

# SADC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM

Parliament Gardens • Erf 578 Love Street  
Private Bag 13361 • Windhoek • NAMIBIA  
Tel.: 264-61-287 0000 • E-mail: info@sadcpf.org  
Website: www.sadcpf.org



*All official correspondence should be addressed to the Secretary General*

## **STATEMENT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD 11<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2024**

Dear representatives of Member Parliaments, Civil Society Organisations and other partners,

It is with overwhelming pleasure and honour that I release this Statement on the occasion of the International Day of the Girl Child.

In this respect, the Forum fully associates itself with the UN theme for this year that relates to “Girls’ Vision for the Future” which demonstrates the need for Parliaments and Governments to prepare an inclusive future which is accommodative of the voices of young girls, teenagers and women at all levels, especially where decision-making roles are involved. Girl children in Africa and elsewhere are allowed to be planners, visionaries, and even dreamers who aspire for the future that they want in a conducive society that is respectful of gender equality and equal opportunities.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, practices such as child marriages and betrothals, Female Genital Mutilations (FGM), school dropouts due to menstruation or early pregnancies, to cite but a few, are abhorrent to a democracy and to the development of girls in Africa. In this respect, the Forum relentlessly advocates for the domestication of the SADC Model Law on Child Marriage, the SADC Model Law on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and the SADC Model Law on Public Financial Management (PFM) which impose financial discipline on Member States to promote the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the yearly budget exercise.

Despite the above measures, there are still enduring divides in legal and regulatory frameworks concerning protection of girls in Africa. Yet, the protection of girls is not an option, it is a must and constitutes a baseline without which socio-economic development will continue to lag behind. It is trite that a society which does not recognize the merits of girl children will be vowed to failure.

For its part, the Forum will continue to work closely and consistently with its Member Parliaments and partners to ensure that laws and policies regarding child protection are progressively domesticated to create the coveted Vision that we want for our children.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Boemo M Sekgoma', is positioned below the text 'Yours sincerely,'.

**Boemo M SEKGOMA**  
**SECRETARY GENERAL**