



27 March 2025

Communique of the 1st Sitting of the 3rd Southern Africa Youth Parliament

1. The 3rd Southern Africa Youth Parliament (hereafter called the Regional Youth Parliament) held its 1st physical sitting in Johannesburg, Republic of South Africa from 24th to the 28th of March 2025 under the theme, "Empowering Youth for Sustainable Development and Inclusive Governance." The parliament deliberated on a number of issues, recommendations and resolutions.
2. The Southern Africa Youth Parliament was hosted after successful virtual Standing Committee Sessions to consult young people and stakeholders in Southern Africa. The virtual sessions were held from 3rd to the 11th of March 2025.
3. The Regional Youth Parliament was presided over by the Speakers of Parliament Hon. Nsama Patrick Mpundu (Zambia), and Hon. Patience Munyenyembe (Malawi).
4. The Southern Africa Youth Parliament was attended by representatives of the parliament from the following countries: Angola, Botswana, DRC, Kingdom of Eswatini, Madagascar, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The Republic of Comoros was absent.
5. The Regional Youth Parliament was graced by Her Excellency Boemo Ndu Sekgoma the Secretary General of SADC Parliamentary Forum (SADC-PF), who is also the Patron of the Regional Youth Parliament, the delegation of the African Union Commission (Gender, Youth and Women Division), the Chief Mentor of the Regional Youth Parliament Mr. Sheuneni Kurasha, UN Women East and Southern Africa representative Ms. Maureen Shonge, SAYoF Regional Secretariat, youth representatives, representatives' from partner organizations: Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association (ZELA), HIVOS, AMREF, Women of the South Speak Out (WOSSO), Southern Africa Trust (SAT), Action Aid Zambia, Youth For Tax Justice Network, WYDE, Blind SA, and Afro Arab Youth Council (AAYC).
6. The Southern Africa Youth Parliament appreciates the support from Private Sector, African Philanthropies and the African Union Commission that constitute 70% of the support to the hosting of the parliament. The regional parliament also takes note and appreciate foreign support from: WAYDE (Alda Europe, Albarlament.org, People in Need) supported by European Union and European Partners for Democracy. In addition AMREF, ZELA, Youth For Tax Justice Network, WYDE and AAYC.
7. The first and the second day featured capacity strengthening and partner engagements, capacity sessions and panel discussions respectively. These highly informative engagements

have allowed Southern Africa Youth Parliamentarians to learn, unlearn and relearn best practices. The sessions featured a spark talk on Locating the Role of Youth in Policy Making and Regional Governance, capacity building on Youth Policy Advocacy, details on the Africa Union Charter @20 Campaign, Advancing Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights in Eastern and Southern Africa exploring the role of regional SRHR fund, Youth Leadership in Natural Resource Governance, Strengthening Advocacy Strategies for Tobacco Control, launch of the Southern Africa Youth Commission on AfCFTA (SAYOCA), 1 million next level and Opportunities for Youth. The second day featured panels on digital literacy and youth participation in political spaces and additionally a high level panel on effective youth participation.

8. Several deliberations were made on tailoring context specific solutions to the challenges faced in the region, meaningful engagement of grassroots communities, the significance of intergenerational dialogues, understanding that any form of leadership is an epitome to serve, civic education, youth centric policies, youth participation in elections, tech facilitated gender based violence and critical mineral rush within the continent and the impact on communities.

9. The third day convened the Official Plenary Assembly Session of the Southern Africa Youth Parliament, where the Regional Youth Parliament deliberated on critical issues affecting young people across the region. The Regional Youth Parliament received and adopted **Country Reports and Standing Committee Reports**.

10. The House noted, recommended and adopted the following but not limited to:

- I. The Parliament will facilitate the participation of youth in regional programs, skills development, access to information and opportunities. The Regional Parliament will also work with the African Union Commission (AUC) there represented, in facilitating youth opportunities in SADC region. Southern Africa Youth Parliamentarians to support the implementation of the Agenda 2063 and the 1 Million Next Level Initiative across the region and support AU to create 300 million opportunities for young people and finally and Southern Africa Youth Parliament to help review the African Youth Charter, through a collaborative consultative forums.
- II. The Regional Parliament took note of the opportunity offered by SADC-PF to allow the Speaker of Southern Africa Youth Parliament Hon. Nsama Patrick Mpundu to represent the youth parliament and make a presentation during the 56th Assembly of the SADC-PF Plenary Assembly hosted in Zambia. The youth parliament applauded the adoption of the Youth Caucus in SADC-PF as requested by the Southern Africa Youth Parliament during the presentation.
- III. The Regional Youth parliament took note of the challenges such as climate change, lack of representation in critical decision making spaces, limited youth participation in political spaces, unemployment and health crisis and pledged to leverage on existing structures to curb these.
- IV. The house deliberated and agreed on the need for youth friendly healthcare services with integration of HIV and GBV services by the Parliament and SAYoF, and the need to leverage on existing organizations in the region. Leverage on the Regional Strategy for SRHR (2019 to 2030), including comprehensive sexuality education, academic programs within the region to reflect youth needs and align accordingly. To support the above

agendas the parliament took note of pledges made by HIVOS, WOSSO and End Period Poverty Movement.

- V. The Regional Youth Parliament welcomed the pledge by Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association to further engage the Regional Youth Parliament to champion corporate accountability issues within the extractives considering that most countries within the region practice mining and with the critical minerals rush in mind. The Southern Africa Youth Parliament and ZELA to engage youth in the region to become YICA Ambassadors advocating for responsible business conduct and environmental protection.
- VI. Recommendations were made to strengthen collaboration with parliaments in SADC Region and maintain existing relations with SADC-PF.
- VII. Recommendation was made to ensure various Southern Africa Youth Parliament Standing Committees participate in SADC-PF Standing Committees, including effective contribution in Public Sessions for direct influence and engagement. The Regional Youth Parliament will also facilitate the participation of youth in Southern Africa in SADC-PF processes.
- VIII. The parliament acknowledged and agreed on the proposal by SADC-PF for the Joint Commemoration of the International Youth Day.
- IX. The parliament emphasized the Inclusion of Southern Africa Youth Parliamentarians in election observation in the SADC region Member States. The Parliament will also support youth and young women candidates running for elections, including facilitation for capacity building and exchange of best practices. The parliament appreciates the pledge by UN Women East and Southern Africa to capacitate parliamentarians on tech based gender based violence.
- X. The Regional Youth Parliament urged SAYoF in collaboration with SADC-PF and other relevant partners to establish a SADC Civic Leadership Programme, a structured initiative offering capacity-building sessions, workshops, and webinars to enhance youth political literacy, civic engagement, entrepreneurship and leadership skills. The resolution anchored the outcome of the 6th Southern Africa Youth Forum hosted in Harare, Zimbabwe to establish a Pan-African Youth Fellowship Leadership Program. The house also adopted motions from partners such as Africa Union on the institutionalization of the youth parliament through collaborative with other inter-regional platforms,
- XI. Additionally, the Southern Africa Youth Parliamentarians agreed to have an ad-hoc committee consisting of one member from each standing committee to work with SAYoF Media, Advocacy and Communications team to assist in website revamp, create a digital SADC Youth Engagement Platform a dynamic online space connecting SADC Region youths to opportunities, policy dialogue, knowledge exchange, and real-time advocacy.

The Speaker of Parliament, thanked everyone who attended the 1st Sitting of the 3rd Parliament.

Done in Johannesburg, Republic of South Africa from **24 to 28 March 2025**, all texts being equally authentic.

#SouthernAfricaYouth

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