

Senate President's Welcoming Remarks
Cyber Crime Bills, 10th – 11th May, 2021
The Happy Valley Hotel

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR,
HRH – PRINCESS SIKHANYISO – THE HON. MINISTER FOR ICT,
MINISTRY OF ICT PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON &
MEMBERS
HON. SENATORS
PRINCIPAL SECRETARY
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS
ICT MINISTRY OFFICIALS
PARLIAMENT OFFICIALS
JOURNALISTS
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

It is an honour for me to welcome you to this essential workshop, relevant to the current times – owing to the social space being abuzz with cyber patterns of diverse activities globally. Coincidentally, the cyber-space can no longer be ignored, as the dreadful COVID-19 pandemic has compelled the hosting of meetings and other gatherings to be virtual, and, Parliament is no exception.

Honourable Minister, I would further wish to applaud your Ministry for having significantly leapfrogged in the digital space. A recent good example would be that of the preparatory stages of the official opening of the 3rd Session of the Kingdom's Eleventh Parliament, where the Ministry was visibly on the ground in as far as technological strategies are concerned. The COVID-19 cloud (as also attested by His Majesty King Mswati III in the Speech from the Throne - 2021), has evidently given us all enough time to come up with innovative means to strategise on how best we, as a country, can support one another in making things better.

With that articulated, I would also like to extend my gratitude to the Honourable Minister and her staff for facilitating this workshop for Honourable Senators, which undoubtedly, will ease understanding and insight of Senators on issues of cybercrime – which is, at the end of the day in the interest of the country.

Further, as a legislative organ (Parliament), we can only carry out our mandate effectively if we have adequate capacity, hence, I am also appreciative of you Hon. Senators for having attended in these impressive numbers for this imperative exercise; and am very optimistic that you will participate actively in the deliberations ahead of us. Your constantly gestured commitment and diligence Honourable Senators in executing your legislative role, are traits that do not go unnoticed.

Your Royal Highness, with the three (3) interwoven Bills before us: *Computer Crime & Cybercrime Bill 2020*, *Electronic Transactions Bill 2020*, and *Data Protection Bill 2020* to be exhausted over the 2 days, we anticipate very insightful awareness, especially with regard to the Fourth Industrial Revolution era we have been ushered in (in light of the ever-evolving technological trends). Equally of note is that these Bills have come at a time when numerous motions on the protection of human rights have been paraded. Whilst we fully embrace the rights bestowed to humankind, we should however remain cognizant of the fact that every human right is coupled with a responsibility, and that accountability is inescapable. One therefore foresees the ultimate enactment of these laws certainly being of benefit – by means of shielding the country's image as well as its citizenry.

Last but not least, may I state that even though combating cybercrime is not easy, it is also not impossible – application of mutual cooperation and coordination across jurisdictions if embraced, a lot can be achieved in this regard.

With those few remarks, I would like to say to you Hon. Minister and your ministry's skilled officials in this subject, we are more than receptive to the knowledge you are yet to

impart to us; and to the Honourable Senators, I wish you a fruitful workshop, which will certainly also impact positively in our respective personal spaces.

Ladies and gentlemen, may I end with a kind reminder to us all on adherence to the COVID-19 Regulations – let us take it upon ourselves to protect our lives and those of others.

I THANK YOU ALL