



SADCA HOLDS ITS 23RD ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING

The Southern African Development Community Cooperation in Accreditation (SADCA) held its 23rd Annual Meeting on 14 March 2019 at the Safari Court Hotel in Windhoek, Namibia. The meeting which was held in conjunction with the 34th meeting of SADC TBT Cooperation Structures, was officially opened by the Deputy Minister of Industrialization Trade and SME Development, Honorable Ms Lucia Lipumbu at a ceremony held on 11 March 2019 and attended by over 100 delegates from SADC countries, diplomats, international development partners and stakeholders from Namibia.

Prior to the SADCA Annual meeting, the SADCA Executive Committee met on 10 March 2019 to finalize preparations for the annual meetings. The SADCA Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) Committee, the MRA Council and the Marketing and Communications Committee (MCC) all met on 11 March 2019 whilst the SADCA Technical Committee (TC) met on 13 March 2019 during which the Committees reviewed implementation of their respective 2018 work plans and developed the 2019 work plans in support of the SADCA five year (2017 to 2021) strategic plan. The Committees also reviewed draft documents some of which were approved at the general assembly meeting which was subsequently held on 14 March 2019. The 23rd SADCA Annual Meeting was attended by over 30 delegates from 14 SADC Member States excluding Madagascar. Amongst the observers were Mrs Marie Chilcott who was the first SADCA Secretariat and Mrs Masego Marobela who together with Mrs Maureen Mutasa and Mr Ron Josias were amongst the first members of SADCA. Cooperating partners from PTB Germany and UNIDO also attended the meeting.



Delegates at the 23rd SADCA Meeting



The Chair of the SADCA, Mr Viki Mbuya Kanama welcomed delegates to the 23rd SADCA Annual meeting which was held under the theme **“Accreditation: Adding Value to Supply Chains”**. In his report to the Annual Meeting, Mr Kanama reviewed the progress made in the 2nd year of the SADCA 5-year Strategic Plan (2017 to 2021) whose thrust is to achieve international recognition of the SADCA MRA. He reported on the achievements of the year with MAURITAS achieving signatory status for the testing and calibration schemes in accordance with ISO/IEC 17025 and management systems certification accreditation scheme in accordance with ISO/IEC 17021-1 in the sub-scope Quality Management Systems (QMS) in accordance with ISO/IEC 17021-3. He congratulated SANAS for their new offices and SADCAS for achieving 10 years of accreditation services and also wished all the 3 accreditation bodies well in their upcoming re-evaluations which in the case of SADCAS will also involve evaluation for extending signatory status to include management systems certification bodies accreditation scheme in the sub-scope QMS. The Chairman ended his report by expressing his gratitude to the SADCA Executive Committee and cooperating partners PTB Germany and SA dti for their continued support to SADCA.

On membership, the Regional Coordinator, Mr Ron Josias noting the admission of MAURITAS as a signatory to the AFRAC MRA and the launch of the SADCA MRA for testing and calibration, SADCA had a total of 19 Members of which 3 are Arrangement Members (MRA Signatories); 8 Ordinary Members; no Associate Members; and 8 Stakeholder Members. He further advised members that the SADCA Executive Committee met 2 times during the period under review and considered a number of documents some of which have since been approved whilst others will be approved at the annual meeting. He noted that SADCA Membership covers all 15 SADC Member States namely: Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Although Angola has established an accreditation body IAAC it is not yet operational hence will continue to be serviced by SADCAS. The Regional Coordinator reported on developments at AFRAC, ILAC and IAF and then reported on the progress with the implementation of the Executive Committee’s workplan with the internal audit and management review having been undertaken as scheduled in January and February 2019 respectively. He then presented the 2019 Executive Committee workplan which was subsequently approved by the General Assembly.

This was followed by the accreditation body reports where MAURITAS, SADCAS and SANAS each presented their 2018 reports highlighting the achievements made, the challenges faced and lessons learnt as well as their plans for 2019. Notably MAURITAS achieved signatory status in the AFRAC MRA for testing, calibration and management system certification in the sub-scope QMS and had cumulatively accredited 29 conformity assessment bodies (CABs) by 31 December 2018. At the same time, SADCAS had accredited 92 CABs whilst SANAS had accredited 1700 CABs. All the 3 accreditation bodies reported on significant progress with transitioning to ISO/IEC 17011:2017. On challenges, SADCAS highlighted the limited pool of assessors conversant in French and Portuguese and the low attendance to Advisory Committee meetings as being unique challenges of a multi economy accreditation body directed to offer services in all the 3 official languages of the region and informed members of the initiatives underway to address these challenges. The National Accreditation Focal Points (NAFPs) also reported on the activities undertaken during the period under review, the challenges faced highlighting the limited funding for NAFP activities, lessons learnt and also presented their plans for 2019.

The Senior SADC TBT Officer, Dr Lomkhosi Mkhonta reported on the SADC Quality awards noting the increased number of entrants, the highest so far since the Awards were introduced and still encouraged all countries to participate in the 2019 Awards. She also reported on the new recruits at SADC TBT and presented on the launch and recent signing African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the EAC/COMESA/ SADC Tripartite Free Trade Area and the need to cooperate at continental level and the need for SADCA activities to be aligned with the SADC industrialization policy and framework.

The cooperating Partners PTB Germany and UNIDO also reported on the various activities that they sponsored in 2018 and activities underway all of which are contributing towards accreditation infrastructure development in the region thus push the SADCA accreditation agenda forward. Reports on developments in accreditation worldwide from ILAC IAF, and the various regions of the world were noted during the meeting.

A total of 34 resolutions were adopted by the General Assembly including the approval of procedures (M001-02: SADCA Policies and procedures for an MRA among ABs, M002-02: SADCA MRA, P004-01: Joint Evaluations with Other Regional Cooperations, P001-02: SADCA Membership Admission Procedure, A002-02: SADCA Quality Manual, A004-02: Guidelines for the Use of the



SADCA Logo, A005-02: SADCA Code of Ethics and A007-02: SADCA EXCO Terms of Reference and all the Committees' workplans for 2019. The General Assembly also approved the 2018 annual report as presented.



Outgoing Chair Mr Viki Kanama handing over to incoming Chair Mrs Maureen Mutasa

Mrs Maureen P Mutasa, the SACAS CEO was unanimously elected as Chairman of SADCA to replace Mr Viki Mbuya Kanama who retired at the 23rd Annual meeting having served 2 three-year terms as Chairman of SADCA. In her acceptance speech Mrs Mutasa thank the chair for his leadership over the past 4 years a period when SADCAS and MAURITAS both achieved international recognition and SADCA launched its MRA. "I hope that the launch of the SADCA MRA rejuvenates us to achieve international recognition" she said. She noted that the journey towards international recognition started some time ago and she hoped that it is not long before achievement of the said status but acknowledged that it is a lot of work and that we all have to work together to achieve international recognition. Mr Edward Mmatli, NAFP-Botswana was elected Chair of the Marketing and Communications Committee to replace Mrs Sybil Sthembiso Dlamini, NAFP – Swaziland. Who had served her 2 three-year terms. The General assembly also elected Mrs Cheshta Matadeen-Domum as the Vice Chair of the Marketing and Communications Committee.

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