

**REMARKS ON THE OBJECTIVES OF THE FORUM
BY MR. MUSSA CHIWAULA**

**DIRECTOR GENERAL, SOUTHERN AFRICA FEDERATION OF THE
DISABLED (SAFOD)**

**AT THE SOUTHERN AFRICA DISABILITY ROUNDTABLE FORUM
20-23 JUNE 2017, HOLIDAY INN, JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA**

- 1. Our Gust Honor, Ms. Hendrietta Bogopane-Zulu, MP,
Deputy Minister of Social Development, South Africa**

- 2. Mr. Mzolisi ka Toni
Deputy Director General: Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Department of Social Development (DSD), South Africa**

- 3. Ms. Lilly Ann Elvestad, Secretary General of the Norwegian
Federation of Organisations of Disabled People (FFO)**

- 4. Mrs. Rachel Kachaje,
Chairperson of the Southern Africa Federation of the Disabled
(SAFOD), as well as Secretary for the Africa Disability Forum (ADF)**

- 5. Mr. Dan Rekane,
The Gauteng Provincial Chairperson for Disabled People South Africa
(DPSA)**

- 6. Distinguished Guests**

- 7. Ladies and Gentlemen**

A very good morning to all.

I am very happy today to present to you an outline of the key objectives highlighting what the Southern Africa Federation of the Disabled (SAFOD) wants to achieve by organizing this milestone event as far as disability mainstreaming and/or advocacy in the SADC region is concerned.

For me, and the entire SAFOD family, this is a meaningful and special activity. It is a milestone in the advocacy for the promotion of rights of persons with disabilities not only in Southern Africa, but also within the international fraternity.

Yes, I say the international fraternity because the forum emanates from the need and collective desire to reposition ourselves as a disability movement, within the various international, continental and regional development frameworks.

It is anticipated that in the course of this forum, participants shall have the opportunity not only to learn about the progress made so far but also share the challenges that we are all facing as well as good practices that we can build upon in promoting the rights and welfare of persons with disabilities in the region. We want to appreciate the achievements or milestones during the 30-year period, the challenges which have been experienced and how delegates, especially development partners, can effectively support both SAFOD and the entire disability sector in sustaining the gains that have been made so far.

Another very important objectives of the Roundtable Forum is to contribute towards shaping the strategic direction of not only SAFOD but the entire disability movement in the region. This will be achieved by, among other things, aligning our ambitions with the already existing development frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The forum also has an objective of raising awareness about disability mainstreaming among donor agencies or development partners and other key

partners and discuss how they can effectively integrate disability within their various programs in the region.

It is expected further that this forum will explore in detail, ways and means through which the civil society, DPOs, researchers, the private sector, Governments and many other stakeholders can support or strengthen the current best practices that some of your institutions will be sharing.

Furthermore, this forum also provides all participants a rare opportunity to re-examine how the local Civil Society and International NGOs have cooperated and interacted in the past and building on what worked well in the past to chart the foundations of the future.

Honorable Deputy Minister, Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen, SAFOD wishes to express its profound gratitude for your presence at this forum. We know that you have had to sacrifice other equally important and perhaps more deserving things for the sake of this forum and we do not take it for granted.

It is our sincere hope that we shall all seize this opportunity tenaciously and cherish it so much as if it will never arise again for eternity; and give it our best attention as if it is our last attempt to put the interests of persons with disabilities on the top of the agenda, both nationally and regionally.

We shall have no excuse if we squander this opportunity!

With these few remarks, I sincerely congratulate you for making it to this forum.

I wish you nice and fruitful deliberation.

Thank you.

MUSSA CHIWAULA

DIRECTOR GENERAL

SOUTHERN AFRICA FEDERATION OF THE DISABLED (SAFOD)