



**SOUTH AFRICA MINISTER OF TRANSPORT, DR BLADE NZIMADE RESPONSE TO SOUTH AFRICA RECEPTION OF THE TRANS-KALAHARI CORRIDOR CHAIRPERSONSHIP, AT SAFARI HOTEL- WINDHOEK – NAMIBIA**

27 September 2018

Director of the Proceedings, the Acting Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Works and Transport in Namibia, Mr Robert Kalomho;

Minister of Information and Communication Technology in Namibia, Mr Stanley Simataa;

Minister of Telecommunications and Postal Services in South Africa, Mr Siyabonga Cwele;

The Deputy Minister of Works and Transport in Namibia, Honourable Sankwasa James Sankwasa;

The Permanent Secretary, of Ministry of Works and Transport in Namibia, Mr Willem Goeiemann;

The representative of the Minister of Transport and Communications in Botswana, Mr Goarekwe Mojaphoko;

Co-Chairperson of the TKCMC South Africa, Mr Segodi Mogotsi;

Members of the diplomatic corps present;

TKCS Executive Director, Mr Leslie Mpofu;

Delegations from all member states;

Business delegations;

The Media;

Ladies and gentlemen;

It is a great honour and privilege for me to be here in Namibia-Windhoek joining you in this auspicious gathering.

As South Africa, we are gratified to be handed-over the chairpersonship of the Trans-Kalahari Corridor.

I must take this opportunity to congratulate Namibia for having steered this august organisation and for achieving so much during its chairpersonship.

This corridor plays a pivotal role in economic development of all our member states and our region, particularly in anchoring the development of industries and business along the corridor.

I would like to thank you all for ensuring that the Trans-Kalahari Corridor, since its formation in 2003, has been growing abundantly, with practical economic development achieved along the corridor.

However, as South Africa we believe that more still could be done to for us to exploit our unique characters and variant positions in advancing our common interests as member states.

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Key challenges hindering our growth and trade, includes amongst others, poor infrastructure, low density across transport networks, inefficient border processes and fragmented regulatory environments.

Landlocked countries within the region require efficient transport links to and from the sea in order to enjoy competitive prices for imports and export markets.

Most ports within the region currently operate near capacity and experience delays due to poor integration with other transport modes and slow clearance processes.

It is at this point that I would like to congratulate Namibia on its port expansion in Walvis Bay. This will bring more capacity on the Western seaboard, which includes ports in South Africa.

We need to ensure that our ports complement each other instead of competing to improve regional value chain.

Therefore, if the region is to attain its goal of creating a seamless, cost-effective and a fully integrated region; road, rail and ports systems are required to secure the future of the region.

The Trans-Kalahari Corridor development can serve as a good guide for the overall attainment of this regional developmental goal.

We therefore need to deepen our integration so that we maximise our trade creation and trade diversion.

This will assist us to ensure that we have a shift in production from high to the low cost countries and reduce the costs of doing business amongst the member states.

This corridor should also help us to ensure that we trade amongst each other and replace imports from the rest of the world, especially those coming outside of our continent.

Equally important, this corridor should help us beyond trade liberalisation by reducing uncertainties and improving our credibility and thus making it easier for the private sector to plan and invest in this corridor.

We therefore need to adopt unified positions on issues of mutual interest.

This will help us to negotiate trade and international commodity agreements with third parties and for us to safeguard our common regional interests.

I am indeed happy with the strides that we have made the TKC thus far. Amongst the milestones achieved, is the introduction of the Custom Single Administration Document, the completion of the feasibility study on Truck Stops, the development of harmonised weighbridges, the harmonisation of axle load limits from 8.2 to 9 tones and the introduction of the Joint Law Enforcement Operations across the member states.

Your Excellencies,

As we are now entering the Fourth Industrial Revolution, we must also be able to capacitate ourselves in line with this global phenomenon.

We therefore need to modernise our transport infrastructure, which includes working together with our research institutions

to find common solutions to our common and diverse challenges in the region.

As South Africa, we are exploring possibilities of establishing transport hubs throughout our provinces. These hubs will serve as centres of excellence on transport related matters. The centres will indeed assist the region at large to plan better on transport infrastructure.

For the benefit of all the TKC member states, we must ensure that we move swiftly to harmonise our transport regulations and ICT systems to ensure a seamless movements at our ports of entry.

This will ensure that we are also able to deal with organised crimes at these centres.

In conclusion, as member states, we also need to focus a great deal on transformational policies that include private sector participation in order to create quality jobs for our communities. This should include key focus on implementing decisions that are taken at this level.

In June 2018, South Africa has launched its national committee and we hope that other TKC member states will launch their committees soon.

I think we will all agree that robust economic transformation is key in shape our ability to generate inclusive growth and tackle serious challenges, such as poverty, inequalities and unemployment.

As Former Nelson Mandela once said when addressing the Southern African Development Community (SADC) 15th anniversary summit, in Johannesburg 13 September 1995, he said:

***“We owe it to all the peoples of the sub-continent to ensure that they see in us, not merely good leaders waxing lyrical about development, but as the front commanders in the blast furnaces of labour, productive investments and visible change”***

As South Africa, we are also looking forward to be the host of the Joint Law Enforcement Operation on the 04<sup>th</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup> November 2018 in Rustenburg.

We are looking forward to be a good host.

I thank you

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