



SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY (SADC) PARLIAMENTARY FORUM

51ST PLENARY ASSEMBLY SESSION

SOLIDARITY STATEMENT FROM CHRISTIAN AID

DELIVERED BY: JOAB OKANDA, PAN AFRICA SENIOR ADVOCACY ADVISOR.

- **President of the SADC Parliamentary Forum and Speaker of the National Assembly of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Hon Christophe Mboso N’kodia Pwanga;**
- **Right Honorable Catherine Gotani Hara, MP – Speaker of the Parliament of Malawi, Host Speaker of the 51st Plenary Assembly Session of the SADC PF;**
- **The Vice President of the SADC Parliamentary Forum, Hon Dr. Fiarovana Lovanirina Celéstin**
- **Honourable Speakers and Heads of Delegations from SADC Member parliaments,**
- **Distinguished Delegates**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen, Good morning.**

First, I would like to thank the SADC Parliamentary Forum for inviting Christian Aid as an observer to the 51st Plenary Assembly hosted by the warm people of Malawi where we have witnessed robust and passionate discussions on how to transform our economies and the lives of the people we represent.

Honorable members, the journey to protecting our dignity and sovereignty has commenced with the adoption of the SADC Model Public Finance Management Law today. The first of its kind in the world. Congratulations!

As Christian Aid, we celebrate this milestone and look forward to walking the journey of implementation with you.

As the Model PFM Law seeks to among other things strengthen the role of Parliamentarians in debt scrutiny, we look forward to working with you, together with our partners at the community and national levels, to challenge our borrowing and spending culture, demand for transparency in debt contracts, and accountability in how the loans are spent; challenge wasteful tax incentives and loopholes that facilitate illicit financial flows out of our continent; call for debt cancellation and reallocation of Special Drawing Rights in a manner that does further press the knee that is already on our necks so that our governments can have a breathing space to invest in social sectors that benefit the most vulnerable in our communities.



Above all, we will continue to demand for the democratization of economic decision-making processes at Global, Regional and National level. At Christian Aid, we believe that we must connect our struggles from national to global levels by demanding for reforms of the Global Financial Architecture that has been rigged against us.

Honorable members, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, we have witnessed, sadly, that the greatest impact of COVID-19 pandemic, the climate induced disasters such as Cyclone Idai, and the Russia-Ukraine conflict has fallen disproportionately on those who were already living in poverty.

The impacts of the triple crises being experienced today is a true reflection of the underlying gaps in how we have raised and managed our public finance - from both a revenue and spending perspective. The structure of global finance, our revenue collection and spending mechanisms continue to trap millions of our people in poverty. Millions of Africans have been pushed into hunger and poverty and there have been countless unnecessary deaths because we did not invest prudently in: public healthcare, transforming our agriculture, protecting workers' rights, renewable energy or provided safety nets for people who can't work.

Honourable members, as the triple crises have demonstrated to us that it is public services that matter most times of crisis, it is time we re-engineer our deeply unfair economies that are enriching an already wealthy minority - at the expense of millions of poor Africans. The adoption of the SADC Model PFM law today is a great starting point of re-engineering our economies. If implemented, it will go a long way in ensuring good governance of our public resources, thus protecting millions of our people who are a crop failure or sickness away from falling into extreme poverty. We must, therefore, with the same passion that has been demonstrated here, domesticate and implement it through our national parliaments.

Distinguished honourable members, this Model PFM Law calls us to be bold in our actions and in our role as people's representatives. We have no choice but to be bold. Bold enough to stem illicit financial flows and prudently invest in transforming our agricultural systems, healthcare, education, and renewable energy. Bold enough to challenge the Executive on public debt management. With such boldness, then we are sure of steering not just our region but the continent to the right path of energy efficiency, sustainability, and self-sufficiency.

As I conclude, I would like to reiterate that this Model PFM law is about our people's dignity, it's about equality, and it's about justice. We must stand together to protect the dignity of the people who elect us.

We look forward to strengthening collaboration between civil society and parliamentarians to strengthen the oversight role of our parliamentarians.

Once again, congratulations on the adoption of the SADC Model Public Finance Management Law.



Asanteni sana
Thank you
Obragado
Merci beaucoup