Summary of Deliberations

Meeting of the SADC Technical Committee on Certification and Accreditation (TCCA)

1.0 The SADC Technical Committee on Certification and Accreditation (TCCA) held a meeting from 19-20 April 2017 in Johannesburg, South Africa.

2.0 The meeting was attended by Chief Executive Officers and Directors of national institutions responsible for Certification and Accreditation of education and skills training, from the following Member States: Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and the SADC Secretariat to review progress towards implementation of the SADC Qualifications Framework based on the Action Plan developed at the last TCCA meeting held in September 2016. The meeting was preceded by the launch of the SADC Qualifications Verification Network (SADCQVN) on the 18 April 2017. The TCCA meeting addressed the following issues:

   a) Establishment of the SADCQVN;
   b) Progress on the ratification of the "*Revised Arusha Convention on the recognition of studies, certificates, diplomas, degrees and other academic qualifications in higher education in African States*" known as Addis Convention;
   c) Mobility statistics in SADC;
   d) Modernising verification in SADC region;
   e) Overall progress towards implementation of the SADCQF since September 2016;

f) Overall structures that need to be in place to ensure proper functioning of the SADCQF;

g) Progress on the alignment of National Qualification Frameworks (NQF) to SADCQF;

h) Implementation update on Quality assurance; and

i) Recommendations for Ministerial meeting.

3.0 The Chair of the TCCA, Mr Joe Samuels welcomed all delegates to the meeting and gave a presentation on the overview of the 2016 TCCA meeting in terms of achievements and plans for the future. He also outlined the programme of work on issues to be discussed during the TCCA meeting.

4.0 The meeting of the 18 April 2017 considered and endorsed the Terms of Reference of the SADCQVN. A booklet of the SADCQVN was developed with verification contact details of the SADC Member States with the exception of Tanzania who still needs to provide the relevant contact details. Mrs Mirriam Chiyaba from Zambia Qualifications Authority (ZAQA) presented an overview of the African Qualification Verification Network (AQVN) with regards to its establishment, membership, and upcoming Annual General Meeting (AGM) planned for October 2017. The meeting was informed that SADCQVN had been accepted into the membership of the AQVN.

5.0 The SADCQVN meeting reviewed progress on the ratification of the Addis Convention by Member States since none of the SADC Member States have ratified the Convention. Each of the Member States provided brief progress reports on the status of ratification and most of the Member States are at the stage of national consultations and review of national structures to facilitate ratification.

6.0 The SADCQVN meeting noted information on mobility statistics from Member States with regards to the number of qualifications verified within a particular financial year. The meeting agreed that all countries were to send statistics on qualification verification by 28 April 2017 for a report to be compiled for presentation

to the Ministerial meeting in June 2017. The meeting received a presentation by Mr Stephen Logan, Chief Executive Officer of Privy Seal on a pilot project on real-time verification. The meeting appreciated the presentation and noted the need to modernise qualification verifications in the future.

7.0 The meeting of 19-20 April 2017 reviewed and endorsed the minutes of the TCCA meeting held in September 2016. The meeting reviewed the progress on the implementation of the Action Plan for accelerating the implementation of the SADCQF. The meeting noted the following key milestones that have been achieved under the leadership of SAQA: the development of the communication strategy, establishment of the social media platforms (setting up of Twitter and Facebook accounts), and development of marketing material on the SADCQF. The meeting also noted the challenges experienced during the last six months with regards to the institutional arrangements to support the Secretariat in the implementation of the SADCQF.

8.0 The meeting considered the structures that need to be established to ensure proper functioning of the SADCQF. It was reported that the TCCA Executive Committee (EXCO) was established compromising of Botswana, South Africa and Swaziland and the SADC Secretariat and held its first meeting on the 12 December 2016 in Pretoria, South Africa. The TCCA EXCO also allocated responsibilities to the members, with Swaziland leading the Qualifications Verification, Botswana to lead Quality Assurance and South Africa to lead the alignment of NQFs to the SADCQF. The TCCA EXCO, during their meeting, agreed on the need for a study tour to be undertaken to benchmark with other regions on the implementation and institutionalisation of Qualification Frameworks. A study tour was undertaken to the European Commission in February 2017 comprising of representatives from Botswana, South Africa and Swaziland with support of UNESCO. The TCCA meeting considered the report of the study tour and its recommendations and agreed that the recommendations be tabled during the Ministerial meeting for consideration. The meeting also considered the proposal for the establishment of

the Implementation Unit of the SADCQF and made some inputs to be tabled for the Ministers consideration during their June 2017 meeting in Swaziland.

9.0 The meeting considered the alignment flow chart for alignment of NQFs to SADCQF. Guidelines for SADC countries to align with the SADCQF were presented and discussed. Namibia Qualifications Authority (NQA) and SAQA shared their experiences on self-assessment on the 10 alignment criteria. SAQA offered to host a workshop on sharing of experiences and peer learning on NQFs with pilot countries – proposed for May/June 2017. Eight countries will participate in the alignment exercise pilot study (Botswana, Mauritius, Seychelles, South Africa, Zambia, Namibia, Lesotho and Swaziland) - countries to establish their National Alignment Committees. Alignment reports to be submitted by end August 2017 for countries who are ready for the TCCA meeting for consideration in September 2017.

10.0 The TCCA also hosted an Awareness Raising Event on the evening of 19 April 2017 towards the Launch of the SADCQF by the Ministers possibly in June 2017.

11.0 The meeting received a presentation from the Southern African Quality Assurance Network (SAQAN) on the establishment of a regional quality assurance system focusing on higher and tertiary education. A presentation was also made on the Harmonisation of African Quality Assurance and Accreditation (HAQAA) project, whose main purpose is to promote harmonisation within Africa on Higher Education. The President of SAQAN Prof Ngara presented a draft paper on the proposed SADC Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (SADC-CATS) which is meant to facilitate a common system in the region on issues of credits and learning hours. The TCCA pointed out that the notional hour credit systems had already been decided on and what was needed is guidelines for implementation. The SADC-CATS guidelines will facilitate free movement of students and staff in the region, facilitate cooperation between higher and tertiary education institutions in the region, promote practical implementation of the SADCQF; and will also facilitate free

movement of students from international community to the SADC region. The meeting urged members to send inputs to the draft paper by 28 April 2017. The meeting also noted that the proposed system should include Portuguese as a language of the SADC region. The chair of TCCA noted that the TCCA was happy to have the participation of SAQAN at the meeting. Requested SAQAN to provide inputs to the 16 SADCQF Quality Assurance Guidelines which will lead to the development of an Implementation Plan, to be coordinated by Botswana.

12.0 The meeting also agreed that South Africa will compile a list of credible institutions in the region and will submit to the SADC Secretariat for publishing on the SADC website. The meeting also considered and agreed on issues to be tabled for the Ministers meeting consideration in June 2017.

13.0 The meeting urged all member countries to expedite the full implementation of the SADCQF in their countries. The meeting also thanked SAQA for providing support to the SADC Secretariat for the past six months in supporting the implementation of the SADCQF. The next meeting of the TCCA will be held from 19-20 September 2017 in South Africa, and thereafter the meeting of the SADCQVN will be held on 22 May 2018 and TCCA 23-24 May 2018.

Issued by the Technical Committee on Certification and Accreditation on 20 April 2017 at Birchwood Hotel, Johannesburg, South Africa