

# **Minister Pandor's opening remarks to the Joint Meeting of SADC Ministers responsible for Education and Training and Science, Technology and Innovation**

Zimbali, Durban, South Africa,  
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Programme Director  
AU Commissioner  
SADC Executive Secretary

Welcome to you all, and thank you for attending and participating in this important meeting of the SADC Joint Meeting of Ministers responsible for Education and Training and Science, Technology and Innovation.

South Africa is very pleased to host you, and it's indeed an honour and privilege to have you here.

South Africa was recently elected to fill a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council for the term

2019 – 2020. As South Africans, we would like to express our unreserved gratitude and appreciation to the SADC Member States for the nomination and the AU for endorsing South Africa's candidature.

The Revised Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan 2015-2020 and the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap 2016-2063, adopted at the Extraordinary Meeting of the SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government in Harare, Zimbabwe, emphasises industrialisation as the key priority for the region.

The SADC Plan focuses on value-added industrialisation in the context of the current economic and policy conditions prevailing in SADC countries. The SADC region aims to move up the value-chain from producing and exporting basic manufactured and semi-finished goods, to producing final consumer and industrial goods.

One of the problems with resource-based economies has been the difficulties of expanding into manufacturing industry. Of course, having natural resources to sell

abroad is hugely beneficial to a country, but it's all too easy to rely on one sector to the detriment of others. It's all too easy for a resource benefit to lock out manufacturing and to become a resource curse.

It's now well known how to avoid falling into the trap of the resource curse, but often governments are not able to do what economists and others tell them to do. It is not always possible to lower the exchange rate or to set up a stabilisation fund.

South Africa is committed to the growth of manufacturing industry in the region. In this regard, South Africa has adopted policies to contribute to the region's efforts. In particular, the National Development Plan (Vision 2030) and the Industrial Policy Action Plan are such policies for South Africa.

The National Development Plan 2030 is an overarching plan for the country and sets out a broad outline of the country's vision 2030, based on the elimination of unemployment, poverty and reducing inequality.

The Industrial Policy Action Plan (IPAP) is the country's industrialisation plan. While IPAP is a national strategy, the importance of the region in South Africa's industrialisation and vice versa cannot be understated.

We also need to develop our capacity to benefit from regional value chains.

We must focus on harnessing the participation and involvement of the private sector.

This can only be achieved by creating synergy between national and regional strategies and programmes.

As countries we have our own platforms and structures, but we cannot make progress on our own.

This gathering must be guided by our vision of a shared future, to be attained through regional cooperation and integration in the socio-cultural, economic and political areas.

I'm looking forward to hearing about the initiatives being undertaken to share education experiences.

We need to ensure that there is portability and mobility of qualifications for citizens in our respective countries.

I'm also concerned about measures we can take to promote social cohesion in the region.

I welcome the initiative for introducing Southern African liberation history in curriculum in SADC countries.

I also welcome the proposal to introduce a skills competition in SADC.

I cannot overemphasise the importance of TVET. We need to share curriculum and materials in order to improve our systems.

Our focus must be on the eradication of poverty and a reduction of inequality through the promotion of deeper integration in SADC and so as to be able to be more competitive in the global economy.

I'd like to commend the Secretariat, senior officials from member states and our partners for organizing a series of technical committee meetings and consultations in preparation for this meeting.

I know you've been working hard since the last meeting in eSwatini, and for the past three days, preparing documents and logistics for the meeting.

I wish you well in your deliberations here today and the work to be undertaken over the next years towards implementation of the regional frameworks that will culminate in fuller and better regional integration.

I thank you.

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Training**