



**54<sup>TH</sup> PLENARY ASSEMBLY SESSION OF THE**  
**SADC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM**

**Hosted by the National Assembly of Mauritius**

From 22<sup>nd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> November 2023

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**SPEECH**

By Hon. Sooroojdev Phokeer, GCSK, GOSK,  
Speaker of the National Assembly  
Republic of Mauritius

**Theme:**

**“The Role of Parliaments in Promoting  
Coordination for Enhanced Disaster Risk  
Reduction and Recovery Planning in the  
SADC Region”**

**Venue: Sir Harilal Vaghjee Memorial Hall,  
Government House, Port Louis**

Date: 22 November 2023

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**Hon Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, Prime Minister  
and Guest of Honour,**

**Hon. Roger Mancienne, President of the SADC-  
PF,**

**Hon. Speakers and Presiding Officers from  
Member Parliaments,**

**Hon. Ministers,**

**Hon. Members of Parliament**

**Members of Diplomatic Corps**

**Ms Boemo Sekgoma, Secretary General of the  
SADC-PF,**

**Distinguished Guests & Participants,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**Good morning,**

**It is a singular honour for the Republic of Mauritius and the National Assembly as a valuable partner of the SADC PF to host the 54<sup>th</sup> Plenary Assembly of the SADC Parliamentary Forum.**

**As Speaker of the National Assembly, I extend a warm welcome to all delegates. The Plenary Assembly gives us the opportunity to pursue regional cooperation. We are fully conscious that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, inter-parliamentary democracy plays a cardinal role in international relations and that parliaments are also expected to contribute to the regional integration agenda.**

**As an active participant in SADC's activities and initiatives, Mauritius contributes to regional cooperation in various sectors, including trade, economic development, regional integration and climate issues.**

**The theme for this Assembly:-  
“The Role of Parliaments in Promoting  
Coordination for Enhanced Disaster Risk  
Reduction and Recovery Planning in the SADC  
Region”, I must say, comes at an opportune  
time.**

**Climate-related extreme catastrophes have  
become a growing concern for many countries  
in recent years due to the ongoing effects of  
climate change.**

**Unpredictable and extreme weather events are  
disrupting daily lives and causing significant  
damages to infrastructures and having a toll on  
the economy of affected countries.**

**Distinguished Delegates,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**The theme, which is cross-cutting with climate change and disaster preparedness, demonstrates clearly the transboundary nature of certain regional issues, which require Parliamentarians of different jurisdictions to deliberate and exchange views for an enhanced and informed parliamentary delivery at the national level.**

**This is why, I believe, regional and international efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change are essential when addressing these catastrophes.**

**Mauritius has had its own share of challenges related to natural disasters, particularly flash floods, landslides, and cyclones, which have caused significant damage.**

**It is my firm conviction that the Plenary will play a crucial role in promoting coordination within the SADC region and will come up with insightful suggestions for prompt actions to address complex challenges posed by natural disasters and climate change.**

**Having said so, I will now say a few words on the business of this august Plenary Assembly. I wish to underscore that the Plenary Assembly will also address other key topics which are fundamental to the region through the tabling of Reports of Standing Committees which are the driving engines of the SADC PF in relation to thematic advancement.**

**In particular, reports relating to issues such as gender equality, women representation, democratization, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and access to resources, to cite a few, will be considered during this session.**

**Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**This Plenary Assembly will thus consider a diversified set of satellite themes together with the main theme of disaster risk reduction and recovery planning, all of which are very significant to socio-economic empowerment in the SADC region.**

**I wish to end by encouraging delegates to interact and deliberate on the topics under discussion in view of assisting this august Assembly to develop constructive and actionable resolutions that will guide Member Parliaments and Line Ministries accordingly.**

**It has been a pleasure to collaborate with delegates of the SADC PF and we are confident that the holding of this Plenary Assembly will go further to reinforce the robust bonds of solidarity and congeniality that we share with one another under the auspices of the Forum.**

**We look forward to many more fruitful years of inter-parliamentary cooperation across Southern Africa and to hosting further events of the SADC PF.**

**On this note, I wish the Assembly fruitful deliberations.**

**I thank you for your attention.**

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*Updated on Tuesday 21 Nov 2023*