



**SPEECH BY THE PERMANENT SECRETARY OF THE MINISTRY
OF HEALTH MOZAMBIQUE**

AT

**THE OPENING OF THE
SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL NETWORK (SARN) GENERAL
COUNCIL MEETING**

03 APRIL 2008

**AVENIDA HOTEL
MAPUTO
MOZAMBIQUE**

- **The Master of Ceremonies**
- **Acting Chairperson of the SARN Steering Committee**
- **Senior Civil Servants**
- **Partners in the Fight against Malaria**
- **Distinguished Delegates**
- **Invited Guests**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**

I feel honoured to have been invited to officiate at this very important occasion. We are indeed privileged as a nation, to host you in this beautiful country of ours, Mozambique.

This has been an important week, not only for the people of Mozambique, but for the whole SADC Region. I say so because since Monday, there have been several meetings which include the SADC Malaria Managers meeting, the SARN Steering Committee meeting and today we play host to the SARN General Council meeting.

As a developing region, which needs the support of the rest of the world to overcome the Malaria challenge, we can still win the fight against Malaria by prioritizing it on our national and regional agendas. It is therefore imperative that we continue to mobilize our people and our own resources to ably sustain this battle.

I am informed that the SADC Malaria Managers have carried out a review of progress made in malaria control by the SADC Member States and finalized the draft SADC Malaria 2007 Report including a

report to the SADC Health Ministers. Furthermore, you discussed issues related to the elimination of malaria in Southern Africa and finalized the SARN Work Plan and budget to be presented to the General council later today.

The SADC Malaria Technical Committee continues to spearhead implementation of key interventions in the region including expansion of cross-border initiatives to the Trans-Zambezi Region. They also continue to lead the implementation of the SADC Malaria Strategic Plan which was approved by the SADC Health Ministers in Malawi in March 2007. At the moment, I am informed, there is the Zambezi Malaria Expedition or River of Life Expedition being carried out by the six Trans-Zambezi countries.

We acknowledge with appreciation the hard work by the SADC-SARN-RBM partnership. I am told that the SARN general Council is a forum of partners in malaria control which continues to grow in strength and numbers in Southern Africa. Let me at this juncture also acknowledge and appreciate the good work that the SADC health sector is doing to foster greater regional integration and development.

Malaria is the second leading cause of morbidity and mortality and a major impediment to socio-economic development in the region. About 300,000 – 400-000 malaria related deaths and 20 million malaria episodes are reported each year in the region. In recognition of these grim facts, SADC Malaria managers and Partners drafted the

SADC Malaria Elimination Strategy Document which was approved by the Ministers in November 2007.

This region has demonstrated that working together in cross border initiatives can yield great results. The first initiative of such a nature is the Lubombo Spatial Development (LSDI) in malaria control involving South Africa, Mozambique and Swaziland. To date, the LSDI has shown malaria case reduction of more than 90% in the implementing areas in South Africa and Swaziland and 70% reduction in Mozambique, compared to the 2000 baseline surveys. You will all agree with me that this is a demonstration of joint efforts between government, private sectors, research institutions and communities and is worthy approach to pursue. We are looking forward to the same successes once this initiative is fully operational.

May I also pay special tribute to our Regional and International Cooperating Partners, RBM Partnership, Business Sector, NGOs, Non-Governmental Organisations, Research Institutions, WHO and other UN Agencies, for the commitment and continued assistance rendered Member States in the SADC region. This commitment has been demonstrated over the years and we can sight successes such as the Rally against Malaria five years ago and the annual commemorations of the SADC Malaria Day in November each year. Partnership has played a role in the fight against malaria and will still do. I look forward to a strong partnership and commitment in the implementation of the SADC Health Agenda through the SARN work plan.

In conclusion, let us take this opportunity to thank the SADC Secretariat for having trust in us by allowing us to host this important meeting. The Government of Mozambique remains committed and will always be at your disposal for hosting such beautiful occasion.

In conclusion, I now declare the 2008 SARN General Assembly Meeting official opened

I thank you for your kind attention!

Muito Obrigado pela Vossa Atenção