

**Statement by  
His Majesty, King Mswati III  
Head of State of the Kingdom of Eswatini  
at the 77<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly  
General Debate  
New York  
21 September 2022**

Mr. President,  
Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,  
United Nations Secretary-General  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

**Introduction,**

It is a great honour for me to address this distinguished 77<sup>th</sup> United Nations General Assembly, where we have once again come together as a community of nations to renew our commitment to implementing the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals Agenda.

We are meeting at a time when we have just passed through a stage of tragedies brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has claimed lives all over the world. We thank God that this period is subsiding.

We must praise the countries of the world for uniting to fight this pandemic up to this stage where it is on the verge of being eradicated. The development and supply of COVID-19 vaccines has proven to be very useful, especially with regard to the prevention interventions.

We also applaud the United Nations for being instrumental in working under extremely difficult conditions. It remained resolute in assisting countries, and it is safe to say we are where we are today because of their efforts. Despite these challenges, it is encouraging to think that there were some positives to take away from this experience.

In the case of Eswatini, we were compelled to develop testing laboratories and oxygen storage facilities, which are now very helpful in the fight against other health issues.

We have witnessed the availability of oxygen, which has been used in saving the lives of snake bite victims, among other medical emergencies.

### HIV and AIDS Milestones

The COVID pandemic arrived in the midst of an HIV/ AIDS pandemic, which we were still battling with, and it affected various programmes that had been put in place. Eswatini has made great strides in the fight against HIV and AIDS.

The country became a shining example for the continent and the world at large after it attained the 95-95-95 UNAIDS treatment cascade targets in 2020. We are now focused on ending the AIDS pandemic as a global health threat by 2030.

This milestone would never have been possible without the support of the development partners who have been with the country since 1986 when the first AIDS case was announced.

### On-going Conflicts and Tensions in the World

Mr. President, it is unfortunate that even after COVID, when we were beginning to say that there is hope, we are now confronted with the conflicts that are taking place all over the world. Their consequences include, among other things, the loss of life.

These conflicts and tensions have also contributed significantly to the rise in food prices globally. They are not unique to a certain area, as they persist in Africa, Europe, Asia and the Middle East.

We hope to see an end to these clashes through peaceful resolutions. We must applaud the United Nations for its efforts to prevent these conflicts from escalating. Hopefully, there will be long-lasting, fruitful results emerging from these United Nations interventions.

### Living Up to Founding United Nations Objectives

As we gather here at the United Nations, we are all reminded of the main purpose of establishing the organization, which was to reduce tensions that lead to conflict around the world.

We hope the aspirations of our forefathers will guide us in using the organization to bring us together, so that we can resolve our differences where they exist and find lasting solutions. This will, no doubt, be of great help to all mankind.

### Attainment of SDGs 2030

These problems are a setback to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which are ongoing, given that COVID has had a negative impact while the conflicts are also taking their own toll on these programmes.

During the pandemic, we witnessed the collapse of many economies, the shutdown of industries, and a disruption of poverty alleviation projects that could not be implemented properly due to all the prevention measures, which meant there was no movement of people and goods.

Nevertheless, now that COVID is subsiding, it is high time for all of us to once again renew our focus on the SDGs and implement them, as they will play a crucial role in helping our countries develop.

### **Role of Financial Institutions in Rebuilding Economies**

We also note the importance of the role that needs to be played by financial institutions in assisting countries in the recovery process, as most countries really suffered a lot economically and financially, which means they face challenges in raising resources to fund this process.

We hope and urge our financial institutions to remain open to receiving countries that need support to revive their developmental programmes, to welcome their requests with sympathy to the plight of the challenges that they faced during the troubling COVID and HIV/AIDS challenges.

We do appreciate that in recent days, we have seen the financial multilateral organizations become more welcoming towards countries in need of budget support.

We trust the world will continue to come together to resolve these challenges as countries have a great strain on their resources, a situation that will be felt for some time to come. We hope the world will come together to contribute to resolving some of these problems.

### **Global Challenges Affecting Mankind**

Our theme for this 77<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly is *“A Watershed Moment: Transformative Solutions to Interlocking Challenges”*.

The theme fits very well with the several issues we are facing in the world today. The Kingdom of Eswatini, like all other Member States, has not been immune to these encounters that have heightened pressure on our already stressed economies.

They have served to derail us from our pursuit of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Agenda 2030 and the African Union Aspiration 2063 – The Africa We Want.

The theme should, therefore, serve to kick-start our economies towards recovery and enable us to create a sustainable future for our people.

### Availing Investment Opportunities

As the Kingdom of Eswatini, we are continuing with our efforts to attract investment and to support small medium enterprises as well as create big industries. In doing so, we realize the need for reliable energy to help us achieve our investment goals, so it is one of the areas we are working on developing, as a region.

We are also focussed on remaining highly competitive, which is why the world bank ease of doing business ranks us at the top in Africa when it comes to trading across borders.

The Government has also put in place fiscal support measures to ensure the cost of establishment of businesses and initial operational costs are reduced drastically through a range of options from fiscal to non-fiscal incentives.

The creation of special economic zones has placed us at an advantage to leverage our export potential through attracting export-oriented manufacturing projects.

Eswatini is also well positioned as a launch pad to the African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA), which seeks to boost intra - Africa trade with a market of 1.2 billion people and a combined GDP of \$2.2 trillion.

The country is also engaged in creating opportunities for our youth to address the issue of unemployment and poverty. There are opportunities to be explored in areas of ICT, agriculture and the informal sector, to name but a few.

**Mr. President,** the Kingdom of Eswatini welcomes the new programme by the UNDP to support our youth in Africa who want to engage in entrepreneurship to mitigate the issues of poverty. This is a noble idea, and we are ready to embrace it.

### Food Security

Food security and ending hunger remain a priority for the Government of the Kingdom of Eswatini. We are deploying a double-pronged strategy to address this challenge by providing social safety nets for the most vulnerable groups.

We have increased budget allocations, engaged in emergency food aid distribution, providing cash transfers to the elderly and vulnerable, school feeding programmes and other support services for disadvantaged populations.

With regard to agriculture growth and development, the key projects driven by these public investments, include the acceleration of water harvesting and irrigation development, where an average of 1,000 hectares is developed with irrigation every year.

We are also creating market-linked agriculture growth opportunities for small and emerging farmers to produce and generate income to enhance their livelihoods.

The negative effects of climate change are compelling the government to build more dams throughout the kingdom for irrigation. Other initiatives include the rollout of input subsidies for staple food crops.

The combination of these programmes has also increased the production of maize, our staple food, by 30% for the 2021–2022 farming season, only 9% short of our national target.

### Reform of the UN Security Council

With global stability at stake, Africans have recognized the need to guard against opportunists who seek to take advantage of the fragile economies to advance their agendas.

Ours is a history littered with problems of the past and ongoing attempts to re-infiltrate our countries through covert and overt means.

Eswatini is of the ardent belief that Africa must have permanent representation in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC); a call made in the Ezulwini Consensus in 2005.

Our position emanates from the fact that every democracy has its exceptionality and that societies are founded according to different cultural norms and values. We will not tire of the consideration and belated adoption of this call by the un to bring in the proper perspective on the African polity.

### Taiwan Participation in UN System

When the world faced the COVID pandemic, it must be noted that no country was spared, which means we all needed to come together to find solutions.

Unfortunately, Taiwan was unable to access some of the World Health Organization's (WHO) programmes and thus implement the remedies that required their approval.

We continue to appeal for Taiwan to be considered for full participation in the un agencies. We are confident that the global village would benefit substantially from Taiwan's meaningful participation in the UN system.

The Kingdom of Eswatini calls upon the United Nations to make the necessary arrangements for Taiwan to significantly participate in relevant un specialized agencies and mechanisms.

### Conclusion

**Mr. President**, as I conclude, Eswatini remains confident in the global body's capability to confront and overcome the challenges we face because most of them are manmade.

We can achieve this through our full commitment to the ideals of the United Nations Charter. This time, history is calling on each member state to intensify efforts to address our plight if we envisage triumphantly walking the path to 2030.

However, and most importantly, we must remain certain about one important thing; our success hinges on unity and respect for one another, which is key to all the outcomes of this 77th session of the United Nations General Assembly. Despite our diversity, we are one big family.

We need to give the world and our people hope and confidence that the United Nations has the entire mandate to play its role in all global issues that affect mankind.

**I thank you – May the Almighty God bless us all.**