

**SENATE PRESIDENT’S REMARKS DURING THE**  
**WORKSHOP OF THE REVIEW OF SENATE STANDING**  
**ORDERS – 08 TO 10 MARCH 2021**

The Resident Representative to United Nations Development  
Programme (UNDP),

Deputy President of Senate,

Chairperson of the Standing Orders Committee,

Honourable Senators,

Clerk to Parliament,

Facilitators,

Parliament staff,

Members of the media,

Ladies and gentlemen.

Honourable Senators, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your attendance at this workshop. It is encouraging to note the seriousness with which you take the work that we have to do together. His Majesty the King, when addressing the Nation in His Speech from the Throne, highlighted that it has become evident that this will now be our new way of meeting one another since the advent of the Coronavirus pandemic which has negatively impacted the Kingdom of

Eswatini and the entire world. Timphunga Letihloniphekile, ours is to implement and ensure work continues.

I would also like to extend my profound gratitude to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) through the Resident Representative, who at very short notice moved every obstacle to ensure that this meeting takes place. This is not the only initiative they have assisted us with thus far. We value our relationship with UNDP and her commitment in assisting us fulfil our mandate as Parliament. We look forward to a continuing healthy relationship.

Honourable Senators, today we are here to look at our Standing Orders pursuant to Section 121 of the Constitution of Eswatini which gives each chamber the power to develop its rules of procedure in the form of Standing Orders. You will further recall that as part of our sessional committees we have the Standing Orders Committee, which in its wisdom resolved that we all be present as Senators to review our standing orders. You are all aware that there are certain provisions within our standing orders that need review. You will further recall that over and above that there was a resolution taken by Senate for the review of the Standing orders in light of the Covid-19 pandemic that has changed life as we knew it.

The standing orders committee was tasked with initiating that process. Several attempts were made by the committee to start working as per the resolution of the House but due to the concurrent urgencies brought about by Covid-19 it was not always possible for it to start its work, because at every given point we found ourselves having to work on our feet because of the curveballs thrown at us by the new normal. These included the various Regulations and Directives put in place to curb the spread of Covid-19. It is for that reason that I am grateful that we are finally able to have this meeting.

Honourable Senators, this by its very nature cannot be a process that we can complete in a few days, certainly not in two days. What is important is for us to start the process and this is what we are here to do. In that regard I urge you Honourable Senators to apply yourselves critically in the process at hand. Most importantly however we also need to evolve to adapt to the 4th Industrial Revolution that is upon us. We have seen other jurisdictions adopt virtual sittings. In that regard it would amiss of me not to extend our appreciation to UNDP for providing training for us on some of those virtual platforms, and it is surely gratifying to see how Senators have adapted to using that platform as we have been able to conduct a healthy number of meetings through same. We hope we can extend that into our plenary and committee sittings which is also why the process of reviewing our standing orders is important. UNDP has further graciously agreed to

also make another presentation and training available as part of this workshop.

My intention is not to be long winded but to officially welcome Honourable Senators and to declare this workshop official open. Having said that let us not lose sight of His Majesty's caution at the inauguration of the 3<sup>rd</sup> session of the 11<sup>th</sup> parliament to the extent that "we should not lose focus but join hands in the fight against this outbreak, so we come out with ways and means of winning the battle".

I wish us a productive session.

Thank you very much Honourable Senators for your kind attention.