

SADC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM

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10th December 2024

STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE SADC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM ON HUMAN RIGHTS DAY 2024

Dear Members, Parliamentarians and Partners,

It is with esteem and honour that I release this Statement on Human Rights Day 2024, a day that is cardinal to the Strategic initiatives of the SADC Parliamentary Forum.

The Forum associates itself with the theme espoused by the international community “Our Rights, Our Future, Right Now” which demonstrates the urgent need for action to implement and enforce human rights. Today, human rights are all often repressed with limitations of freedom and liberty which are not in accordance with human rights principles and practice. Moreover, most SADC Member States have a constitution which enshrines civil and political human rights, and despite their constitutional value, human rights are still being violated on a daily basis.

Through its Strategic Plan (2024-2028), the Forum spotlights the implementation of both civil and political rights, and socio-economic human rights which are interdependent and interconnected with one another. The right to health, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, has been severely under threat in the last years. Access to essential medicines is still a far reality in remote locations or is simply unaffordable. The appreciation of foreign currencies has also caused the price of imported medicines to escalate, hitting drastically the consumer market in Southern Africa. The Forum advocates for Governments to promote price stability on SRHR commodities and to ensure that essential medicines are available and accessible to all, without discrimination, especially key populations which are often left behind.

The Forum will continue to build the capacity of Parliamentarians to champion human rights implemented in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the SADC Model Laws as well as generally accepted human rights treaties ratified by SADC nations.

Yours sincerely,

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

**H.E Boemo M SEKGOMA (Ms)
SECRETARY GENERAL**