



Joint SADC PF and INTER PARES Workshop

ENHANCING PARLIAMENTS' ROLE IN DEFENDING AND PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Concept Note

Parliaments play a central role in the promotion and protection of human rights. They are responsible for, *inter alia*, ratification of human rights treaties and adoption of enabling legislation at national level, ensuring that sufficient funds are provided for human rights implementation and overseeing governments' activities in the field. Parliaments also have significant potential to support the international human rights system and improve the implementation of internationally recognised standards at the domestic level.

The Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC PF) is an important actor in promoting the principles of human rights in the work of parliaments in the region. Among many of its activities, the institution has recently developed the ***Guidelines for Parliaments in the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the SADC region***, validated and approved in February 2023, paving the way for their subsequent dissemination and domestication.

The role of Parliaments in promoting and protecting human rights is a thematic priority for the International IDEA within its INTER PARES I Parliaments in Partnership programme, funded by the European Union. In September 2022, the programme launched a ***Toolkit on Effective Human Rights Engagement for Parliamentary Bodies***, which brings together international best practices on enhancing the role of parliaments in advancing human rights. INTER PARES will be soon complementing the Toolkit with an *online course on parliaments and human rights* which will be hosted at AGORA Portal for Parliamentary Development.

In order to strengthen networks on parliamentary development and inter-parliamentary cooperation in human rights field, INTER PARES and SADC PF are organizing a ***Joint Regional Workshop on Enhancing Parliaments' Role in Defending and Promoting Human Rights in Southern Africa***.

The Joint Workshop will take place on ***8-9 November 2023 in Lilongwe, Malawi***. It is a hybrid event and will gather the members of the SADC PF Standing Committee on Democratisation, Governance and Human Rights as well as Members of the EU Member States Parliaments and renowned experts of the field. The workshop aims to:

- Enhance the knowledge of parliaments on innovative developments in parliamentary engagements with human rights protection and promotion by facilitating mutual learning between the national parliaments of EU Member States and SADC PF.
- Introduce the mentioned knowledge materials in the field and create a platform for Parliamentarians to share practical examples of good practices across the regions for learning and benchmarking.

The Workshop is organized by INTER PARES in cooperation with the SADC PF, and hosted by the Parliament of Malawi.

PROGRAMME

For in-person attendance:
UFULU GARDENS HOTEL
43/365, Ufulu Road, PO Box
30727, Lilongwe

For online engagement,
use [Zoom Platform](#):
Meeting ID: 870 5947 5440
Passcode: 781835

DAY 1

Wednesday, November 8, 2023

Time in the Agenda is indicated both in **Central African Time (CAT)**
and **Central European Time (CET)**.

08:30 – 09:00 CAT	Registration of Participants
OFFICIAL OPENING	
09:00 – 09:30 CAT 08:00 – 08:30 CET	<p>Her Excellency Madam Boemo Sekgoma, Secretary General of the SADC Parliamentary Forum</p> <p>Mr. Ivo Hoefkens, Head of Cooperation, European Union Delegation to the Republic of Malawi</p> <p>Dr Jonathan Murphy, Head of Programme, INTER PARES, International IDEA</p> <p>Dr Roba Sharamo, Regional Director for Africa and West Asia, International IDEA (<i>online intervention</i>)</p> <p>Hon. Tendai Nyabani, Chairperson of the SADC PF Standing Committee on Democratisation, Governance and Human Rights, Zimbabwe</p> <p>Keynote and Official Opening Address by Rt. Honourable Catherine Gotani Hara, Speaker of the Parliament of Malawi</p>
09:30 – 09:45 CAT 08:30 – 08:45 CET	<p>Introductions, Expected Outcomes and Overview of Agenda</p> <p>Mr Sheuneni Kurasha, SADC PF Programme Manager, Democracy, Governance and Human Rights</p>
09:45 – 10:15 CAT	GROUP PHOTOGRAPHY & COFFEE BREAK

SESSION I: SETTING THE SCENE

10:15 – 11:15 CAT

09:15 – 10:15 CET

SADCPF Guidelines



INTER PARES Toolkit



- ***SADC PF's Trendsetting Role in Parliaments and Human Rights & Profiling the Principles and Guidelines for Parliaments in the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the SADC region***

Mr Sheuneni Kurasha, SADC PF Programme Manager, Democracy Governance & Human Rights

Dr Landilani Banda, Legal Practitioner & Drafter of the SADC PF Principles & Guidelines

- ***Trends and opportunities for parliamentary engagement in human rights in Europe and around the world***

Dr Kirsten Roberts Lyer, Professor, Central European University, human rights practitioner and author of INTER PARES Toolkit on Effective Human Rights Engagement for Parliamentary Bodies (*online intervention*)

Q & A and Reflections from participants

SESSION II: FROM PRINCIPLES TO ACTION – PUTTING PARLIAMENTS AT THE PULSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

11:15 – 12:15 CAT

10:15 – 11:15 CET

Discussion Panel One: Establishing and Strengthening Parliamentary Human Rights Committees

- ***Mandate, composition and working methods:*** the powers of the committee should be clearly established in law, in parliament's rules and made publicly available.

Hon. Utaara Mootu, SADC PF DGHR Member, Namibia

Hon. Milorad Pupovac, Chairperson of the Committee on Human and National Minority Rights, Parliament of Croatia (*online intervention*)

- Responsibilities and functions: a clear mission statement to help ensure effectiveness and legitimacy.

Hon. Cláudia Santos, Vice-President of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, Rights, Freedoms and Guarantees, Parliament of Portugal (*online intervention*)

- Ensure human and financial resources and support

Hon. Jerónima Agostinho SADC PF DGHR Member, Mozambique

Panel moderated by **Dr Jonathan Murphy**, Head of Programme, INTER PARES, International IDEA

12:15 – 13:30 CAT

11:15 – 12:30 CET

LUNCH BREAK

SESSION II CONTINUES...

13:30 – 14:45 CAT

12:30 – 13:45 CET

Discussion Panel Two: Sensitising Parliamentarians on their role to safeguard human rights (law-making)

- when preparing national legislation

Mr. Adam Bodnar, Former Polish Ombudsman for Citizens Rights; elected to the Senate of the Parliament of Poland in October 2023 (*online intervention*)

- when deciding on the national budget

Hon. Richard Labrosse, SADC PF DGHR Member, Seychelles

- when ratifying international/regional conventions

Hon. Darren Bergman, SADC PF DGHR Member, South Africa

Panel moderated by **Ms Maureen Shonge**, Regional Policy Specialist – Women’s Political Participation, UN Women Eastern and Southern Africa Region (ESARO)

14:45 – 15:15 CAT

13:45 – 14:15 CET

COFFEE BREAK

15:15 – 16:30 CAT

14:15 – 15:30 CET

Discussion Panel Three: Sensitising Parliamentarians on their role to safeguard human rights (oversight)

Hon. Leonard Mwalwanda, SADC PF DGHR Member, Malawi

Hon. Erik Ottoson, Deputy Chairperson of the Committee on the Constitution, Parliament of Sweden (*online intervention*)

JUDr. Eduard Csudai, PhD, Head of Secretariat, Committee on Human Rights and National Minorities, National Council of the Slovak Republic (*online intervention*)

*Panel Moderated by **Mr Gram Matenga**, Programme Manager, International IDEA*

18:00 – 19:30 CAT

17:00 – 18:30 CET

RECEPTION

DAY 2

Thursday, November 9, 2023

For online engagement,
use [Zoom Platform](#):
Meeting ID: 870 5947 5440
Passcode: 781835

SESSION III: SPECIFIC THEMES IN PARLIAMENTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

10:00 – 10:30 CAT

09:00 – 09:30 CET

Recap of Previous Day and assignment of participants to groups

- **Mr Sheuneni Kurasha**, SADC PF & **Ms Sophie Guruli**, INTER PARES, International IDEA

WORKING GROUP DISCUSSIONS (PARALLEL SESSIONS)

10:30 – 12:00 CAT

09:30 – 11:00 CET

Group A (Hybrid Session): The role of regional parliamentary bodies and regional governance institutions in fostering and advancing human rights

- Practical challenges and innovative approaches to the promotion and protection of human rights in the SADC region and the European Union
- How is the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights implemented in the different countries in the region? Sharing best practices between parliaments in the region.
- Taking part in regional parliamentary assemblies dealing with human rights: SADC Parliamentary Forum, the European Parliament and the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) as three examples of regional parliamentary bodies dealing with human rights.
 - **SADC PF DGHR Members** with contributions from:
 - **Mr Stefan Krauss**, Head of Human Rights Action Unit, European Parliament
 - **Dr Kirsten Roberts Lyer**, Professor, Central European University, human rights practitioner and author INTER PARES Toolkit on Effective Human Rights Engagement for Parliamentary Bodies

Discussion moderated by **Mr Sheuneni Kurasha**, SADC PF

Group B (In-person Session): Parliamentary Inclusion

- Access to parliamentary venues for disabled persons: the parliamentary building is an important symbol as being the house where elected representatives work. Both MPs, staff and visitors, no matter if they have disabilities, should be able to enter that building physically.
- People with hearing or visual impairment should also have access to legislative documents and be able to follow political debates in the chamber. Discussion on possible technical and physical ways to handle this.
- Representation of women and minorities in the parliament: What actions can be taken to enable women and minorities to work as MPs on the same conditions as male MPs?

*Discussion moderated by **Dr Landilani Banda**, Legal Practitioner & Drafter of the SADC PF Principles & Guidelines*

12:15 – 13:30 CAT

11:15 – 12:30 CET

LUNCH BREAK

REPORTING BACK FROM WORKING GROUPS AND NEXT STEPS

13:30 – 14:30 CAT

12:30 – 13:30 CET

- ✓ Reporting back from working groups
- ✓ Presentation of the draft Communiqué for the Regional Joint Workshop
- ✓ Next Steps

14:30 – 15:00 CAT

13:30 – 14:00 CET

Closing Ceremony

- ✓ Vote of thanks by a representative of the Participants
- ✓ Closing Remarks by **Hon. Tendai Nyabani**, Chairperson of the SADC PF Standing Committee on Democratisation, Governance and Human Rights & **Dr Jonathan Murphy**, Head of Programme, INTER PARES, International IDEA
- ✓ End of Joint Regional Workshop



THANK YOU

FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE JOINT REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON ENHANCING PARLIAMENTS' ROLE IN DEFENDING AND PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

We would appreciate if you could share your feedback about the workshop by filling in the Post-Event Evaluation Survey, which you can download from the QR Code below:

