Peter Bosshard, Director de Política da International Rivers.

“Pelo contrário, os projectos de energia renovável descentralizados como energia solar, eólica, micro-centrais eléctricas e fogões de cozinha melhorados são mais eficazes para chegar à maioria das pessoas em África e no sul da Ásia que não estejam ligadas à rede eléctrica,” defendeu Bosshard.

Segundo o hidrólogo Richard Beilfuss, não são só as preocupações com as alterações climáticas que pesam contra o projecto de Batoka.

“Os cenários de alterações climáticas modificam não apenas o desempenho financeiro das centrais hidroeléctricas como Batoka, mas também os riscos financeiros com que se defrontam. As alterações climáticas conduzem a uma variabilidade significativa no desempenho económico – reduzindo não só os valores médios da produção de energia mas também a fiabilidade das receitas provenientes da venda de electricidade,” disse Beilfuss à TerraViva.

Em Junho, a Revisão Mundial dos Rios efectuada pela International Rivers gerou apreensão que a parede da barragem de Batoka, que se prevê ter mais de 190 metros de altura e que irá produzir um lago artificial com mais de 50 quilómetros, afecte outras actividades no Zambeze. A Revisão apontou que “a central de Batoka vai inundar o desfiladeiro e submergir os enormes rápidos que fizeram das Cataratas de Vitória um local excelente para rafting.”

Apesar destas preocupações, o projecto da barragem de Batoka, financiado sobretudo pelo Banco Mundial, está a ser apontado pela Zâmbia e pelo Zimbábue como a resposta ao défice energético na região.

O Presidente do Zimbábue, Robert Mugabe, e o Presidente da Zâmbia, Michael Sata, assinaram o memorando de entendimento para a construção da barragem no ano passado. O início da construção estava previsto para este ano.