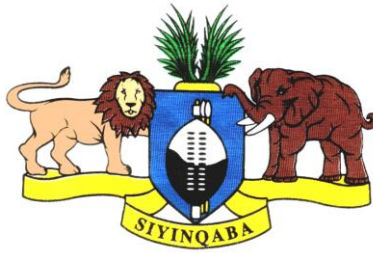


# **KINGDOM OF ESWATINI**



**NATIONAL STATEMENT BY**

**BY**

**HIS MAJESTY KING MSWATI III DURING THE 78<sup>TH</sup>  
SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY, NEW YORK, USA.**

**20<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023**

**KING'S OFFICE**

MR. PRESIDENT,  
YOUR MAJESTIES,  
YOUR EXCELLENCIES HEADS OF STATE AND  
GOVERNMENT,  
THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY GENERAL  
DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES,  
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

## **INTRODUCTION**

IT IS A GREAT HONOUR FOR ME TO ADDRESS THIS  
78TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY UNDER THE THEME,  
**"REBUILDING TRUST AND REIGNITING GLOBAL  
SOLIDARITY, ACCELERATING ACTION ON THE  
2030 AGENDA AND ITS SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT GOALS TOWARDS PEACE,  
PROSPERITY, PROGRESS AND SUSTAINABILITY  
FOR ALL"**.

IN A WORLD FACED WITH COMPLEX CHALLENGES SUCH AS CLIMATE CHANGE, POVERTY, INEQUALITY, AND RESOURCE DEPLETION, IT HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY EVIDENT THAT SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IS NOT JUST A NOBLE ASPIRATION, BUT IS AN IMPERATIVE FOR THE SURVIVAL AND WELL-BEING OF OUR PLANET AND ITS INHABITANTS.

FOR 78 YEARS, THE UNITED NATIONS HAS STOOD FOR THE GREAT IDEAL OF BUILDING AN INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM OF COLLABORATION, SOLIDARITY AND COMMON PURPOSE.

THE VALUES OF THE UN CHARTER, WHICH ARE OUR ROADMAP TODAY, WILL REMAIN AS SUCH FOR GENERATIONS TO COME BECAUSE THE UNITED NATIONS IS FOUNDED ON THE TIMELESS IDEALS OF GLOBAL PEACE, SECURITY, DEVELOPMENT, HUMAN RIGHTS AND GLOBAL COOPERATION. TODAY, WE NEED UNITY IN OUR ORGANIZATION MORE THAN EVER BEFORE.

AMONG THE MULTIPLE CRISES WE ARE EXPERIENCING ARE THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, GEOPOLITICAL CONFLICTS AND WARS, AND THE CLIMATE CHANGE CATASTROPHE. THESE HAVE UNDERMINED OUR RESILIENCE AND INCREASED VULNERABILITY TO SHOCKS AND SIGNIFICANTLY SLOWED THE PROGRESS TO ACHIEVE THE SDGS BY 2030.

JUST AS THE FOUNDERS OF THE UN ONCE UNITED TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES OF THEIR TIME FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL, IT IS NOW OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO STAND TOGETHER AND CONFRONT THOSE WE FACE TODAY, REBUILD TRUST AND TAKE SWIFT ACTION TO ACHIEVE THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) AND THE AFRICAN AGENDA 2063.

OF GREAT CONCERN ARE THE CONFLICTS, COUPS AND UNCONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE OF GOVERNMENTS IN SEVERAL AFRICAN STATES, WHICH ARE NEGATING THE GAINS TOWARDS ATTAINING OUR AU GOALS.

WE HAVE ALSO WITNESSED NATURAL DISASTERS IN THE FORM OF FLOODS AND EARTHQUAKES THAT HAVE CLAIMED THOUSANDS OF LIVES IN LIBYA AND MOROCCO, AMONG OTHERS.

WE WISH TO EXTEND OUR SYMPATHIES AND CONDOLENCES TO THOSE WHO HAVE LOST THEIR LOVED ONES.

### **POLITICAL SOLUTIONS FOR MOROCCO**

THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI WISHES TO ENCOURAGE THE EFFORTS THAT ARE BEING UNDERTAKEN TO FIND A POLITICAL SOLUTION TO THE MATTER REGARDING THE WESTERN SAHARA WITHIN THE PARAMETERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2654 OF 2022.

WE COMMEND THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL AND HIS PERSONAL ENVOY TO PROGRESS DIALOGUE AS A MEANS TO REACHING A SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION TO THE IMPASSE.

TO ATTAIN THIS, WE NEED TO ACTIVELY PRACTISE TOLERANCE AND PROMOTE PEACE IN ALL AREAS. WE OWE IT TO OURSELVES TO REIGNITE GLOBAL SOLIDARITY TO ACHIEVE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ADVANCEMENT FOR ALL OUR PEOPLES.

## **PEACE**

MR. PRESIDENT, THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI EMBRACES MULTILATERAL COOPERATION AND PRIORITIZES ADHERENCE TO INTERNATIONAL LAWS WHEN LOOKING TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES POSED BY CONFLICTS AND WARS.

WE THEREFORE SUPPORT THE GLOBAL CALL FOR SILENCING OF THE GUNS WHICH AFFECT THE MOST VULNERABLE GROUPS.

WE REMAIN STEADFAST IN OUR CALL FOR PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF CONFLICTS AND A CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT OF DEMOCRATIC AND INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE.

THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI THEREFORE COMMENDS THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL FOR FACILITATING THE NEW AGENDA FOR PEACE WHICH PROMOTES THE PRINCIPLES OF TRUST AND SOLIDARITY THAT ARE FOUNDATIONS OF THE UN CHARTER.

ESWATINI SUPPORTS WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION AND DEVELOPMENT.

WE SHOULD WORK TO ADVANCE GENDER EQUALITY AND END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN. OUR FOCUS IS ON BUILDING ACCOUNTABLE, EFFECTIVE, AND INCLUSIVE INSTITUTIONS ALIGNED WITH SDG 16.

WE HAVE ESTABLISHED A LEGAL AID OFFICE TO ENHANCE ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND THE RULE OF LAW, ESPECIALLY FOR VULNERABLE AND MARGINALIZED GROUPS.

WE HAVE ALSO DEVELOPED AN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND STRENGTHENED NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS OF MONITORING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORKS TO PROMOTE AND PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS FOR ALL EMASWATI.

### **2030 AGENDA**

LIKE ALL OTHER MEMBER STATES, ESWATINI'S IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SDGS HAS BEEN IMPACTED BY MULTIPLE SHOCKS, BOTH AT GLOBAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS. NOTWITHSTANDING THESE CHALLENGES, AS A COUNTRY WE REMAIN STEADFAST IN OUR COMMITMENT TO ACHIEVE THESE TARGETS.

WE HAVE BEEN RANKED TOP FIVE BY THE WORLD BANK FOR OUR GROWING ECONOMY WITH OUR GDP GROWTH AT ABOUT **7.8 PERCENT**. WE ATTAINED THE **SECOND GREATEST** MANUFACTURING VALUE ADDED PER CAPITA COUNTRY, AND ARE PLACED **SIXTH** ON THE 2022 AFRICA INDUSTRIALIZATION INDEX.



FURTHERMORE, WE HAVE BEEN RANKED NUMBER 9 AMONGST THE 10 AFRICAN COUNTRIES WITH THE HIGHEST GPD PER CAPITA. WE WILL NOT REST ON OUR LAURELS BUT WORK MUCH HARDER AS WE LOOK TO IMPROVE OUR ECONOMY.

### **KEY MILESTONES THAT HAVE BEEN ATTAINED**

MR. PRESIDENT, THE RECENT GLOBAL CHALLENGES HAD NEGATIVE IMPACTS ON OUR ABILITY TO PROVIDE SOCIAL SERVICES, INCLUDING HEALTH AND EDUCATION.

DESPITE THIS, WE HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED THE RATE OF UNDER FIVE DEATHS AND THE MATERNAL MORTALITY RATIO IN ESWATINI. THE HIV PREVALENCE AMONGST ADULTS AGED 15 TO 49 HAS ALSO DROPPED.

WE CONTINUE TO WORK TIRELESSLY TO STRENGTHEN OUR HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS WHILE ALSO ENSURING THAT OUR CITIZENS HAVE ACCESS TO THESE ESSENTIAL SERVICES.

WE COMMEND THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR THE MANY INITIATIVES AIMED AT HELPING MEMBER STATES TO RECOVER BETTER FROM THESE MULTIPLE SHOCKS.

FOLLOWING OUR PARTICIPATION IN THE TRANSFORMING EDUCATION SUMMIT LAST YEAR, WE ARE DELIGHTED TO SHARE THAT THE COUNTRY CONTINUES TO INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING THROUGH THE INTEGRATION AND USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES.

SIGNIFICANT STRIDES HAVE BEEN MADE BY THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI IN INCREASING ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY SINCE ADOPTION OF THE 2030 AGENDA.

WE NOW HAVE NATIONAL COVERAGE ABOVE 80%. ALSO, NOTABLE PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE IN TERMS OF ROAD AND ICT INFRASTRUCTURE CONNECTING CITIES AND ECONOMIC ZONES.

WHEN IT COMES TO ACCESS TO BASIC WATER SERVICES, 69% OF THE POPULATION NOW ENJOY THIS NECESSITY AND ACCESS TO BASIC SANITATION SERVICES HAS REACHED 58% OF OUR PEOPLE.

THE LITERACY RATE AMONG ADULTS AGED 15 AND ABOVE HAS IMPROVED FROM 79% IN 2000 TO 87%. THE GROSS ENROLMENT RATIO FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION HAS INCREASED FROM 97% IN 2000 TO 104%.

IN THE LEAD-UP TO THE SDG SUMMIT THIS WEEK, THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI UNDERTOOK A SERIES OF CONSULTATIONS IN EACH REGION, SEEKING THE VIEWS OF THE PEOPLE REGARDING HOW BEST TO ACCELERATE THE ATTAINMENT OF THE SDGS.

AS A RESULT, THE KINGDOM HAS PRIORITIZED INVESTMENTS IN KEY AREAS IN THE REMAINING 7 YEARS. WE WANT TO CREATE DECENT JOBS AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVERYONE, ESPECIALLY THE YOUTH.

WE WANT TO IMPROVE WATER AND SANITATION FOR ALL. WE ARE CONVINCED THAT THIS WILL HELP SECURE MAXIMUM PROGRESS ACROSS ALL 17 SDGS.

### **ESWATINI'S UNIQUE MODEL OF DEMOCRACY**

MR. PRESIDENT, ESWATINI HAS CONTINUED TO CHERISH HER HOME GROWN AND UNIQUE MODEL OF A PEOPLE-DRIVEN DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE.

LIKE MANY OTHER DEMOCRACIES, OUR CONSTITUTION RECOGNISES THE ROLE OF THE MONARCHY AS WELL AS A BI-CAMERAL PARLIAMENT, SEPARATION OF POWERS, FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE RULE OF LAW.

IT TAKES INTO ACCOUNT OUR RICH CULTURAL HERITAGE AND TRADITIONAL AFRICAN VALUES IN THAT IT IS GROUNDED IN RESPECT, CONSENSUS AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT THROUGH TRADITIONAL STRUCTURES. IT IS A MONARCHICAL DEMOCRACY.

OUR SYSTEM IS BASED ON INDIVIDUAL MERIT WHERE CANDIDATES ARE NOMINATED FROM THEIR COMMUNITIES TO STAND FOR ELECTIONS IN CONSTITUENCIES WHICH WE CALL TINKHUNDLA TO WHICH THEY ARE ACCOUNTABLE.

THE ELECTORATE EXPECTS MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT TO MEET AS COLLEAGUES RATHER THAN COMBATANTS, TO LOOK FOR CONSENSUS AS OPPOSED TO PARTISANSHIP, AND TO BALANCE THE INTERESTS OF THEIR CONSTITUENCIES WITH THOSE OF THE NATION.

IN TERMS OF OUR DEMOCRATIC DISPENSATION, ELECTIONS ARE A CONSTITUTIONAL IMPERATIVE AND ARE HELD EVERY 5 YEARS. ESWATINI IS IN THE MIDDLE OF OUR ELECTORAL CYCLE, IN A BID TO ELECT THE 12TH PARLIAMENT.

IN THIS REGARD, A VOTER REGISTRATION EXERCISE WAS CONDUCTED WHICH RETURNED OVER 95% REGISTERED AGAINST AN ELIGIBLE POPULATION.

THIS WAS A RESOUNDING SUCCESS AND A RINGING ENDORSEMENT OF THE SUPPORT FOR THE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT.

AS WE SPEAK, THE NOMINATION PROCESS HAS BEEN COMPLETED, PRIMARY ELECTIONS WERE HELD ON THE 26TH AUGUST 2023 AND OUR SECONDARY ELECTIONS WILL BE TAKING PLACE 29TH SEPTEMBER 2023. WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO EMASWATI EXPRESSING THEIR DESIRES THROUGH THE BALLOT BOX.

SIBAYA REMAINS ONE OF OUR HIGHEST INSTITUTIONS WHERE EMASWATI DIALOGUE AND PLAY THEIR PART IN DETERMINING THE FUTURE THEY WANT.

IT IS AN ALL-INCLUSIVE FORUM WHERE CITIZENS, IRRESPECTIVE OF GENDER AND SOCIAL STATUS, DISCUSS ISSUES OF NATIONAL INTEREST.

A COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO THE NATION WAS CELEBRATING 55 YEARS OF OUR INDEPENDENCE, DURING WHICH EMASWATI HAVE BEEN LIVING IN PEACE AND HARMONY.

## **PROSPERITY AND PROGRESS**

MR. PRESIDENT, ESWATINI HAS BEEN HIT HARD BY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, WHICH HAS AFFECTED SOME OF OUR SOCIAL SECTORS. ALTHOUGH WE HAVE MADE PROGRESS IN REDUCING POVERTY AND INEQUALITY, THEY REMAIN HIGH.

AS A RESULT, WE CONTINUE TO BATTLE WITH HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT, ESPECIALLY AMONG THE YOUTH. WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN ESWATINI, WE HAVE LAUNCHED A YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME WHICH HAS GENERATED GREAT PUBLIC INTEREST FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

WE HOPE TO ENROL AT LEAST 4000 YOUNG PEOPLE INTO THE PROGRAMME TO INCREASE THEIR CHANCES OF EMPLOYMENT, HELP THEM START THEIR OWN BUSINESSES AND WITH ACCESS TO FINANCE.

THE EUROPEAN UNION (EU) HAS ALSO PLEDGED TO SUPPORT YOUTH EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVES TO MITIGATE THE UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION.

ESWATINI IS HIGHLY DEPENDENT ON EXTERNAL SOURCES OF INCOME, SUCH AS REGIONAL TRADE, REMITTANCES, AND TRANSFERS FROM THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN CUSTOMS UNION (SACU).

WE CONTINUE TO IMPLEMENT STRUCTURAL REFORMS TO IMPROVE OUR BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT, DIVERSIFY OUR ECONOMY, AND FOSTER INCLUSIVE GROWTH. WE HAVE RECENTLY LAUNCHED OUR NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY FOR THE AFRICA CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AGREEMENT (ACFTA).

TWO DAYS AGO, ON THE SIDELINES OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY, WE HAD A RESOURCE MOBILISATION SESSION TO INTRODUCE THE AFRICA STRATEGIC INVESTMENT ALLIANCE (ASIA).

THIS WILL SUPPORT THE PROGRAMMES OF THE AE-TRADE WHICH SEEKS TO CREATE A DIGITAL MARKETING PLATFORM FOR ALL AFRICAN COUNTRIES TO PROMOTE TRADING THROUGH TECHNOLOGIES.



WE ARE ALSO LOOKING AT THE ADVANCED COUNTRIES TO SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES SO THAT AFRICA WILL NOT BE LEFT BEHIND. WE URGE MEMBER STATES AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS TO SUPPORT THE AE-TRADE INITIATIVE.

WE WISH TO COMMEND THE PRIVATE SECTOR THAT PARTICIPATED AT THIS FORUM AND FURTHER COMMITTED ITSELF TO PLEDGES TOWARDS THIS NOBLE OBJECTIVE.

THIS WILL HELP US TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTRA-AFRICA TRADE, INCREASE NATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY, AND PROMOTE REGIONAL INTEGRATION IN THE WORLD'S LARGEST FREE TRADE AREA THAT CONNECTS 1.3 BILLION PEOPLE ACROSS 55 COUNTRIES WITH A COMBINED GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP) VALUED AT US\$3.4 TRILLION.

## **SUSTAINABILITY FOR ALL: LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND**

ESWATINI IS EMBRACING THE LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND PRINCIPLE, WHICH IS THE CENTRAL PROMISE OF THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ITS GOALS.

AS WE WORK TOWARDS ACHIEVING THESE TARGETS, IT IS CRUCIAL TO RE-EVALUATE THE GLOBAL FINANCIAL ARCHITECTURE.

WE MUST ADDRESS INTEREST RATES IN A WAY THAT IS FAIR AND BENEFICIAL FOR BOTH THE LEAST AND DEVELOPING NATIONS.

THIS WILL ENSURE ERADICATION OF POVERTY IN ALL ITS FORMS AND IMPROVED LIVING CONDITIONS FOR THE POOREST OF THE POOR.

SUSTAINING THE SDGS WILL REQUIRE THAT MEMBER STATES DEVELOP INNOVATIVE FINANCING STRATEGIES TO ENSURE THAT IMPLEMENTATION REACHES THE MOST LEFT BEHIND.

AT THIS CRITICAL JUNCTURE, INCLUDING TAIWAN IS AN ESSENTIAL NEXT STEP IF WE ARE TO SUCCESSFULLY ACHIEVE THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

WE CALL FOR TAIWAN'S INCLUSION IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM, WHICH ENCOMPASSES PARTICIPATION IN MEETINGS, MECHANISMS, AND ACTIVITIES THAT PERTAIN TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS).

THIS WOULD NOT ONLY STRENGTHEN GLOBAL COOPERATION AND PARTNERSHIP BUT ALSO EMPHASISE THE PRINCIPLE OF ENSURING THAT NO ONE IS LEFT BEHIND.

## **CONCLUSION**

IN CONCLUSION, MR PRESIDENT, IN THE REMAINING 7 YEARS, ESWATINI WILL CONTINUE TO PRIORITIZE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SDGS AND ENSURE THAT THEY REMAIN THE CORE AGENDA BEHIND OUR DEVELOPMENT.

WE ARE OPTIMISTIC THAT A WIDE RANGE OF ACTORS WILL BE MOBILIZED AND THAT CAPACITIES WILL BE STRENGTHENED TO ENSURE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE GOALS BY 2030.

THE SDGS WILL CONTINUE TO BE A GUIDING LIGHT THAT SHAPES NATIONAL POLICIES, BUDGETS, INSTITUTIONS, GOVERNMENT'S AND SECTOR STRATEGIES.

THE KINGDOM STANDS WITH THE REST OF THE WORLD IN COMMITTING TO ACCELERATING PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UN TARGETS IN THE REMAINING 7 YEARS.

THE YEAR 2023 IS A TURNING POINT FOR THE COUNTRY AS WE HOPE TO BREAK THROUGH TO A BETTER FUTURE FOR ALL.

MR PRESIDENT, LET ME TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO WISH YOU ALL SUCCESSFUL DELIBERATIONS.

**I THANK YOU - MAY THE ALMIGHTY GOD BLESS US ALL.**