



**Closing Remarks by Hon. Agnes Limbo, Chairperson of the SADC PF Standing Committee on Democratisation, Governance and Human Rights and Member of Parliament from Namibia during the High Level Seminar on Peace, Security and Sustainable Development: *The role of Parliaments in tackling the Root Causes and Consequences of Violent Extremism and Terrorism* held at the Belgian Senate Chamber in Brussels, Belgium on 8 and 9 October 2015**

Let me start by thanking AWEPA President Ms Miet Smet for convening this high level seminar where we as Parliamentarians from Africa and Europe have had the opportunity to interface with different partners in tackling challenges on peace, security and sustainable development.

I am sure I am speaking for the majority of you when I say that the robust deliberations we have had from yesterday have exposed us to new knowledge on these very complex issues. The new knowledge has in many ways challenged the assumptions and stereotypes that tend to dominate the discourse on violent extremism and terrorism. This has enabled us to dig deeper in exploring the root causes, consequences and possible responses to the global challenge of violent extremism and terrorism, in particular what we can do as parliamentarians.

As the representatives of the people we must advocate more for more engagement and dialogue oriented solutions to the challenges of violent extremism and terrorism at national, regional and international levels.

We must make full use of our legislative, oversight and representation mandates to ensure we establish systems and structures of government that are more inclusive, responsive and therefore credible so that no one feels excluded, marginalised or deprived. MPs from Africa and Europe should for instance, share experiences on the advantages of different electoral systems and encourage Member States to embrace positive elements of the different electoral systems in order to ensure inclusive outcomes where women, youths and minority groups are fairly represented. As we know, the credibility of elections is critical in ensuring peace and stability which are necessary conditions for the economic development of our countries. Where the integrity

of elections is compromised, it goes without say that the legitimacy of democracy is also compromised.

As I conclude, I wish to commend the deliberate involvement of parliamentarians in the post-2015 development agenda. Parliamentarians have a crucial role to play in the implementation of SDGs. There is therefore, need to find a structured mechanism of aligning the SDGs and their targets with regional and national development plans. This will make the monitoring of their implementation smooth as it will be synchronised with Parliaments' oversight mandates and programmes at regional and national levels.

I am glad to inform this august gathering that the SADC Parliamentary Forum has already started mainstreaming SDGs into its programmes and will also work to help national Parliaments in the Region do the same.

Accordingly, the theme for the SADC PF's 38<sup>th</sup> Plenary Assembly Session which will be hosted by the Parliament of Namibia in Swakopmund in Namibia from 20 to 24 November 2015, is ***"From MDGs to SDGs: Towards A Greater Parliamentary Role in the Development Agenda."***

We have invited partners like the UN Millennium Campaign and AWEPA to come and address the Plenary Assembly on this theme.

Let me end by urging all the partners that are present here to take home the declaration we have just adopted and take practical steps to operationalise the recommendations therein for the benefit of our citizens.

I thank you.