



5th June 2009

# Vice President Mujuru Opens the COMESA Meeting for Foreign Affairs Ministers

The Vice President of the Republic of Zimbabwe Her Honour Madam Joyce Mujuru has opened the meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs from the COMESA region with a call for peace, security and stability as essential pre-requisites for sustainable development and deepening regional integration.

“Conflicts not only result in destruction of lives, property and infrastructure but also divert resources and energies from the pursuit of productive activities to improve the standard and quality of lives of our people,” Mrs Mujuru said.

In this case, she has welcomed the initiative by COMESA to put into place structures to undertake preventive diplomacy missions using the soon to be launched Committee of Elders. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs are expected to consider Rules of Procedure for the Committee of Elders.

The Vice President noted that significant progress has been made to establish and launch the Inter-Parliamentary Forum for COMESA, which will, among other things promote understanding of the systems in the various countries, promote public awareness and contribute to entrenching democratic and representative structures in the region.

COMESA is also working on an effective early warning system which will enhance the region’s capacity to detect brewing conflicts so that timely interventions



Her Honour Madam Joyce Mujuru

can be put in place before problems escalate into full blown violent conflicts.

“It is therefore commendable that our peace and security programme includes components on post conflict reconstruction, rehabilitation and development such as the Trade for Peace project whose objective is to stimulate productive economic activities in areas emerging from conflict,” Madam Mujuru added.

She thanked COMESA member States for their support and solidarity during the period when Zimbabwe was facing unwarranted hostility for having dared to assert its right to control their destiny and natural resources.



# COMESA Wants a Peaceful and Secure Region

**P**IRACY off the coast of Somalia and the recent conflicts in Madagascar need to be addressed quickly as they affect peace and security which in turn affects regional integration efforts, the COMESA Secretary General Mr Sindiso Ngwenya has said.

In his speech at the ninth meeting of the COMESA Ministers of Foreign Affairs meeting in Vic Falls Town Zimbabwe, Mr Ngwenya said these issues needed urgent attention from the regional bloc.

He said the Committee on Peace and Security had met and was considering them.

Madagascar is a member of COMESA but its interim President Mr Andry Rajoelina who ousted president Marc Ravalomanana in May is not attending the summit and has been suspended from African Union (AU) of which COMESA is a building block.

“We should be mindful that as we address conflicts that besieged us for the past few years, new issues of peace and security have emerged that have a negative impact on our integration efforts,”

Mr Ngwenya added, “Such issues include piracy of the coast of Somalia and we have received reports that it is now coming into the Mozambique channel. These are issues that need your attention and I am pleased to inform you that the Committee on peace and security which met two weeks ago in Mauritius considered these issues,”

He said the fundamental pre-requisite for sustainable

economic integration was peace and commended the bloc for successfully ending some of the conflicts.

“Looking back, one realizes that the Authority’s decision of 1999 gave birth to a structured framework that has given our member states a forum to come together to enhance peace, security and stability in our region. The reduced number of conflicts since 1999, though not exclusively because of our programme, is testimony to the fact the much needed dialogue to prevent and resolve conflicts which started in 1999 is bearing results,”

Mr Ngwenya added that COMESA had also scaled down conflict entrepreneurship.

He said some economies were virtually turned into war economies that were being used to fuel armed conflict and violence in the region.

“Conflict entrepreneurship was on the rise. It is in this light that as a trade based organization, we are embarking on working with our member states which are coming out of conflicts to realize benefits for the people of the region by turning these economies into pro development economies for our people,”

Mr Ngwenya added that peace and security will only succeed if there is full and effective structured participation of all stakeholders in the region.

He noted that there was also need for COMESA to develop an early warning and response mechanism to detect potential conflicts at the earliest opportunity.

## LET NOT THE BABY DIE

Let not this baby die  
We have borne it in the womb  
All these months  
We have felt it turn and kick  
In our womb  
Now the baby is born  
Now the birth pangs are gone  
It is time to nurse the baby  
Time for the baby to suckle  
At the breast of our determination and perseverance  
To suckle from the breast of our vision and unity  
Let us together wean the baby  
Let us together protect the baby  
Let our undying vision be its warm clothing  
Let our deep passion be its shoes

Let not this baby die  
Let us freely move from coast to coast  
Let us to the new era toast:  
The new has come, the old is gone  
The customs union is born

### CALENDAR OF OPENING DATES FOR MEETINGS

6th June 2009	COMESA Golf Tournament
7th June 2009	First Ladies Roundtable
7th June 2009	13th COMESA Heads of State Summit (Tent)
8th June 2009	Closing of the 13th Heads of State Summit (Tent)

# CLIMATE CHANGE: WHAT CAN WE DO?

Climate change and its cousin, global warming, caused by emissions of green house gases such as carbon dioxide generated from the burning of fossil fuels, is posing the most serious threat to the survival of mankind and life as we know it on this planet. We are now witnessing massive melting of the world's glaciers and ice caps, unprecedented blizzards, the wild fires, decreased crop yields extinction of many species and many other calamities never seen before.

There can be no doubt that the world has awoken to this grave development and leaders are rightly putting this issue highest on their agenda. Africa has a key role to play in the global climate solution because of its vast wealth of important carbon pools and the potential for enhanced carbon sequestration in its forests, agriculture and its large landmass.

Although Africa has so far been exempted from reducing her emissions, this derogation cannot last forever. Our emissions are increasing and largely come from the use of firewood and charcoal. In addition to the emissions generated, the use of trees in this way robs the planet of its capacity to sequester carbon.

Solving the problems of climate change is not just an issue for politicians, bureaucrats and technocrats. Every individual needs to take stock of their actions and see where and how they can make their contributions. The active involvement and participation of ordinary citizens, including the youth, women, rural communities, the poor and the business community is essential.

We are generating increasing amounts of garbage from our homes, offices and factories often without regard to what happens to it after it leaves our premises. The plastic, metal and glass objects we throw away are ideal breeding sites for mosquitoes and other vermin that spread malaria and other diseases whose severity will increase with warmer temperatures. Recycling these materials helps to solve the problem in addition to reducing emissions and creating jobs. We can all make efforts to be less wasteful and generate less garbage.

Many still use candles, paraffin or electricity for lighting when free and cleaner solar energy is abundant daily throughout Africa. Energy conservation through energy saving devices reduces consumption of grid electricity and hence emissions especially where fossil fuels are used for power generation.

We should not forget adaptation measures to help our people to cope and live with the changes to the climate. Improved staple crop varieties and technologies capable of good performance under the changing rainfall patterns must be developed. Conservation agriculture and water harvesting for irrigation boost the continent's food security and reduce dependence on rain-fed agriculture.

Climate change must be mainstreamed into educational curricula at all levels. After all, the youth are the future generations that will experience the full impact of climate change. They may as well start to take charge of their future early on.

## POEMS

### MY M O T H E R L A N D

Behold she is my mother land  
How beautiful and lovely she is  
Kind and graceful is my mother  
land  
How glamorous and majestic she  
is

Her charity and hospitality are  
without measure  
Warmth love care reside in her  
heart  
Her glamour and glitter  
worthwhile a treasure  
Her splendor won so many a  
heart

A paradise she is to many  
A home and sanctuary to  
mankind and wildlife  
Providing unsurpassed comfort  
and joy to many  
Legendary for your vast array of  
wildlife

Oh beautiful Zimbabwe my  
mother land  
Endowed with a diversity of  
natural resources  
Full of milk and honey is my  
mother land  
So plentiful and overflowing are  
the resources

The Might Victoria Falls full of  
inspiration  
A spectacular so magnifying  
The wilderness so sensational  
and invigorating  
The Might River Zambezi  
whispering relaxation

Behold she is my mother land  
All feed from her generosity and  
love  
With love and care she extends  
her hand  
Satisfaction and joy is found in  
her abundant love

*By Eddington A.K. Munatsi  
POET*