



JOINT STATEMENT

Regional Conference “The HCCH and the Relevance of its Work for Southern Africa”

Tuesday 7 and Wednesday 8 February 2023

On the occasion of the Regional Conference “The HCCH and the Relevance of its Work for Southern Africa”, jointly organised by Finland, South Africa and the HCCH, with the participation of Namibia and Tanzania, as well as other SADC States, hosted by the University of Pretoria;

Acknowledging the increasing frequency of cross-border activities around the world, including in Southern Africa, and number of instances in which private international law questions arise;

Emphasising the need to provide legal certainty and predictability for individuals, families and companies involved in cross-border situations;

Understanding that robust legal frameworks contribute to fostering peace, sustainable economic and social development, encouraging trade and investment, facilitating economic integration, and improving access to justice;

Underlining the importance of strengthening multilateral international judicial and administrative cooperation and integration at the regional and global levels;

Recognising that HCCH Conventions and instruments contribute to enhanced cooperation and integration, offer effective multilateral solutions to private international law problems, establish widely-accepted international standards that are respectful of the diversity of legal traditions with limited impact on domestic law, provide for cost-efficient processes, and enable the use of technology to enhance their operation;

Accentuating the benefits for all States when new States become Members of the HCCH and / or Party to HCCH Conventions or instruments;

We, the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services of South Africa, the Minister of Justice of Finland, the Minister of Justice of Namibia and the Minister of Constitutional and Legal Affairs of Tanzania, do hereby:

Encourage all States, in particular those throughout Southern Africa, to join the HCCH as Members and to consider becoming Party to HCCH Conventions and instruments;

Undertake to promote the visibility of the HCCH and its work in the areas of international family and child protection law, transnational litigation and authentication of public documents (Apostille), as well as international commercial, digital, and financial law;

Agree to continue to seek efficiencies in the implementation and operation of HCCH Conventions and instruments, including through the use of technology;

Consider it important to explore opportunities to continue cooperation between our States and other States in Southern Africa in the area of joining and implementing HCCH Conventions.

Invite other States in Southern Africa to consider hosting similar regional conferences, with the aim of further promoting the work of the HCCH and its benefits.

Signed at Pretoria this day, 7 February 2023

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H.E. Mr Ronald Lamola

Minister of Justice and Correctional Services
of South Africa

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H.E. Ms Anna-Maja Henriksson

Minister of Justice of Finland

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H.E. Ms Yvonne Dausab

Minister of Justice of Namibia

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H.E. Dr Damas D. Ndumbaro

Minister of Constitutional and Legal Affairs
of Tanzania