



**MINISTRY OF FINANCE
PRESS RELEASE**

SADC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS' MEETING
8-13 MARCH 2021

The Meeting of the SADC Council of Ministers was held on the 13th March 2021. The meeting was preceded by meetings of the Standing Committee of Senior Officials and the Finance Committee on 8 to 11 March 2021

The agenda for the meeting included:

1. Status of Finance

This is a standing agenda item under which the Secretariat provides information pertaining to the use of the current year's budget, including the status of payment of Member States' annual contributions. The item also includes presentation for approval of the Secretariat budget for the coming year.

Council approved a total budget for 2021/22 of US\$83,051,565, comprising US\$55,948,442 to be financed by Member States and US\$27,103,123 to be finance by Development Partners. The assessed 2021/22 annual contribution for Lesotho is US\$2,576,870.

Council approved the inclusion in the 2021/2022 budget, allocation for the holding of face-to-face Council and Summit meetings planned for May/June 2021. These meetings were initially planned for March 2021, but had to be postponed on account of the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Update on COVID-19 Pandemic Situation

Council was presented with a summary report on the work of the SADC Committee of Ministers of Health on the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Committee also urged Member States to share lists of accredited laboratories or recognized by governments to facilitate authentication of COVID -19 testing for international travelers; this amid increased reports of fake COVID-19 negative certificates circulating in the region.

3. Commemoration of SADC 40th Anniversary

The Secretariat reported that, as a way of commemoration, they produced two videos highlighting SADC achievements and key milestones. The videos are available on You-tube. The videos were also shared with National Media Coordinators in Member States for wider publicity at the national level.

4. Update on the Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)

The AfCFTA Agreement entered into force on 1 January 2021. Nine SADC Member States have ratified that Agreement, and Council urged those that have not done so, to ratify the Agreement.

ENDS

13th March 2021