

AMBASSADE DE LA REPUBLIQUE
DE MOZAMBIQUE

ET MISSION PERMANENTE
AUPRES DE L'UNION EUROPÉENNE



EMBAIXADA DA REPÚBLICA
DE MOÇAMBIQUE

E MISSÃO PERMANENTE
JUNTO À UNIÃO EUROPEIA

Brussels, 07 May 2021

Ref. n° 07/EMB-BRU/21

Excellency,

On behalf of the Brussels based SADC Group of Ambassadors, I have the honour to submit the attached SADC Group of Ambassadors' standpoint on the proposed Motion for a European Parliament Resolution on the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, with particular reference to the paragraph 28.

I take this opportunity to renew to Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Berta Celestino Cossa'.

Berta Celestino Cossa
Ambassador
Chair of the SADC Group



His Excellency
Hon Mr. César Luena, MEP
Rapporteur of the Committee on the Environment,
Public Health and Food Safety
European Parliament
Brussels

SADC-BASED GROUP OF AMBASSADORS' STANDPOINT ON THE PROPOSED MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION ON THE EU BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY FOR 2030 – IN PARTICULAR PARAGRAPH 28

We, the undersigned Ambassadors of various SADC States in Brussels, have taken note of the Draft Report on the proposed Motion for an European Parliament Resolution on the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030: Bringing nature back into our lives (2020/0000(INI)) by the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI). Having considered the proposed Motion, we are writing to express our concern about Paragraph 28 which:

“Reiterates its call for a full ban on the trade in both raw and worked ivory to, from and within the EU, including ‘pre-convention’ ivory and rhino horns, and asks for similar restrictions for other endangered species, such as tigers;”.

While we respect and commend your Committee’s efforts to protect and restore biodiversity globally, it is our view that Paragraph 28 is misguided, disproportionate and excessive in that it goes beyond what is necessary in order to protect global wildlife populations. Paragraph 28 fails to distinguish between legal and illegal wildlife trade and therefore risks criminalizing all trade in wildlife even where it is sustainable and legal. Furthermore, by failing to differentiate between the commercial and non-commercial trade in ivory, Paragraph 28 appears to endorse a blanket ban on the importation of hunting trophies which are considered personal effects.

We would also like to draw your attention to the fact that our countries have demonstrated international leadership and achieved proven success in the area of conservation and wildlife stewardship. Through science-based wildlife management programmes, we have managed to both stabilize and increase various key wildlife populations/species.

Paragraph 28 also fails to recognize the vital revenue that is generated through sustainable hunting and associated conservation programmes, particularly in and for our rural communities. Our economies have been hit hard by the prevailing Covid-19 pandemic, and licensed and otherwise controlled hunting will play a vital role in the recovery of our tourism industries. We are thus disappointed by the fact that a proposal is being entertained which will threaten Africa’s wildlife economic recovery during a time of unprecedented economic and social dislocation, particularly for already vulnerable communities which derive essential income from regulated hunting activities.

As Brussels based Ambassadors, we would like to take this opportunity to reiterate our determination to work with the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety in a constructive manner and plan to provide you with more detailed information about our position in the coming days and weeks.

We would appreciate the opportunity to discuss these issues with you in person at your earliest convenience and herewith request a meeting with ENVI. Following the EU Parliament's endorsement of a new EU – Africa partnership which envisions a deeper relationship between our two continents and cooperation on equal terms, we hope that your Committee will act in the spirit of this new partnership and engage in an inclusive and open dialogue with us.

Yours sincerely,

Ambassador of the Republic of Angola

Miguel Naveiro A. Costa

Ambassador of the Republic of Mozambique

Beck Carr

Ambassador of the Republic of Botswana

Phetole S.O. Outthole

Ambassador of the Republic of Namibia

M. Kaopanda

Ambassador of the Kingdom of Eswatini

S. Mkhombedli

Ambassador of the Republic of the Republic of South Africa

TOKOZILE XASA

Ambassador of the Kingdom of Lesotho

Mokhe PANTSO SEKATE

Ambassador of the United Republic of Tanzania

JESIAS A. NYAMANGA

Ambassador of the Republic of Madagascar

BERIZIKY Jean-Omer

Ambassador of the Republic of Zambia

Prof Esther Munalula NKandu

Ambassador of the Republic of Malawi

Tedson AUBREY KALEBE

Chargé d' Affaires of the Republic of Zimbabwe

LINDY S. CHENGA

Brussel, 11 May 2021