

SADC Growth Requires More Infrastructure and Fewer Barriers



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Poor infrastructure is seen as the biggest hurdle to economic growth across southern Africa. Lack of electricity in rural areas means that 80 percent of Mozambicans rely on charcoal for cooking. Credit: Jinty Jackson/IPS

By John Fraser

JOHANNESBURG- Experts are agreed that a key tool for unlocking the economic potential of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) lies in easing cross-border flows of people, goods, capital and services.

However, even if border restrictions can be lifted, a lot more needs to be done in terms of enhancing road, rail, electricity supply and other infrastructure within the region – and in tackling the informal non-tariff barriers in the form of excessive red tape and restrictions which still impede development.

In June, a group of SADC leaders met in Maputo, Mozambique for a SADC Infrastructure Investment Conference.

Part of the agenda was a Transport Sector Plan, which looks at the liberalisation of transport markets, the development of transport corridors and the facilitation of cross-border movement.

However, the chief executive officer of consultancy Africa @ Work Dianna Games told TerraViva that while moves are being made to bring down physical barriers to cross-frontier movement, informal barriers are often replacing them.

“As tariff barriers have gone down, there has been a mushrooming of non-tariff barriers – leading to delays at border posts and inefficient border posts, with the worst being the Beit Bridge border crossing between South Africa and Zimbabwe,” she said.

“This should have been sorted out long ago – and it suggests that while there is a lot of political lip service being given to trade liberalisation, the countries are as protectionist as ever.”

Dr Rose Phillips, the South-Africa based CEO of management consultancy Accenture, told TerraViva that “more facilitation of trade and less reliance on aid is what is needed to accelerate sustainable economic development on the continent. Quite simply, really, we need an Africa that works.”

“Regional economic integration and intra-Africa trade are designed to benefit SADC countries and businesses through providing economies of skill and scale, predictability, common standards and regulations and transparency of information in the region - key ingredients for a strong private sector that is competitive. Further harmonisation of trade

policies, stronger governance and joint regional cooperation and investment are but some of the actions needed.”

She stressed the need for more focused investment in the building and the maintenance of infrastructure, such roads, information and communications technology, rail, water and power supply.

And she also supported the SADC focus on developmental corridors.

“Accenture research reveals that unreliable power supply alone leads to losses in industrial production valued at six percent of company turnover,” she warned.

“Road freight costs (in Africa) are two to four times higher per kilometer than in the US, and travel times along key export corridors are two to three times longer than those in Asia.

South African trade consultant John Mare told TerraViva that while donor support for infrastructure development from bodies such as the African Development Bank is welcome, “the funds must be targeted and managed in an effective manner.” *Continued on page 3*



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Será que a Lua-de-Mel Relativamente ao Comércio Entre a SADC e a UE e Terminou?

Por John Fraser

Joanesburgo - Um diferendo sobre as exportações de limões sul-africanos para a União Europeia não foi a única nota dissonante quando os líderes de ambos os países se reuniram para discussões sobre comércio e outros assuntos em Pretória em Julho.

O Presidente sul-africano, Jacob Zuma, reuniu-se com José Manuel Barroso, Presidente da Comissão Europeia, e com o Presidente do Conselho Europeu, Herman van Rompuy, no dia 18 de Julho, para negociar a forma de agilizar as relações da União Europeia com o bloco comercial da Comunidade de Desenvolvimento da África Austral (SADC).

As actuais negociações irão substituir todos os acordos existentes com a SADC, incluindo o Acordo de Comércio, Desenvolvimento e Cooperação [ACDC, com um Acordo de Parceria Económica (APE) global.]

No entanto, John Mare, consultor em relações internacionais, um dos delegados do Fórum Empresarial África do Sul-União Europeia, sugeriu que se tinha registado uma nova atmosfera.

“Penso que as coisas se tornaram muito mais reais para ambos os lados, e que está prestes a haver graves danos no comércio União Europeia-África do Sul e União Europeia-África, assim como nas relações políticas de apoio – numa altura inoportuna para ambos os lados,” opinou Mare à IPS.

Gert Gouws, Director Financeiro da Corporação para o Desenvolvimento Industrial (IDC), empresa estatal sul-africana, que foi um dos intervenientes no Fórum Empresarial, disse à IPS que estava “optimista que se celebraria um novo acordo com a União Europeia.”

“Em geral, as luas-de-mel nunca duram para sempre,” acrescentou.

“As relações a longo prazo precisam de ser construídas sobre alicerces que sejam mutuamente benéficos. Têm-se realizado muitas discussões a nível bilateral, e as empresas europeias continuam interessadas em investir na nossa região, em áreas como a energia renovável, que será importante durante muitos anos.”

Tornou-se claro no período que antecedeu a Cimeira que existia uma certa irritação tanto da parte sul-africana como da parte da União Europeia a propósito da actual relação.

O Ministro do Comércio e Indústria da África do Sul, Rob Davies, e o seu principal negociador na área do comércio, Xavier Carim, criticaram a decisão da União Europeia de impor o prazo de Outubro de 2014 para implementação da nova APE com a SADC, sugerindo que, se isso não fosse alcançado, alguns dos países vizinhos da África do Sul podiam constatar que o acesso preferencial existente referente às suas exportações para a Europa iria terminar sem estar implementado qualquer novo regime.

Davies sugeriu que esta situação podia afectar países como a Namíbia, Suazilândia e Botswana de “maneira brutal, com repercussões socio-económicas e para o emprego.”

O Comissário do Comércio da União Europeia, Karel De Gucht, sublinhou que os negociadores europeus estão sob



In SADC-EU EPA negotiations, more work is needed on market access, in particular on agricultural products. Credit: Trevor Davies

pressão por parte dos lobbies agrícolas numa altura em que a economia da União Europeia continua deprimida.

Sugeriu que a União Europeia já concede melhor acesso às exportações sul-africanas do que o oferecido pela África do Sul às exportações da União Europeia.

De Gucht advertiu que a África do Sul não devia tomar como garantido que a Europa iria continuar a fazer concessões a menos que os seus interesses fossem respeitados e que isso também se aplicava ao investimento – uma vez que a União Europeia foi a fonte de 88 por cento dos investimentos directos estrangeiros na África do Sul no passado.

Mare indicou estar optimista e que, apesar da retórica, “A União Europeia está mais disposta a chegar a um compromisso para uma solução mutuamente aceitável, e para a criação de um novo regime comercial.”

“Somos o maior parceiro comercial da África do Sul e planeamos continuar a sê-lo,” declarou Barroso. “Vemos um grande potencial na relação entre a União Europeia e

a África do Sul.”

Zuma concordou: “Valorizamos muito esta parceria estratégica.”

Diminuiu entretanto o holofote sobre a cimeira, pelo que as negociações comerciais entre a União Europeia e os países da SADC vão continuar em sessões mais discretas.

Porém, depois das recentes duras negociações, o tom das discussões mudou.

A África do Sul e os seus parceiros receberam um aviso claro que as boas intenções da Europa permanecem, mas é preciso haver reciprocidade.

A Directora do programa da diplomacia económica do Instituto dos Assuntos Internacionais da África do Sul, Catherine Grant, disse à IPS “Parece haver ainda um certo nível de desconfiança.”

“A relação é muito frágil, particularmente quanto às questões económicas. Vemos a área do investimento tornar-se um ponto nevrálgico em grande parte das discussões.”

TERRAVIVA

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Small Businesses Tackle Poverty in Mauritius

By Nasseem Ackbarally

PORT LOUIS - Raja Venkat, a food vendor on the sidewalk of Immigration Square in the centre of Port Louis, the Mauritian capital, sits on his tricycle with a bag full of dhal puris - small, round, flat Indian bread stuffed with pulses - which he sells together with tomato sauce and bean curry.

"Come and taste my dhal puris, you'll want more. Come, come," he shouts.

Thousands of small businesses like this have sprung up in every town and village on the island since the government eased the procedures for obtaining a business permit a year ago.

"At times, I helped in masonry, in vegetable transportation or washing vehicles. I was available for any job, but most of the time I was unemployed," Venkat tells IPS.

The unemployment rate stood at 8.6 percent at the end of 2012, according to figures obtained from Statistics Mauritius, the official organisation responsible for collection, compilation, analysis and dissemination of statistical data. And the easing of procedures for obtaining a business permit has been aimed at reducing unemployment in this Indian Ocean island. Official figures from Statistics Mauritius indicate that the total number of business activities increased from 133,723 to 138,236 in 2012.

Since he started his small business six months ago, after paying the required fee (about 50 dollars a year to the Municipality of Port Louis) for his business licence, Venkat now has a steady income. His wife, Aashna Venkat, cooks the dhal puris in the small wooden kitchen of their home at Terre-Rouge, four km away.

"I now earn enough to feed the family and also to save some money for the future," this father of two children, aged six and three years, says.

Many other people have started similar businesses on the island, selling food, vegetables, fruits, small luxurious items and clothes. Some have opened small mechanical workshops where they repair bicycles and motorcycles. Many women, particularly from Muslim families, have developed the art of applying henna to the hands.

Minister of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives Jim Seetaram tells IPS that there are more workers in these small and medium businesses than in the larger establishments.

"Net employment creation in small and medium business between 2000 and 2011 is estimated to be 67,800, i.e., an increase of more than 36 percent, as compared to an increase of 14,400 in large establishments," he says.

"Small and medium businesses are the main drivers of

job creation and contribute in a significant way to economic growth. They employ around 250,000 people, representing more than 44 percent of the total number of jobs."

Mauritius Chamber of Industry and Commerce's chairperson and business consultant Ganesh Ramalingum tells IPS that these microenterprises are very important to the economy because they create jobs.

"A person who has some mechanical skills opens a business of repairing bicycles and motorcycles. He'll need one or two people to help him ... So, many jobs are being created in this way and that's good for the economy. People who earlier had difficulty earning a living are now creating their own businesses in fields that suit them," he says.

Local authorities regulate these small businesses. They are not supposed to get involved in any unusual activity in a residential area, or disturb neighbours at unreasonable hours or pollute the environment with dust, fumes or odours. They are required to comply with the guidelines issued by the Fire Services, the Sanitary Authority and the Environment Ministry. But many feel that these small businesses are not complying with the guidelines.

Ganeshen Moonesawmy, vice chairperson of the District Council of Rivière du Rempart that issues and monitors business permits in the northern part of the island, is happy that these people are working, but finds that many of them lack discipline in running their business.

"They won't ask for jobs from the government as there (are) none available ... (but) they sell food in an unhygienic manner and they disturb the living environment in their area. We have very few staff to keep a check on them," he tells IPS.

In Goodlands, northern Mauritius, small businesses operate literally on the sidewalks in spite of a law that prevents this. Many of them put their goods in large baskets that they place on wooden or iron stands on the sidewalks.

Ashok (full name not given), a vendor, tells IPS he has to do this to attract clients because his business is very small.

"There is so much competition around from big stalls and also from smaller businesses around. If you don't fight, you don't eat tonight," he says.

Municipal Councillor Kritanand Beeharry of Curepipe, a town in the southern part of Mauritius, chairs the Municipality's Health and Sanitation Committee. He tells IPS that his staff has inspected some of these small businesses after receiving complaints from residents. "The police is also solicited when the need arises," he adds.

However, he finds more positive points than negative ones in these modest endeavours, as "these small businesses are easy to manage".



Since Mauritius eased the procedures for obtaining a business permit a year ago, small businesses are cropping up all over the island. People have started selling food, vegetables, fruits, small luxurious items and clothes. Credit: Nasseem Ackbarally/IPS

But councillor Prakash Bhunsee of the Flacq District Council in eastern Mauritius believes the situation has gotten out of control.

"I am afraid the police only check the licences of the small entrepreneurs and is not concerned with health, sanitation, environment or pollution matters," he says.

The shortage of staff at the municipal inspectorate level makes it obvious that many of these businesses go unchecked for months.

SADC Growth Requires More Infrastructure and Fewer Barriers

Continued from page 1 ... "I personally support the creation of bodies that are dedicated and linked to certain infrastructural projects, as they can help manage all aspects of the completion of such projects - along with funding management and the inclusion of the private sector in Public Private Partnership structures.

"This all seems to suggest regional authorities should create some suitable body such as the Maputo Development Corridor Board, but with an expanded executive mandate from the start - to work in partnership with all stakeholders and help mobilise as well as manage funding."

Phillips stressed the importance of SADC countries working together to tackle the region's challenges through agreements between governments.

"They are key in promoting and facilitating the creation of new industry opportunities given, for example, that Angola and Nigeria are experiencing the highest growth rates in Africa.

"The World Bank, IMF and the WTO should actively promote government legislation which reduces corruption, improving the flow of foreign and cross-regional investments,

as well as creating a consolidated platform for sectorial growth."

However, she stressed that the opening up of Africa cannot just be left to governments.

"The private sector plays a vital role," she argued.

"Inclusive growth and development that advances the active economic participation of Africans is the responsibility and the reward of the public and private sector alike."

Games also stressed the importance of the private sector, noting, for example that the infrastructure mining companies often need to build to transport their products can also be used for the wider community, and can remain after the mining activity is over.

"They build the infrastructure which becomes public infrastructure," she suggested.

Phillips said that the development of Africa requires more than money, and that people are also crucial, with human capital a key resource for African development.

"As more and more highly educated Africans are coming home and our talent investment is bearing fruit, we are capitalising on the melting pot of talent that is uniquely African; diverse by nature, education, experience and viewpoint, and innovative by implication," she stated.

Curbing Tanzania's "Land Grabbing Race"

By Orton Kiishweko

DAR ES SALAAM - Since January 2013, Tanzania started restricting the size of land that single large-scale foreign and local investors can "lease" for agricultural use. The decision follows both local and international criticism that major investors are grabbing large chunks of land here, often displacing small-scale farmers and local communities.

The Permanent Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office Peniel Lyimo confirmed that the government would limit the amount of land leased to investors in this East African nation. Previously, there were no limits.

"For a large-scale investor who wants to invest in sugar, the ceiling has been put at 10,000 hectares. (The limit for rice is 5,000 hectares. The ceiling for sugar is significantly higher due to the fact that it may also produce electric power," Lyimo told IPS. Sugarcane fibre is used in the generation of electricity.

According to official documents, seen by IPS, from the Tanzania Investment Centre, a government agency set up to promote and facilitate investment: "Even within a seven-year period, an investor would not be able to use more than 10,000 hectares..."

The move will come as a relief to land rights organisations that have continually called for the government to curb the land grabs here.

In 2008 the Tanzanian government launched the Kilimo Kwanza (Agriculture First) initiative in order to increase private sector investments in agriculture.

And when the World Economic Forum took place in Dar es Salaam in 2010, the Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania (SAGCOT), a multi-stakeholder partnership to rapidly develop the country's agricultural potential, was formed and the government began to invite foreign companies to invest in crops like sugarcane, maize, rice and cassava.

However, civil society organisations like the Tanzanian NGO Land Rights Research and Resources Institute (LARRRI) and the Oakland Institute, an independent policy think tank in the United States, called on the government to review its investment policy to limit the amount of land given to foreign investors.

"Giving tens of thousands of hectares to large-scale investors was hurting small-scale farmers," said LARRRI executive director Yefred Myenzi.

To date, he told IPS, the government has given 80,000 hectares of land to large-scale investors.

"Land conflicts pitting poor villagers against powerful investors now number more than 1,000 reported incidents. On average, there are five land disputes daily in the country and three of these involve powerful investors," said Myenzi.

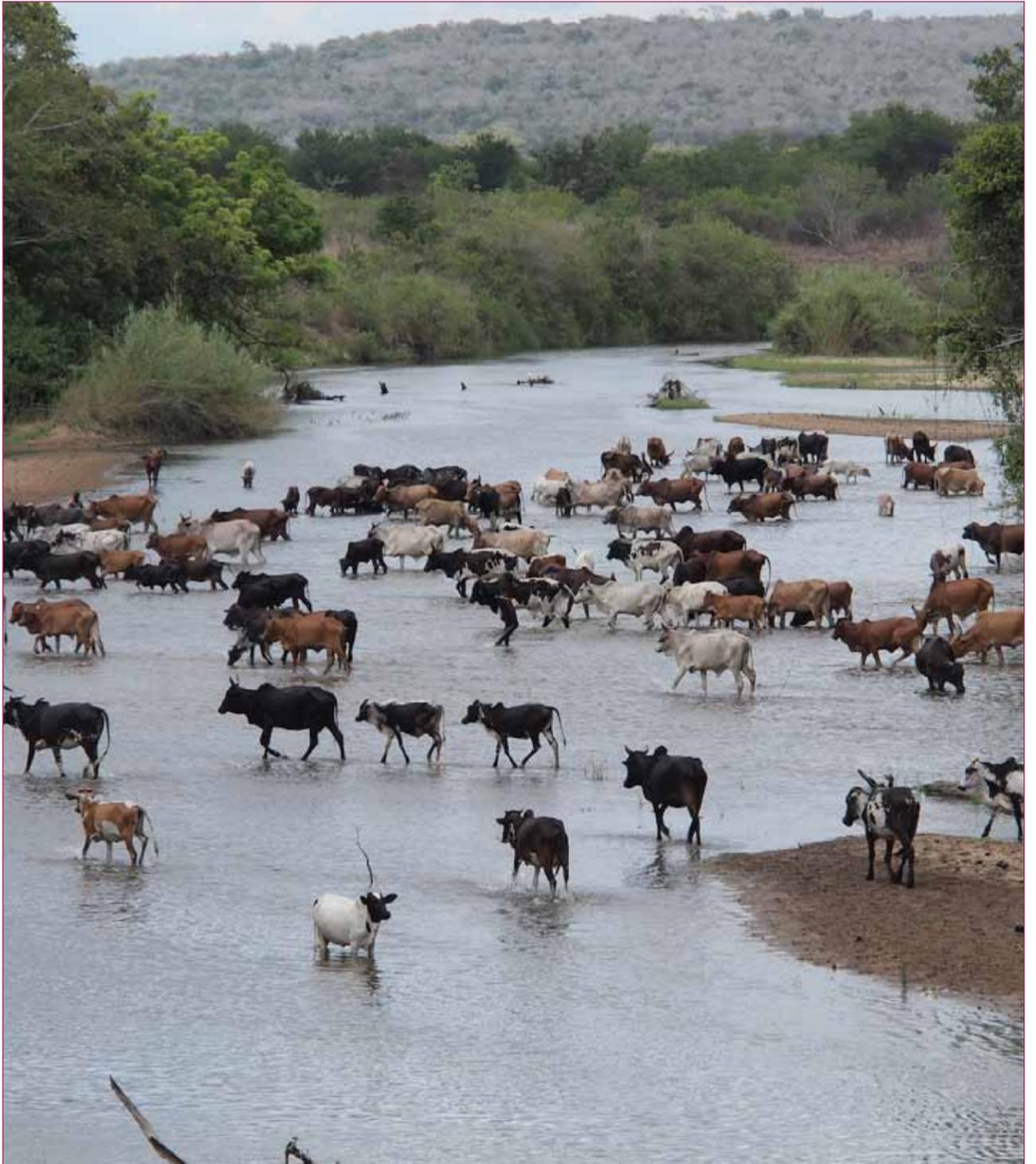
In Tanzania's northern Loliendo district, which is known for its wildlife, much of the land has been leased out to international hunting concessions, which has resulted in the large-scale eviction of the local population — although the government refutes this. A major U.S. energy company, AgriSol Energy, has also been accused of engaging in land grabs in Tanzania that would displace more than 160,000 Burundian refugees, according to a report by the Oakland Institute. The report states that AgriSol is benefiting from the forcible eviction of the refugees, many of whom are subsistence farmers, and leasing the land — as much as 800,000 acres — from the Tanzanian government for 25 cents per acre.

Myenzi said that of the 1,825 general land disputes reported in 2011, 1,095 involved powerful investors.

"The country has unbearable land (disputes). This calls for concrete remedial actions. Government actions currently focus on large-scale farming, but there should be a clear plan on how they can coexist with the small-scale farmers who are in the majority," he said.

According to Tanzania's Ministry for Agriculture, Food Security and Cooperatives, small-scale farmers produce over 90 percent of the country's food.

Of Tanzania's 94.5 million hectares, only half — 44 mil-



Tanzanian NGO Land Rights Research and Resources Institute said that of the 1,825 general land disputes reported in 2011, 1,095 involved powerful investors. Credit: Orton Kiishweko/IPS

lion hectares — is arable land. And according to the National Sample Census for Agriculture of 2002/2003, only 9.1 million hectares is under cultivation.

"Only a few own huge land resources (in Tanzania). What is happening now is that the well-to-do from within and outside the country are in a land-grabbing race," Myenzi said.

Damian Gabagambi, an agricultural economist at Sokoine University of Agriculture, the largest agricultural university in Tanzania, said that major investors should provide for the inflow of technological solutions and the creation of markets for small-scale farmers.

"While we encourage large-scale investors in the agricultural sector, Tanzania must limit the amount of land they can acquire, so that they rely on small-holder farmers for most of their supplies. Small-scale traders are more important for the country's food security," Gabagambi told IPS.

Tanzania has an estimated population of 42 million people and 12,000 villages, but only 0.02 percent of its citizens have traditional land ownership titles.

Advocate Harold Sungusia from the Legal and Human Rights Centre told IPS that in order for the government to

control conflicts with investors over land, it should create an equitable balance between the interests of its people and those of investors.

He said the role of state machinery such as laws, institutions and resources have changed from protecting the majority of smallholders interests in the 1970s and 1980s, to facilitating the acquisition of land from communities by a few elite and foreign companies.

"In Tanzania from 2001 to date, the land laws have been changed eight times, for whose interest?"

However, director general Aloyce Masanja of the Rufiji Basin Development Authority, a government organisation that manages the 183,000 square kilometre basin, issues water permits to both large-scale and smallholder farmers along the basin area, and mediates in conflicts, said the government largely depends on the private sector to make SAGCOT a success.

"Land is given out to a private investor after careful evaluation. The private sector can perform better... it has strong links with other areas of economic activities that are linked to agricultural development," he told IPS.

At the Bottom of Lake Nyasa is 'Rare Earth'



Nguwo village committee chairperson Ibrahim Kachinga on the shores of Lake Malawi. And for the past five years the village committee has been going to local gatherings to educate residents about the need to protect the lake. Credit: Mabvuto Banda/IPS

By Thembi Mutch

ARUSHA - The local Tanzanian community bordering Lake Nyasa is no nearer to understanding what the conflict between their country and Malawi is about, nor why so much is at stake, as mediation efforts between Malawi and Tanzania are expected to begin soon.

The 29,000-square-kilometre tranquil lake, known as Lake Malawi by Malawians, is a tourist spot, source of revenue and food for local populations. But since July 2012, it was discovered that the lake could potentially be a lucrative oil and gas source, and it rekindled a border dispute between the southern African neighbours over who owns the lake.

Malawi claims sovereignty over the entirety of the lake that straddles the borders of Malawi, Mozambique and Tanzania. Meanwhile, Tanzania says 50 percent is part of its territory.

In Mbeya Region, in southwest Tanzania, members of the community bordering the lake have been working with national NGO Haki Ardhi, also known as the Land Rights Research and Resources Institute, to understand their water rights.

"We know that we have agreed to disagree with Malawi on this one, but these communities depend completely on fishing and the lake for their lives. There's been no consultation at all with us about how we benefit if there is oil here, none at all. How do we gain from this? The land issue is new for us here: we have no experience," Saad Ayoub, the organisation's assistant programme officer, told IPS by phone.

Local residents echo this feeling. Richard Kilumbo, a resident from Kyela district, which borders Lake Nyasa, told IPS that he could not understand the reasons for the dispute.

"We have relatives from Mzuzu, Malawi and were going to attend a wedding (there last year). We are shocked and panicked to find we are making preparations of war against our neighbours. We do not know why this is such big thing amongst our leaders. We heard people were talking, we thought we were free to walk and enjoy life," he said.

Arguably the trouble started in 1890, when the treaty of Heligoland divided up the lake according to colonial law. It was amended in 1982 by the United Nations. However, more recently in October 2011 Malawi's late President Bingu wa Mutharika, awarded a contract to British Surestream Petroleum to start gas and oil exploration on the eastern part of the lake, and then a second exploration licence in December 2012 to a subsidiary of South African firm SacOil.

In July 2012, Tanzania announced that, with Denmark's help, it planned to purchase a new nine-million-dollar ferry to cross Lake Nyasa's waters. Malawi's Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development claimed Tanzania had no legal right to start operating on Lake Malawi, since the ownership and border dispute was unresolved. In retort, Hilda Ngoye, the Tan-

zanian member of parliament for the Mbeya Region, claimed Malawian fishing and tourist boats were encroaching on Tanzania's waters.

Things took a decisive turn for the worse when Tanzania's then acting Prime Minister in the National Assembly, Samuel Sitta, warned that his country would not hesitate to respond to any military provocation.

To date, most tactics have been employed to resolve the dispute between the neighbours: mediation using former Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano, hot talk of army invasions, threats to take the case to the International Criminal Court of Justice, appeals using Southern African Development Community bishops, and diplomatic talks between the prime ministers of Tanzania and Malawi.

But there has been criticism that the dispute has been used to further political careers, rather than ensuring the best interests of the local communities.

"This lake should be used to improve the lot and livelihoods of local people, on both sides. The lake is a resource – instead it's being used as part of a political game to further political careers," Local environmental journalist and expert who has followed the story for many years, and writes regularly on it for Swahili newspapers and in his own blog, Felix Mwakymbe, told IPS.

"There's no border dispute among the local community, it is a dispute among politicians, a political performance at higher levels, eyeing elections in Malawi in 2014 and Tanzania in 2015. Unfortunately, the local communities are pawns. They lack access to information and education to understand the implications and seriousness of this," Mwakymbe said.

Kilumbo agreed.

"There really is no trouble on the ground, none at all. Fishermen from Tanzania are carrying on as usual, and although we know it's in the news, we've no idea why," he said.

The issues of resource extraction in Lake Nyasa echo other conflicts regionally when it comes to ownership, division of spoils, allocation of licences, and who pays for capital investments.

As with other areas in East Africa, such as the Albertine Rift and Murchison Falls National Park in Uganda, and Virunga National Park in Rwanda, there are two main oversights in this process – disseminating the results of the Environmental Impact Assessments and comprehensively incorporating community feedback into both the planning of extractions, and the "division of the spoils".

"I have no idea about the oil plans, none at all. And no, I've never even heard of an Environmental Impact Assessment, and certainly not seen one," Kilumbo said. Laughing, he added:

"It's hard to know what the 'wazi wazi' (fuss) is."

Yet so far, it does not seem local communities understand this conflict, nor their rights in the process.

Nyanda Shuli, the media and advocacy manager of local civil society organisation Haki Elimu, or Your Rights, told IPS that the emphasis must be on financial accountability and transparency, and that the flows of income and investment must be directed towards the communities.

"Whatever the outcomes of this current dispute, we need daring thinking to try and tackle the bigger issues of how our communities in rural areas develop, find imaginative ways for people know their rights, and what they can expect, from the poorest marginalised fishing communities around Nyasa, to other communities inland.

"At the moment decisions are taken in the capital, Dar es Salaam, and there's no connection or meaningful dialogue with the regions at all. It's more complicated because the distances are so huge, and the transport, telephone networks and roads so poor," he said.

Amidst the obscurity and disagreements, there is one thing that needs to be remembered. There is "rare earth" (a colloquial name for complex and valuable minerals mostly used for engineering) below the lake, and potentially a lot of oil and natural gas.

To date, there is no documentary evidence that either of the local fishing communities, on both sides, Malawi or Tanzania, stand to gain much.

But for now, Kilumbo believes there is enough to go around.

"Yes, I can say the Malawians get the bigger fish, but that's because we Tanzanians like the smaller, younger fish. But there's enough to go round. I have no idea about oil plans, none at all."

For more IPS stories on water related development in the SADC region visit the Southern Africa Water Wire on Facebook or follow us @africawaterwire on Twitter

La croissance de la SADC requiert plus d'infrastructures et moins de barrières

Par John Fraser

Des experts conviennent qu'un outil clé pour libérer le potentiel économique de la Communauté de développement d'Afrique australe (SADC) réside dans la facilitation des flux transfrontaliers des personnes, biens, capitaux et services.

Cependant, même si les restrictions frontalières peuvent être levées, il reste encore beaucoup à faire en termes d'amélioration des voies, chemins de fer, de la fourniture d'électricité et d'autres infrastructures à l'intérieur de la région - et de la levée des barrières non tarifaires informelles sous forme d'une bureaucratie excessive et des restrictions qui continuent d'entraver le développement.

En juin, un groupe de dirigeants de la SADC s'était réuni à Maputo, au Mozambique pour une Conférence sur les investissements dans les infrastructures de la SADC - avec le président sud-africain Jacob Zuma qui avait annulé sa propre participation à la dernière minute en raison des inquiétudes au sujet de la santé de l'icône malade, Nelson Mandela.

Une partie du programme était un Plan pour le secteur des transports, qui examine la libéralisation des marchés des transports, le développement des corridors de transport et la facilitation des mouvements transfrontaliers.

Toutefois, la directrice générale du cabinet-conseil 'Africa @ Work', Dianna Games, a déclaré à IPS que bien que des démarches soient entreprises pour faire tomber les barrières physiques à la circulation transfrontalière, des obstacles informels les remplacent souvent.

"Pendant que les barrières tarifaires ont baissé, il y a eu une multiplication d'obstacles non tarifaires - entraînant des retards aux postes frontières et des postes frontières inefficaces, le pire étant la traversée de la frontière de 'Beit Bridge' entre l'Afrique du Sud et le Zimbabwe", a-t-elle indiqué.

"Cette situation aurait dû être réglée depuis longtemps - et elle suggère que bien qu'il existe un semblant de grande attention politique accordée à la libéralisation des échanges, les pays sont aussi protectionnistes que jamais".

Dr Rose Phillips, la directrice générale du cabinet-conseil

en gestion 'Accenture', basé en Afrique du Sud, a expliqué à IPS que "plus de facilitation des échanges et moins de dépendance de l'aide constituent ce qui est nécessaire pour accélérer le développement économique durable sur le continent. Tout simplement, nous avons vraiment besoin d'une Afrique qui marche".

"Une harmonisation plus grande des politiques commerciales, une gouvernance plus forte et une coopération régionale commune ainsi que des investissements sont quelques-unes des actions nécessaires".

Elle a souligné le besoin pour des investissements plus ciblés dans la construction et l'entretien des infrastructures, telles que les routes, les technologies de l'information et de la communication, les chemins de fer, la fourniture d'eau et d'électricité.

Et elle a également soutenu l'accent de la SADC sur les corridors de développement.

"La recherche d'Accenture révèle qu'une fourniture peu fiable d'électricité seule entraîne des pertes de production industrielle évaluées à six pour cent du chiffre d'affaires de l'entreprise", a-t-elle prévenu.

"Les coûts de transport routier de marchandises (en Afrique) sont deux à quatre fois plus élevés par kilomètre qu'aux Etats-Unis, et les temps de voyage le long des corridors clé d'exportation sont deux à trois fois plus longs que ceux d'Asie".

"Finalement, nous devons diversifier les industries de la SADC dans lesquelles nous investissons, (que nous) encourageons et développons à l'échelle régionale".

Phillips a souligné l'importance des pays de la SADC de travailler ensemble pour faire face aux défis de la région à travers des accords entre les gouvernements.

"Ils jouent un rôle clé dans la promotion et la facilitation de la création de nouvelles opportunités industrielles étant donné, par exemple, que l'Angola et le Nigeria connaissent les taux de croissance les plus élevés en Afrique".

Toutefois, elle a souligné que l'ouverture de l'Afrique ne peut pas être seulement laissée aux gouvernements.

"Le secteur privé joue un rôle vital", a-t-elle affirmé.

Traverser les frontières en faisant du commerce

Par Mantoe Phakathi

Les commerçants transfrontaliers du Swaziland sont à peine capables de joindre les deux bouts en raison des taxes élevées et des droits de douane qu'ils doivent payer lorsqu'ils importent des marchandises par les postes-frontières de ce pays d'Afrique australe.

Les vendeurs ambulants qui importent des habits d'occasion du Mozambique voisin, un pays limitrophe du Swaziland à l'est, se plaignent qu'ils payent des taxes très élevées par rapport à leurs homologues sud-africains. Le Swaziland est limité à l'est par l'Afrique du Sud et le Mozambique, et la plupart des commerçants obtiennent leur stock à partir des deux pays.

Dudu Fakudze vend des vêtements d'occasion à Mbabane, la capitale du Swaziland, et va au Mozambique chaque semaine pour s'approvisionner.

"C'est toujours frustrant d'amener le stock du Mozambique parce que les douaniers ne considèrent pas la valeur à laquelle vous avez acheté le produit", s'est plaint Fakudze.

Alors que le Trésor du Swaziland (SRA) impose une taxe de 14 pour cent de la valeur ajoutée (TVA) pour les marchandises provenant d'Afrique du Sud, une formule différente s'applique à celles qui sont importées du Mozambique.

"Nous sommes obligés de payer soit E450 (46 dollars) par balle ou de déboursier entre E3 et E5 (30 et 50 cents) par article pour les habits d'occasion", a indiqué Fakudze à TerraViva. "Je fais de bénéfice à peine à cause du montant que je paie à la frontière".

Le directeur de la communication du SRA, Vusi Dlamini, a admis que les importateurs à partir du Mozambique paient plus par rapport à ceux provenant d'Afrique du Sud. Il a attribué cela au fait que le Mozambique ne fait pas partie de l'Union douanière d'Afrique australe (SACU), dont sont membres le Swaziland et l'Afrique du Sud.

Dlamini a déclaré que selon le Livre tarifaire harmonisé utilisé par tous les pays de la SACU, on devrait prélever E25/kg (2,50 dollars/kg) de droits seulement sur les vêtements d'occasion, plus 14 pour cent de TVA. Mais il a indiqué qu'il apparaissait que l'application de cette disposition sortirait les commerçants des affaires.

"Après beaucoup de contacts avec le représentant des vendeurs ambulants, il a été décidé qu'un tarif forfaitaire qui inclut à la fois des droits de douane et la TVA à l'importation soit utilisé pour une gamme de produits généralement importés", a-t-il dit.

Des responsables corrompus du SRA en rajoutent également à la tension, s'est plaint Siphon Mabaso, un autre vendeur ambulant à Mbabane. Il a déclaré qu'il a été forcé de payer des pots-de-vin à l'entrée de la frontière.

"Des responsables du SRA menacent de confisquer nos produits si nous ne leur donnons pas une 'boisson fraîche' qui pourrait coûter entre E50 et E100 (cinq à 10 dollars)", a affirmé Mabaso.

Toutefois, la situation n'est pas non plus facile pour les commerçants qui importent des marchandises d'Afrique du Sud, a déclaré le président de l'Association des vendeurs ambulants 'Phandzelumntwana', Mabhodweni Dlamini. Il a affirmé qu'à cause du faible nombre des agents des douanes à la frontière, les files d'attente sont généralement très longues, notamment à la fin du mois où il y a beaucoup de commerçants et de voyageurs.

"Les vendeurs ambulants passent souvent jusqu'à six heures à la frontière et quand vous arrivez devant la queue, vous êtes souvent très frustré", a déclaré Dlamini. "C'est-à-dire lorsque vous êtes obligé de payer un pot-de-vin".

Il a souligné que certains petits commerçants achètent leurs marchandises auprès des vendeurs ambulants en Afrique du Sud qui ne délivrent pas de reçus. Bien que le SRA soit conscient de cette situation, a-t-il dit, les agents des douanes refusent d'accepter les prix déclarés par les commerçants.

Dlamini du SRA a indiqué que l'organisation déterminera les postes qui ont besoin de plus de personnel grâce à l'utilisation d'un modèle clairement défini conforme aux normes de service à la clientèle.

Dlamini a déclaré que depuis la création du SRA en 2011, l'organisation a renvoyé une partie de son personnel qui s'est engagé dans un comportement de corruption ou contraire à l'éthique. Il a souligné que le SRA a reçu des plaintes émanant des importateurs revenant du Mozambique.

"Toutefois, lorsque vous désirez plus de détails, les informations manquent", a ajouté Dlamini.



IMPROVING SKILLS ... Former Angolan soldiers participate in a masonry course offered by Odebrecht's Acreditar Programme in Luanda. Credit: Mario Osava/IPS.

Assouplir les règles bancaires pour une expansion à travers la SADC



Les opérateurs de réseaux cellulaires sont un acteur important dans les services de transferts de fonds transfrontaliers. Credit : Trevor Davies

Par John Fraser/Michelle Chifamba

JOHANNESBURG/HARARE - Vivian Zivira, 40 ans, une négociante de produits agricoles à Nyanga, dans la province du Manicaland au Zimbabwe, affirme que beaucoup de femmes comme elle, ayant une terre communale, font face à d'importants défis pour obtenir des prêts pour démarrer des projets générateurs de revenus.

C'est parce que les banques mettent trop de temps pour traiter leurs demandes, et exigent des taux d'intérêt élevés.

"Il m'a fallu environ six mois pour accéder à mon premier prêt parce que les banques voulaient des garanties, que j'ai finalement fournies grâce à mon mari. Elles m'ont donné 5.000 dollars avec 25 pour cent d'intérêt. Malgré un très bon dossier de remboursement, la banque n'a pas pu augmenter le second prêt", a déclaré Zivira à IPS.

Les principaux banquiers sont préoccupés par le fait que l'environnement réglementaire dans certains Etats d'Afrique australe les empêche d'offrir une gamme complète de services aux particuliers et aux entreprises à travers la région.

Des services financiers efficaces et abordables sont essentiels à la fois pour le développement des entreprises et des projets infrastructurels à l'intérieur de la Communauté de développement d'Afrique australe (SADC) - et pour élargir l'accès, à la banque, de millions de personnes qui sont actuellement en dehors du système.

Le directeur général du groupe 'BancABC', Douglas Munatsi, a déclaré à IPS qu'en surface, les règles bancaires dans les Etats de la SADC sont similaires d'un pays à l'autre, puisqu'elles découlent toutes des directives internationales de Bâle.

"Cependant, la réalité est que certains régulateurs n'appliquent pas les règles de la même façon, sur des questions telles que la capitalisation minimale d'une banque", a-t-il expliqué.

"Parfois, le processus n'est pas aussi transparent qu'il devrait être. Un pays peut avoir des règles d'investissement très positives, mais les lois sur le travail peuvent être très rigides, telles que celles qui couvrent les expatriés au Botswana".

Il a expliqué que si une banque doit étendre sa portée à travers la région, elle doit être en mesure de déployer des gens dans de nouveaux territoires, mais cela n'est pas toujours facile.

"Cela nous affecte, puisque nous trouvons des compétences limitées dans certains endroits, mais nous sommes seulement autorisés à déplacer un certain nombre de personnel", a-t-il prévenu.

Mike Brown, le directeur général de la Nedbank, l'une des plus grandes banques d'Afrique du Sud, est d'accord qu'il existe des incohérences.

"La mesure par rapport à laquelle les services bancaires sont librement disponibles entre les Etats de la SADC diffère à travers les différents produits offerts et les clients servis par les banques", a-t-il indiqué à IPS.

"Dans le système bancaire de gros (les services bancaires pour les entreprises), par exemple, la croissance des échanges entre les pays de la SADC a donné lieu à des banques qui développent des solutions de financement des échanges pour faciliter le commerce intra-régional".

Brown a noté qu'il a eu des progrès "plus limités" dans la fourniture des services bancaires aux clients ordinaires - appelés "la banque de détail" - en raison de l'incapacité à ce jour à harmoniser les règlements à travers la SADC. Il a également cité les contrôles des changes comme un obstacle à l'expansion.

Brown a souligné que les travailleurs migrants, tels que les mineurs en provenance des pays voisins qui travaillent

en Afrique du Sud, doivent pouvoir envoyer des fonds à travers les frontières pour soutenir leurs familles restées au pays.

"Des entreprises qui fournissent des solutions transfrontalières de transfert de fonds ont émergé. Il s'agit des opérateurs mobiles et des entreprises de transfert d'argent (tels que Western Union et Moneygram). Toutefois, le coût de ces services est encore élevé et prohibitif pour beaucoup de gens - et ne sont pas très utilisés", a-t-il averti.

Cas Coovadia, le directeur général de l'Association pour les services bancaires d'Afrique du Sud, a affirmé qu'il croyait qu'il n'y avait pas de problèmes majeurs qui affectent l'offre des services bancaires entre les Etats.

"L'Association pour les services bancaires de la SADC travaille avec le Comité des gouverneurs de Banque centrale de la SADC pour développer un système intégré de paiements et de règlement, qui améliorera considérablement le système bancaire à travers les Etats" a-t-il dit à IPS.

Cependant, il a prévenu que "l'environnement réglementaire dans certains pays est encore relativement faible. Les infrastructures constituent un autre problème, en particulier les télécommunications. L'incertitude politique dans des pays comme le Zimbabwe est un autre sujet de préoccupation".

Le chargé des opérations de la banque 'FNB Africa', Leonard Haynes, est d'accord que de bonnes infrastructures jouent un grand rôle dans la capacité d'une banque à rendre ses services disponibles, et il a souligné l'importance des télécommunications et de la stabilité de l'électricité.

Il a également insinué que l'indisponibilité, dans certains endroits "de documents d'identification personnelle ou de fiches d'identification similaires fiables, fait qu'il est difficile de se conformer aux exigences de 'connaissez votre client'".

Southern African Trade Talks Stall, and the Clock Ticks



Fisheries contribute at least 10 billion dollars to African economies every year and in Angola and Namibia they are vital economic drivers. Fishermen carry their boat in from the sea in Doring Bay, 350km north of Cape Town. Credit: Patrick Burnett/IPS

Analysis by Servaas van den Bosch

WINDHOEK - Southern Africa has to settle in for another round of negotiations after talks on Economic Partnership Agreements failed to produce results in June, bringing countries closer to losing access to the lucrative European Union market.

A high-level visit to the region by EU Trade Commissioner Karel de Gucht in July highlighted there are still many differences.

The troublesome trade negotiations between the EU and the Southern African Development Community (SADC)-EPA grouping that includes Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland (BLNS), as well as Angola, Mozambique and South Africa, have stretched five years past their 2008 deadline.

South Africa joined the negotiations two years back and is looking to improve the terms it has under the Trade and Development Cooperation Agreement, especially for agricultural products.

For the BLNS, which import about 80 percent of their trade from the continent's economic powerhouse and are joined with Pretoria in the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), the entry of South Africa on the scene presents dilemmas, as well as opportunities for further negotiation and regional economic integration.

As the two economic heavyweights – South Africa and the EU – face it off, the smaller countries are stuck in the middle. From Jun. 14 to 21 senior officials talked in Brussels about clinching the long-awaited trade deal, but little progress was made.

"Basically we are where we were last year, nothing has changed in Brussels that would close the deal," commented Rejoice Karita, senior trade advisor at the Agricultural Trade Forum, a Namibian company representing the agricultural industry.

An impasse in the trade talks occurred between the EU and South Africa when the former indicated that the South Africans had not offered enough in terms of agricultural market access. The EU had requested market access for 67 tariff

lines, but South Africa only conceded on 20 lines and put tariff rate quotas on some of them. According to negotiators, the EU responded that the offer fell short of closing the gaps in market access regulations and they needed to see improvement.

This stalemate jeopardises the discussion on agricultural safeguards, which are extremely important for the smaller economies in the region. Such safeguards allow countries to increase duties or put in place quotas if a sudden surge in imports threatens local agricultural production. The EU will need to see concessions on South African market access to give the green light for agricultural safeguards. But both parties are unwilling to move, with the South Africans keen to protect their dairy industry and processed products such as ham and confectionaries.

According to Karita, the next round of talks in September and October will be crucial. "The two blocs have strong positions and there is little movement forward. From the side of the European Commission new articles are being added to the text. Such negotiation tactics delay the process and eventually Namibia could be the odd one out," she told IPS.

A major stumbling block is the issue of export taxes. Facing competition from China, the EU is eager to lock in raw materials, but the developing economies of Southern Africa want to be able to impose taxes to divert exports for local value addition and developing of the local economy.

De Gucht told IPS during a visit to the Namibian capital, Windhoek, that the matter of export taxes is almost resolved with only industrial export taxes outstanding. But Namibian negotiator Permanent Secretary Dr. Malan Lindeque said the issue cannot be merely 'brushed aside'.

"Export taxes are a crucial issue for Namibia. We are primarily exporters of raw materials and need to reverse that situation. It's crucial we move toward more explicit provisions on export taxes that meet our needs," Lindeque told IPS.

Lindeque lamented an October 2014 deadline Europe imposed on the talks, after which Namibia will lose preferential

market access.

"Because of this unfortunate deadline some circumstances cannot be properly accommodated in the talks. Still, we will only sign an agreement that is in our long term interest."

He also warned that increased access of European agricultural goods into South Africa plays out in the Namibian market through the Southern African Customs Union.

"Already European products are extremely competitors. It is cheaper to import basic foodstuffs from Europe than to produce them locally. It is always an uphill battle for our producers to get their products on the local shelves let alone export them into the region," he said.

In trying to reassert its grip on Southern Africa, Europe is trying to find the right tone. But the talks remain riddled with paranoia and accusations and the visit of De Gucht made it clear that many stumbling blocks remain.

The latest round of talks in June were preceded by a courtesy call to Namibia by the Angel Carro, head of division for Southern Africa in the European External Action Service. The visit backfired somewhat as Carro, who came to extend the hand of friendship, was unceremoniously, and perhaps unfairly, labelled a "euro thug" by commentators when conceding in an interview that aid to Namibia would be reduced on the basis of its growing economy and upper middle-income status. In 2011 the World Bank reclassified Namibia as a middle-income country as its per capita income is 4,700 dollars. World Bank figures show that growth reached 4.9 percent in 2012.

The status of the former colonial masters has been dented in the region since the Eurozone crisis and some of the countries negotiating in the SADC-EPA, most notably Botswana, are faring much better than a couple of the EU member states.

On the other hand, growth in South Africa is stalling, coming in at a modest 2.5 percent last year, half that of Namibia. With a weakening exchange rate and investors shunning the country, because of labour unrest and political uncertainty, South Africa is painfully reminded it is still a deal-taker in the global economy and does not yet set the agenda for the continent.



Heads of state and government listen to the SADC anthem at the onset of the Summit. Credit: Kervin Victor

Mugabe Receives Hero's Welcome at Summit

By Servaas van den Bosch and Rumbi Chakamba

Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe was welcomed with loud cheers and two standing ovations by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) delegates at his first major regional appearance since his party's landslide election victory in July. Mugabe's popularity in the region seems undiminished, judging by his warm reception and the words of praise from his fellow leaders.

Meanwhile at home opposition party the Movement for Democratic Change - Tsvangirai (MDCT) has withdrawn its legal challenge disputing the election results.

Mugabe, who was seated in the centre of the panel next SADC executive secretary, Tomaz Salomão, was congratulated on Zimbabwe's "peaceful" elections by incoming SADC chair and Malawi's President Joyce Banda. African Union chair Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma also added words of praise.

"I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate my dear brother, his excellency comrade Robert Gabriel Mugabe, the president of Zimbabwe and the people of Zimbabwe for conducting peaceful elections. We wish to assure the government and the people of Zimbabwe of our continued support as a member of this family," said Banda.

SADC was quick to declare the polls in Zimbabwe free and fair last month, with Botswana President Ian Khama being the only voice of dissent. Earlier this month Khama called for an independent audit of the Zimbabwean election to be held at this head of state summit.

However, the other leaders seemed disinclined to discuss the Zimbabwe issue in depth. As his colleagues closed ranks around the octogenarian Zimbabwean leader, Khama snubbed the summit and sent a representative.

Mugabe, now 89 years old, has been in power for three decades and over the past decade oversaw controversial land reforms that left the economy in tatters, while by and large achieving the goal of returning land to black ownership. Subsequent indigenisation laws saw multinationals shedding sizeable stakes to Zimbabwean shareholders in recent years. After Mugabe won the elections he announced further legislation to promote local ownership, instilling fears in investors.

The summit is an opportunity for Mugabe to regain the confidence of the region and renew old alliances.



President Robert Mugabe in good spirits after a warm welcome at the SADC Summit in Lilongwe, Malawi. Credit: Kervin Victor

SADC to Focus on Rural Communities and Agriculture

By Mutale Kapekele, Emelda Mwitwa, Collins Mtika, Rui Correia & Servaas van den Bosch

In a passionate speech as she took over as chair of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Malawian President Joyce Banda vowed to uplift the poor and reform the regional body to address the needs of rural communities and the youth.

"We must start with the war against poverty. We must fight the war to end the contemporary, deliberate and savage violence of poverty and underdevelopment of our people, particularly those in our rural communities," Banda said on Saturday, Aug. 17, upon assuming the position of chair person of SADC.

"We cannot afford to leave the youth behind. We cannot afford to leave women behind. We cannot afford to leave the poor to look after the poor," Banda continued to the sound of cheers from the packed auditorium.

Banda also announced she would place emphasis on agricultural development in the region. "For much of our region, agriculture is the largest employer, the largest component of GDP and the biggest generator of foreign exchange," Banda said. She called for a more innovative approach in agriculture and public-private partnerships.

Malawi pulled out all the stops for the SADC heads of state summit, which is being held on Aug. 17 and 18. Two dozen motorcades arrived in rapid succession at Lilongwe's Bingu International Convention Centre on Saturday morning, carrying the presidents and prime ministers of the region – along with their entourages.

But the summit skirted around controversial issues such as the disputed results of Zimbabwe's Jul. 31 elections, and the upcoming polls in Swaziland. The issue of Madagascar - whose chair remained empty as the country is still suspended after a 2009 coup d'état – is also still unresolved.

In the run-up to the summit in Malawi's capital, Lilongwe, civil society organisations voiced concern about the slow pace of reforms in SADC, and tabled concerns about women's rights and regional economic integration. The representation of women in politics and key business positions is still low in the region despite a protocol on gender being adopted by the member states.

For cross-border traders and companies in the export sector, intra-regional remains hindered by red tape and high cost. It is one of the bottlenecks Banda plans to address during her term. "While we have taken steps to open our markets for the movement of goods, I believe we need to strengthen our efforts on the free movement of people. We cannot meaningfully talk of regional integration if our people are not actually free to move within the region," she said.

Mozambican President Armando Guebuza, who handed over as chair, said good progress had been made on regional economic integration. "Because of the notable progress that we have had in removing tariff and non-tariff barriers, conditions have improved to raise the intra-SADC trade indices. This led to the creation of a framework for the industrial development of SADC," Guebuza said.



What does the Summit mean for gender equality?

By Kervin Victor and Dan Chan



Tawina Mbalu, Trade Manager

"The SADC Summit must come with good policies to encourage our women to trade with each other. SADC should simplify cross-border procedures into one single document."



Modesta Chalera, Tour Operator

"SADC has to make a big effort concerning education. Educating women should be a top priority, especially in Malawi, as it is an area where we are still lagging behind."



Paul Chawecka, Security Officer

"SADC should assist women to get the money that would allow them to do business."

CSOs: “Give Us a People’s SADC”



Banner with finger prints of petitioners after civil society launched the “people’s campaign”. Credit: Emelda Mwitwa

By Emelda Mwitwa

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) meeting on the sidelines of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Summit in Lilongwe have launched a campaign to pressurise heads of state into creating a regional body that adequately reflects the needs of the people.

The campaign, which is called “The SADC We Want to See,” is an outcry against the regional body that, CSOs say, has deviated from its original purpose of improving the livelihoods of the poor. Instead, they argue, it has become an elite club for heads of state.

The CSOs have three demands. They want a Regional Parliament; a Regional Court of Justice; and free movement of people across borders.

While the SADC Parliament needs to ensure implementation of protocols ratified by the countries, the SADC Court would give citizens a regional legal platform. After the SADC leaders clipped the wings of the SADC Tribunal two years ago, citizens have nowhere to go if they cannot find justice in their home country.

The free movement of people on the other hand would enhance regional economic integration. Reverend Suzanne Matala, Chairperson of the Fellowship of Christian Councils in southern Africa, told TerraViva she wants SADC to follow the example of the East African community where people can move and work without visa restrictions.

“We need to move freely from one country to the other. For example, if I find a job in Zimbabwe, I should not be stopped because am not Zimbabwean,” said Matala, a Zambian citizen.

“What we are asking for is the harmonisation of immigration procedures at the borders, to reduce both time and the cost of doing business,” said Jacob Makambwe, Secretary General of the Cross Border Association of Zambia. “Free trade will remain a pipe-dream if leaders do not address non-tariff barriers to trade.”

He wants simplification of border procedures. “If I am travelling from the DRC to Mozambique and my goods have been cleared in Zambia, I should not find another roadblock in Malawi,” Makambwe told TerraViva. Apart from Zambia, SADC states have not acceded to the 2005 Protocol on the Facilitation of Movement of Persons. Therefore, non-tariff barriers to trade such as double taxation remain firmly in place.

Collins Magalasi, executive director of African Forum and Network on Debt and Development (AFRODAD), also feels facilitation of free movement of persons and goods will help make cross trade more profitable. “We did research which found that out of every one dollar a trader makes, there is a potential to make three dollars. The rest of the money is paid in bribes,” said Magalasi.

Parité homme-femme: 50/50 en 2015, c’est possible!

Par Daniel Chan / Kervin Victor

Maintenant que le protocole de la SADC sur le Genre et le Développement est en vigueur, il faut conjuguer les efforts pour accélérer l’engagement des Etats membres.

C’est ce qu’a déclaré Magdeline Mathiba-Madibela, Responsable de l’Unité du Genre de la SADC au lancement du Vérificateur de Genre de la SADC à Lilongwe, Malawi, le vendredi 16 août.

Selon ce rapport les femmes sont sous-représentées à tous les niveaux de prise de décision dans les secteurs public et privé. Bien qu’il y ait plusieurs développements positifs au cours des dernières années, Magdeline Mathiba-Madibela indique, cependant, qu’il y a encore des lacunes et des disparités.

D’où le besoin d’accélérer l’implémentation du protocole par les Etats-membres. Les moyens pour y arriver selon Magdeline Mathiba-Madibela, et Mary Shawa, Secrétaire Permanent au ministère du Genre, des Enfants et du Bien-être social, présente lors du lancement, sont d’abord les outils législatifs, et aussi, le développement des capacités et la formation.

Et cela, autant pour les femmes s’engageant dans la politique et dans postes à responsabilité que pour la classe politique ainsi que la société en général. Le problème de l’égalité des genres n’est pas seulement une affaire de femme mais nous concerne.

La région de la SADC possède, à son actif, de bonnes réalisations sur les questions de genre. En effet, comme l’explique Magdeline Mathiba-Madibela, en ce qui concerne la participation des femmes en politique et la de prise de décision, la SADC est la 4e région du monde juste après les pays nordiques.

Réaliser une représentation paritaire dans la politique et les prises de décision est dans nos moyens et est donc réalisable. Toutefois, la mise en œuvre des législations des Etats membres déjà en place doit se poursuivre.



Magdeline Mathiba-Madibela, Head of Gender Unit at SADC. Credit: Kervin Victor

SADC Mum on Lake Malawi Dispute

By George Mhango

Civil society representatives are concerned that the lake border dispute between Malawi and Tanzania is not on the agenda of the SADC Summit.

The 50-year-old dispute over who owns the northern part of the lake recently flared up when Malawi granted oil exploration rights in the disputed area to a United Kingdom-based company.

According to SADC social commentator Collins Magalasi, leaders have

betrayed citizens of the two countries. “As civil society, we have to pressure government to stop taking its masses for granted, but to rather include them in various issues,” he said this week at the launch of a ‘stand up and speak out’ campaign by the SADC Council of NGOs. “We need to ensure that the wishes of the public are addressed, whenever the leaders meet,” Magalasi commented.

However, Malawi’s deputy minis-

ter of foreign affairs Abel Kayembe has defended the decision, saying the issue is being handled by former African heads of state. “They are discussing with both parties and Malawi and Tanzania are waiting for a report,” said Kayembe.

Malawi President Joyce Banda has threatened she will take the matter to the International Court in The Hague if the current mediation efforts fail to produce results.

West Cold Shoulders SADC Infrastructure Plan

By Collins Mtika

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) is developing a new fund to implement its Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan (RIDMP). The RIDMP will cost SADC 500 billion dollars over the next 15 years. The decision follows a lack of interest from Western nations and multilateral finance institutions to invest in infrastructure projects in southern Africa.

“I have been to Japan, the United States, the United Kingdom and other countries, nobody has come forward to fund any of the projects we have outlined,” SADC Deputy Executive Secretary for Regional Integration Joao Samuel Cahol told TerraViva, before announcing SADC will start its own infrastructure fund.

“What is holding SADC back is our inability to fund our own

programmes. Therefore, a sustainable funding mechanism has to be established if we are to show that we are committed and progressive.”

The infrastructure master plan aims to deal with the region’s deficit in roads, railways, ports, power supply, communication and water infrastructure to reduce the cost of doing business and make the region competitive.

“SADC has the potential and we are asking for the goodwill of all member states. Let them put down the seed money for the SADC Infrastructure Fund,” said the Deputy Executive Secretary.

Modelled on the European Investment Bank and other regional funding ventures, SADC countries will initially pump 1.2 billion dollars into the SADC Infrastructure Fund. Of this,

51 percent will be contributions from member states who will gain shareholding in the fund; 37 percent needs to be financed by the private sector; the remaining 12 percent will come from international partners.

Contributions from SADC states should commence in 2013 and run over the next five years. Payments to the Fund, noted Cahol, are based on the country’s budget, institutional capacity and other criteria.

“If after five years a country fails to pay its contribution its shares will be recalled and distributed among the complying states so that African states remain the majority shareholder,” Cahol told TerraViva. He however, added this does not necessarily mean member states that are in default would not be able to access funds for development projects.



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