



PRESS RELEASE

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LAW SOCIETY WELCOMES ELECTION OF SOUTH AFRICAN ATTORNEY AS PRESIDENT OF THE SADC LAWYERS ASSOCIATION

The Law Society of South Africa (LSSA) welcomes the election of Pietermaritzburg attorney Thoba Poyo-Dlwati as President of the SADC Lawyers Association (SADCLA).

Ms Poyo-Dlwati, past Co-Chairperson of the Law Society of South Africa, was elected President at the annual general meeting of the SADCLA in Lubumbashi this past week-end. She is the first woman to take this leadership position at the SADCLA. Renowned Zimbabwean human-rights lawyer Beatrice Mtetwa was elected Vice-President, and Yvonne Chilume of Botswana, Kondwa Sakala-Chibiya of Zambia and Patrick Mulowayi of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, were elected to the SADCLA Executive.

'The election of Ms Poyo-Dlwati as SADCLA President is a well-deserved honour as she served the LSSA as Co-Chairperson last year with great distinction,' say the LSSA's current Co-Chairpersons, Max Boqwana and Peter Horn. They add: 'We are particularly pleased to note that four of the five members of the Executive of the SADCLA are women. This is a notable achievement for the organisation and sends a strong signal to legal practitioners in the SADC region of the increasingly prominent role assumed by women lawyers in leadership positions in the legal profession.'

The SADCLA works to maintain and promote the Rule of Law throughout the SADC region as well as human rights, including the rights of people with disabilities, women and children. Besides ensuring that the people of SADC region are served by an independent and efficient legal profession, the SADCLA also fosters a common bond of cooperation within the region by strengthening professional links between members of the legal profession. It is also working towards the harmonisation of legal systems in the SADC region.

Ms Poyo-Dlwati, a director at Pietermaritzburg firm Ngcobo Poyo & Diedericks, has represented the LSSA on the Council of the SADCLA for a number of years. She was Co-Chairperson of the LSSA in 2009 and was President of the KwaZulu-Natal Law Society in 2008. She has served on various committees both at the LSSA and the KwaZulu-Natal Law Society and has been chairperson of the Gender Committees of both bodies.

***ISSUED ON BEHALF OF THE CO-CHAIRPERSONS OF THE LAW SOCIETY OF SOUTH
AFRICA, PETER HORN AND MAX BOQWANA***

by Barbara Whittle
Communication Manager, Law Society of South Africa
Tel: (012) 366 8800 or 083 380 1307
E-mail: barbara@lssa.org.za Website: www.lssa.org.za

Editor's note:

The SADC Lawyers Association is based in Gaborone, Botswana. It brings together law societies and bar associations of the SADC (Southern African Development Community) region to promote the interests of the legal profession and society at large. The Law Society of South Africa has been a member of the SADCLA since the SADCLA was established in 1999.

The Law Society of South Africa brings together its six constituent members – the Cape Law Society, the KwaZulu-Natal Law Society, the Law Society of the Free State, the Law Society of the Northern Provinces, the Black Lawyers Association and the National Association of Democratic Lawyers – in representing South Africa's 20 000 attorneys and 5 000 candidate attorneys.