

All official correspondence should be addressed to the Secretary General

**STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL
ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE
20 FEBRUARY 2026**

It is with immense pleasure that I release this Statement to Member Parliaments, partners and other stakeholders to commemorate the International Day of Social Justice.

Today, we acknowledge that the enjoyment of social justice is a fundamental norm which is grounded in international human rights law and which is intertwined with human dignity. Social justice refers to the range of processes involved to bring equality to society, despite the inherent differences and diversity which prevail between individuals and communities alike. In this respect, the Forum associates itself fully with the UN theme for 2026 which is “**Renewed Commitment to Social Development and Social Justice**” which reflects the commitments taken under the Doha Political Declaration 2025 and the earlier Copenhagen Declaration in 1995 whereby poverty eradication, decent employment and social inclusion were outlined as the supporting pillars of social development.

In the SADC region, the Forum entreats Parliaments to continue promoting the right to work which is consecrated at Article 7 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights and Article 6 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. In this respect, the implementation of sound employment policies can go a long way to promote decent work practices, fair and equal remuneration for employees, fair conditions of work such as sufficient leaves and time-off, as well as effective protection against occupational hazards, thus enhancing social inclusion which undergirds the Doha Declaration. The Forum encourages a rights-based approach which is grounded in guidance from international instruments, especially from the labour conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). We are cognisant that in Southern Africa, over thirty percent of the women workforce are still in informal employment which undermines the stability of their households and expectations of long-term gain, thus making social justice difficult to entrench.

The Forum continues to consistently promote social justice *via* the domestication of its enabling Model Laws, including the SADC Model Law on Public Financial Management which epitomises good governance at all levels, including in ensuring social inclusion, social justice and eradicating corruption. The progressive and steady implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are also a dependable way of achieving social inclusion, especially SDG 3 on health and well-being and SDG 5 on gender equality.

In line with SADC Vision 2050 and Africa Agenda 2063, the Forum remains at the forefront of initiatives to promote social justice in all its facets and is singularly committed to elevating the capacity of Parliaments to achieve this noble objective.

Yours sincerely,



**Boemo M SEKGOMA (Ms)
SECRETARY GENERAL**

