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MEDIA STATEMENT

South Africa hosted the joint meeting of SADC Ministers of Energy and Water

Programme Director

Honourable Minister Gugile Nkwinti, of Water and Sanitation of the Republic of South Africa

Ambassador Thembisile Majola and the Deputy Minister of Energy, of the Republic of South Africa

Honourable Ministers of Energy from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Member States,

Honourable Ministers of Water from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Member States,

Dr Thembinkosi Mhlongo, Deputy Executive Secretary of SADC

Distinguished guests,

Members of the Media

South Africa has been privileged to host the joint meeting of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Ministers responsible for Energy and Water from 26-27 June 2018 here in Johannesburg. Attended by Ministers and senior officials from most of the countries of the regional body, the meeting discussed matters of

primary interest in terms of the energy and water nexus which are of primary importance in the economic develop of the region.

The objectives of this meeting, will serve as inputs from the Energy and Water sectors at the 38th Summit due in August 2018. They were to review progress in the implementation of the decisions of Ministers at their last meetings; consider progress in the implementation of the energy and water programmes and projects; and to also deliberate on and give guidance on the security of energy and water supply, to ensure food security and economic and industrial development in the SADC region as per the request of the Chairperson of the Summit.

The meetings set out to solicit inputs from member states' Ministers in terms of how to achieve efficient, seamless, integrated and cost-effective cross-boundary infrastructure networks and services.

The South African Government embraces the Nexus Approach since it calls for integrated planning amongst sectors. It is thus important that proper planning of the development, utilisation and management of these resources is prioritised and done in an integrated manner.

Water and energy are critical resources that are reciprocally and mutually linked. Meeting energy needs depends upon the availability of water, often in large quantities, for mineral extraction and mining, fuel production, hydropower, and thermoelectric power plant cooling. Likewise, energy is required for the pumping, conveyance, treatment and conditioning, and distribution of water and for collection, treatment, and discharge of waste water. This interdependence is often described as the water-energy nexus. In the region, both energy and water are

strategic resources that are fundamental to the economic development, industrialisation and creation of much needed jobs in a region characterised by high levels of unemployment especially among our youth.

The SADC region has a powerful and stable emerging economy where the role of energy is critical to the success of achieving macroeconomic goals such as real economic growth. The strategic importance of providing accessible, affordable electricity and competitively-priced transport fuels are critical for sustained industrial growth. The regional political stability, progressive economic policies and the managed liberalisation of core sectors of the economy have established the sound political economic base from which to stimulate economic growth.

Water is needed across a wide spectrum of services, including tourism, energy generation, irrigation, maintaining ecosystems' integrity, stock watering, mining and industrial activities, to name but a few. To supply water to these various needs, energy is key.

In addition, the SADC Energy Ministers conducted a regional gas infrastructure and market development workshop which looked at all aspects of the development of the Gas sector as an important area of development for the SADC region that will promote economic development. The workshop provided us with a perspective on the potential of gas in the region. We were indeed challenged to develop the sector and we need to move with speed to ensure that we develop a gas development plan for the region.

The Ministerial Gas workshop also highlighted the potential contribution of gas in our energy and water scarce region, especially considering that clean energy has a direct bearing on the quality of water at source.

I urge all the SADC Member States to support and promote the development of the regional Gas Masterplan and move to the implementation of these big ideas. Funding can be mobilised at both multilateral and development finance institutions.

We need to ensure that we eradicate energy poverty and also ensure access to clean and safe water.

In closing ladies and gentlemen, note that the SADC Secretariat will communicate the outcomes of the ministerial meeting at a suitable time.

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