



**REMARKS BY MS. PAULINA MBALA ELAGO,  
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF SACU**

**29<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2018**

**6<sup>TH</sup> SACU SUMMIT  
GABORONE, REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA**

**Director of Ceremonies, Andrew Sesinyi, Bank of Botswana;**

**Your Excellency Mr. Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi,  
President of the Republic of Botswana and Chairperson of the  
SACU Summit;**

**Your Majesty, King Mswati III, Kingdom of Eswatini;**

**Your Excellency Dr. Hage G. Geingob, President of the  
Republic of Namibia;**

**Your Excellency Mr. Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, President of  
the Republic of South Africa;**

**The Right Honourable Dr. Motsoahae Thomas Thabane Prime  
Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho;**

**Your Honour Slumber Tsogwane, Vice President of the  
Republic of Botswana;**

**Honourable Ontefetse K. Matambo, Chairperson of the SACU  
Council of Ministers;**

**Honourable Ministers;**

**Honourable Members of Parliament;**

**Your Excellencies Members of the Diplomatic Corps;**

**Distinguished Invited Guests;**

**Officials of the SACU Secretariat;**

**Members of the Media;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen.**

**Dumelang. Sanibonani. Good Morning.**

- 1. Allow me to express my sincere appreciation to you, Your Majesty and Excellencies, for taking time off your busy schedules on this day, to meet and engage on the SACU Agenda.**
- 2. Allow me to also take this opportunity to thank our host, the Government of the Republic of Botswana, for the hospitality and excellent facilities accorded to us since our arrival. I also wish to thank the members of the Council of Ministers for the necessary preparations made to facilitate the 6<sup>th</sup> Summit of the SACU Heads of State or Government.**

***Your Majesty, Your Excellencies,***

- 3. The 6<sup>th</sup> Summit of the SACU Heads of State or Government that is taking place today, was preceded by a series of Meetings of SACU Institutions, starting with the Meetings of the Task Teams of Senior Finance, and of Trade and Industry Officials, the Finance and Audit**

Committee, SACU Commission, the Ministerial Task Teams on Finance and on Trade and Industry and finally the Council of Ministers. These were held from the 23<sup>rd</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> June 2018, in this beautiful city of Gaborone.

4. The focus of the 6<sup>th</sup> Summit is mainly to consider a Progress Report from the Council of Ministers on the achievements attained towards the implementation of the SACU Ministerial Work Programme. As you may be aware, this Work Programme was approved by the Council and endorsed by the SACU Heads of State or Government at the 5<sup>th</sup> Summit held in June 2017 at Lozitha, Swaziland (now Eswatini).
5. We are now at a stage where the Member States have developed their national positions and are engaging in technical discussions in these areas.
6. We are grateful that the Heads of State or Government will have an opportunity today, to reflect on the work done so far and provide guidance on how to move our regional Agenda forward.

**Your Majesty, Your Excellencies,**

- 7. Apart from the Ministerial Work Programme, we are also making important strides and progress in a number of areas such as Trade Facilitation and Trade Negotiations.**
- 8. In the area of Trade Facilitation, SACU is implementing a regional Customs Modernisation Programme that is aimed at facilitating cross-border trade to specifically create a conducive environment for the traders in the region. This is important for business, particularly the small and medium scale enterprises that are involved in international trade and more so for the landlocked countries who depend largely on transit trade for their livelihood.**
- 9. Our Customs Modernisation Programme focuses on IT Connectivity, Risk Management and Enforcement and Trade Partnerships. Once these interventions are fully implemented, it is expected that there will be enhanced efficiencies on cross-border trade resulting from reductions in the time spent by the traders at our borders.**
- 10. Governments and the private sector stand to benefit from trade facilitation as efficient border controls also**

reduce instances of fraud and illegal entry of unwanted goods. Equally, business can become more competitive as faster clearances will improve the speed within which products reach the final consumer.

11. I am certain that the successful implementation of the SACU Trade Facilitation Programme will contribute significantly and will lay the foundation for improvement and enhancement of border efficiencies in the SACU countries, through continued implementation of the reforms targeting ports of entry, transit routes and ports of destination. In this regard I am pleased to report that the Revenue and Customs Authorities in the SACU region are already implementing customs modernisation programmes, with a view to achieving the stated results.
  
12. On the Trade front, SACU Member States are pursuing a Trade Negotiations Agenda with third parties as a collective bloc. These include the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Free Trade Area and the African Continental Free Trade Agreement as well as engagement with the UK to roll-over the EU-SADC Economic Partnership Agreement to ensure that there is no trade disruption when the UK exits the EU. This is in addition to the implementation of concluded trade agreements with

MERCOSUR, SADC-EU Economic Partnership Agreement, amongst others.

13. As we proceed to implement the SACU Work Programme, we will be guided by the SACU Vision of being “*an economic community with equitable and sustainable development, dedicated to the welfare of its people for a common future*”.
14. In line with this Vision, SACU’s role as a vehicle for deeper regional integration and development cannot be over emphasised; and given its level of integration, it is our view that SACU can play a catalyst role for sustainable growth and development.
15. This could be achieved through the coordination of macroeconomic and structural policies, for promoting industrialization and large-scale investments. Surely, this can provide an impetus for economic growth for our economies by focusing on developing and enhancing the production base for the region.
16. I believe, this ties well with the Ministerial Work Programme that is currently being implemented, particularly the identification of public policy

intervention tools to promote industrialisation and regional value chains as well as exploring the feasibility of a financing mechanism for the regional projects, amongst others.

17. I therefore believe that the successful conclusion of the Ministerial Work Programme, complemented by the requisite instruments and policy interventions to promote industrial development, will allow individual SACU Member States to address their developmental challenges with a view to ensuring sustainable growth.

Your Majesty and Excellencies,

18. Allow me at this point to convey my gratitude to His Excellency President Masisi, for the leadership and guidance that the Secretariat has received during Botswana's term as the Chair of SACU. I look forward to your continued support in that regard.
19. Equally, I wish to express my deep appreciation and thanks to the entire Summit, the SACU Council of Ministers, and members of the SACU Commission for the support provided to the Secretariat.



20. The SACU Secretariat staff or “Team SACU” as we Proudly call ourselves, remains committed and available to serve and to support the Member States and the SACU institutions, to the best of their abilities, in ensuring that the SACU Work Programme is successfully implemented.
  
21. Finally, I also wish to thank all officials involved in organizing this event as well as the officials from the SACU Secretariat for preparing the background documents.

I thank you for your kind attention.