

# SADC backs Dlamini Zuma's quest for AU chairmanship

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13 Feb 2012

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has once again rallied behind South Africa's Home Affairs Minister Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma to contest the position of African Union Commission chairperson.



(Image: GCIS)

Dlamini Zuma, a seasoned diplomat, recently faced off against Gabon's Jean Ping in Addis Ababa for that seat, but neither of the two could master the required two-thirds majority to clinch a victory.

Following three rounds of voting, Dlamini Zuma withdrew from the race, but Ping, who dared a fourth round, could not win it, making him ineligible to run again next time.

Kenya's Erastus Mwencha is the caretaker chairman until the next round of voting at the AU Summit set for Malawi in July.

The stalemate for this influential position has reportedly divided the continent along the English-speaking and French-speaking African power fault lines.

Confident of its candidate, the SADC Extra-Ordinary Inter State Politics and Diplomacy Committee (ISPDC) said on Sunday that Dlamini Zuma would contest again in July.

The committee met behind closed doors to discuss this and other matters at the Cape Town International Convention Centre at the weekend.

## Still the preferred choice

Following the meeting, it said in a statement that "SADC remains committed and united to its candidate for the Chairperson

of the AU Commission, Hon. Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Minister of Home Affairs of the Republic of South Africa."

It also agreed that the Ad-hoc Committee of Eight Heads of State and Government meet urgently to address the issues relating to the next elections of the members of the AU Commission as mandated by the AU Summit on 30 January 2012.

Angola, as the chair of SADC, is set to represent the region in this committee.

The ISPDC said that the region "remains committed to the threshold of two thirds majority of the election of the Members of the AU Commission in accordance with Rule 42 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the Union.

"SADC urges the AU Assembly to conclude the electoral process for the AUC Chairperson as a matter of urgency."

On other regional matters, the ISPDC reaffirmed the "significance of the Roadmap as the only mechanism for resolving the current political crisis in Madagascar."

It called on "all Malagasy stakeholders to adhere to the letter and spirit of the signed Roadmap and its full implementation."

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