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SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT  
COORDINATION CONFERENCE

Second SADCC Summit in Salisbury

20 July 1981

Background

On 1 April 1980, the Governments of nine independent states in Southern Africa issued a declaration in Lusaka. It began: "We, the undersigned as the Heads of Government of majority-ruled States in Southern Africa, offer this declaration to our own peoples, to the peoples and Governments of the many countries who are interested in promoting popular welfare, justice and peace in Southern Africa and to the international agencies who share this interest. In it we state our commitment to pursue policies aimed at the economic liberation and integrated development of our national economies."

The Declaration established the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) as a permanent body. SADCC has nine member states: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. They have all been in varying degrees integrated into a regional economic system centering on the Republic of South Africa. This dependence fragments and restrains their national economies, and places too much influence in the hands of those who do not wish them well.

In July 1979, the first SADCC Conference was called in Arusha by the Front Line States, as a direct move to extend the struggle for liberation from the political to the economic sphere. It marked the beginning of international co-operation to develop and reorient the economic structure of the region. It was followed by the first SADCC summit in Lusaka in April 1980, which besides adopting the SADCC Declaration, also decided on a plan of action.

It has been axiomatic from the start that, in the words of the Chairman's opening speech at Lusaka, co-operation is "built on concrete projects and specific programmes rather than on grandiose schemes and massive bureaucratic institutions." The summit accordingly identified areas where regional co-operation was most urgent and would be most fruitful. The most important was transport and communications, and a Southern Africa Transport and Communications Commission was set up in Maputo. The other

priority areas were food security, animal health, crop research, manpower development, industrial development, energy and a Southern African development fund. Responsibility for co-ordination and identification of projects in each area was assigned to a particular member state. Summit meetings of Heads of Government have the ultimate decision-making powers; between summits a Council of Ministers exercises control.

By November 1980, SADCC was ready to discuss its plans with the international community, and the second SADCC Conference was convened in Maputo. Besides member states, regional and global agencies such as the OAU, the EEC, UNDP and the World Bank were represented along with 30 other countries from five continents. The opportunities and mutual benefits in co-operation between SADCC and the international community were discussed. Besides an overall development strategy, SADCC put forward project outlines, concentrating on transport and communications. The international response was encouraging; more than 650 million dollars was pledged for SADCC projects, with other offers of unspecified amounts.

The conference at Arusha, Lusaka and Maputo have established the framework and set the direction for SADCC activities in the years ahead. Two books published this week document SADCC aims and achievements. The records of the Arusha and Lusaka meetings are published by Rex Collings Ltd., and the record of the Maputo meeting by SADCC itself. They include not merely decisions of the meetings themselves, but also important policy speeches by Heads of Government, essential strategy papers, information on particular projects, and the response of the international community. The Arusha book has a long introduction by SADCC's first Chairman, the late President Seretse Khama of Botswana, written shortly before his untimely death, explaining the purpose and role of SADCC in considerable detail.

Whilst SADCC has been growing, the international climate has become more threatening. Superpower rivalry has increased. On Namibia, South Africa sabotaged the Geneva conference and remains intransigent. South Africa's armed incursions into SADCC states have increased in both frequency and intensity and have been augmented by moves to undermine their economic stability. On a wider front, SADCC countries have suffered from the world recession, with falling terms of trade and severe balance of payments problems.

In the face of these difficulties, SADCC affirms the region's resolve to take control of its own destiny and to act positively. It has made considerable progress at the practical level. Of the 97 transport and communications projects outlined at Maputo, 22 are now underway, 25 are under appraisal by co-operating countries or agencies and detailed project designations will have

been prepared for a further 20 by mid-September. Plans of action have been developed for all the other priority areas. In several cases, such as the establishment of dry land crop research capacity, detailed proposals have been discussed with international or bilateral agencies; to take another example, data is being collected on the scope for trade in industrial products and inputs.

SADCC has voluntarily committed itself to an annual meeting to review progress with the international agencies and industrialised and industrialising countries who have pledged their support. The next such meeting will be held in Blantyre, Malawi, from 19 - 20 November 1981.

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Southern Africa: Toward Economic Liberation - Papers presented at the Arusha and Lusaka Meetings of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), London, Rex Collings, 1981

Available from Rex Collings, 6 Paddington Street, London W1

SADCC2-Maputo - The Proceedings of the Second Southern African Development Coordination Conference held in Maputo, People's Republic of Mozambique, 27/28 November 1980, London, SADCC, 1981.

Available from SADCC, 1 Cambridge Terrace, London NW1