



**REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE PRIME MINISTER
CLEOPAS SIPHO DLAMINI AT THE OPENING OF THE 10TH RETREAT OF THE
ASSOCIATION OF SENATES, SHOORA AND EQUIVALENT COUNCILS IN AFRICA
AND THE ARAB WORLD (ASSECAA)- KINGDOM OF ESWATINI-10TH MAY, 2023**

SALUTATIONS

- HIS EXCELLENCY HON. ENAAM MAYARA - ASSECAA
CHAIRPERSON
- CABINET MINISTERS
- SENATOR LINDIWE DLAMINI - THE SENATE PRESIDENT OF THE
KINGDOM OF ESWATINI
- HON. PETROS MAVIMBELA – SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF
ASSEMBLY
- MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORP
- HIS EXCELLENCY ABDULASIE YUSUF ALI – ASSECAA SECRETARY
GENERAL
- DISTINGUISHED HONOURABLE SPEAKERS AND HEADS OF
DELEGATIONS
- HON. SENATORS AND HON. MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT
- HHOHHO REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR
- YOUR LORDSHIP MAYORS
- DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES AND OBSERVERS
- SECRETARIAT
- INVITED GUESTS
- MEMBERS OF THE FOURTH ESTATE
- SECURITY FORCES

I GREET YOU ALL

INTRODUCTION

ON BEHALF OF HIS MAJESTY KING MSWATI 111, THE QUEEN MOTHER AND THE ENTIRE NATION, MAY I WELCOME YOU TO THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI.

WE ARE VERY PLEASED THAT YOU CHOSE THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI TO HOLD THE 10TH RETREAT OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SENATES, SHOORA AND EQUIVALENT COUNCILS OF AFRICA AND THE ARAB WORLD.

IT IS ALSO ENCOURAGING TO NOTE THAT YOUR DISCUSSIONS ARE RELEVANT TO THE CURRENT GLOBAL CHALLENGES THAT HAVE NEGATIVELY AFFECTED ALMOST ALL COUNTRIES' ECONOMIES.

PROGRAMME

AS REFLECTED IN THE PROGRAMME, THE TWO THEMATIC AREAS:

“THE IMPACT OF THE MULTIFACETED INTERNATIONAL CRISES ON THE ECONOMIES OF AFRICA AND THE ARAB WORLD”, AND

“THE SIGNIFICANCE OF GREEN ECONOMY IN ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA AND THE ARAB WORLD”, SPEAKE TO THE PRIORITY AREAS ON WHICH WE NEED INTENTIONAL FOCUS FOR OUR NATIONS TO RECOVER AND REVIVE OUR ECONOMIES.

PARLIAMENTS ARE THE MAIN ESTABLISHMENTS TO LEAD IN COMING UP WITH RELEVANT LEGISLATIONS TO THIS EFFECT. THEY ARE ALSO WELL POSITIONED TO ADVANCE ORGANISED COOPERATION AND STRATEGIES THAT WILL BRING SOLUTIONS TO COMMON CHALLENGES.

YOUR EXCELLENCIES AND DELEGATES, THE RETREAT CAME AT AN OPPORTUNE TIME WHERE WE NEED TO SHARE EXPERIENCES AND STRATEGIES AND COME UP WITH PRACTICAL STEPS ON HOW WE CONTINUE TO COLLABORATE TO ENSURE THAT WE SUSTAIN WORLD PEACE AND BRING OUR PEOPLE OUT OF THE ABYSS OF POVERTY IN A SUSTAINABLE WAY.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR

ALTHOUGH THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC MAY SEEM TO HAVE STABILISED BUT ITS IMPACT AND EFFECTS ARE STILL WITH US. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT WE HAVE BEEN NEGATIVELY AFFECTED. WE HAVE HAD TO DIVERT NATIONAL BUDGETS TO FIGHT THE PANDEMIC. OUR PEOPLE LOST THEIR LIVELIHOODS, RESULTING IN A REDUCTION IN TAX REVENUE, MAKING IT DIFFICULT TO RECOVER FROM THE RESULTANT ECONOMIC PLUNGE. WE ALSO LOST A LOT OF LIVES. THIS INCLUDED THOSE WHO WERE PLAYING IMPORTANT ROLES IN OUR DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES.

THROUGH THE WISDOM OF HIS MAJESTY, THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI, PUT TOGETHER AN ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN. HOWEVER, RESOURCES TO IMPLEMENT THE PLAN ARE LIMITED.

THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR REMAINS A THREAT TO GLOBAL PEACE AND WE ALL NEED TO ENCOURAGE THE TWO COUNTRIES TO RESOLVE THEIR DIFFERENCES THROUGH PEACEFUL MEANS. WE HAVE SEEN AN ALL-TIME HIGH INCREASES IN FUEL AND COMMODITIES PRICES AND THIS IS BEING ATTRIBUTED TO THE ONGOING WAR. WE HAVE SEEN HUGE INCREASES IN PRICES OF OTHER BASIC COMMODITIES, INCLUDING FOOD.

THIS WAS FURTHER EXACERBATED BY THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE. LAST YEAR, THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE EXPERIENCED WIDESPREAD HEAT WAVES AND DROUGHT, WHICH NEGATIVELY IMPACTED FOOD PRODUCTION, THUS INCREASING INFLATION FURTHER. OUR SUB-REGION WAS NEGATIVELY IMPACTED BY TORRENTIAL RAINFALL EVENTS WHICH DAMAGED OUR INFRASTRUCTURE, AMONG OTHER THINGS, CAUSING FURTHER ECONOMIC CHALLENGES. HEALTH SYSTEMS WERE ALSO NEGATIVELY IMPACTED

COLLABORATION

WE APPLAUD **ASSECAA** FOR CONTINUING TO ENSURE THAT THE SENATES OF AFRICA AND THE ARAB WORLD REMAIN SAFEGUARDS AGAINST DEMOCRATIC BACKSLIDING.

WE HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN ABOUT OTHER DISEASES WHICH CONTINUE TO AFFECT NATIONS. DISEASES SUCH AS CHOLERA THAT WE THOUGHT WERE BEHIND US ARE ALSO EMERGING, PUSHING OUR PEOPLE DEEPER INTO POVERTY AND AN ARRAY OF OTHER CHALLENGES.

AS WE THINK ABOUT HOW TO OVERCOME THESE CHALLENGES AND ATTAINING OUR DEVELOPMENT GOALS, THE NEED TO REBUILD BETTER AND FASTER CANNOT BE OVER-EMPHASISED. THERE IS GREAT WISDOM IN THIS AFRICAN PROVERB WHICH SAYS: **“IF YOU WANT TO GO FAST, GO ALONE, IF YOU WANT TO GO FAR, GO TOGETHER”**.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY

YOUR EXCELLENCES, I ENCOURAGE YOU AS YOU REFRESH AND REVITALISE TO FIND IMPACTFUL WAYS OF SERVING OUR PEOPLE. IT WILL BE IMPORTANT TO STRIKE A BALANCE BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY AND DEVELOPMENT. GREENING OUR ECONOMIES AND BUILDING CLIMATE RESILIENCE IS LONG OVERDUE.

HOWEVER, WE HAVE ALSO RECORDED SOME POSITIVES WITH THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC GETTING BEHIND US. WE ARE ALSO POSITIVE THAT THE RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN WAR WILL COME TO AN END. HOWEVER, THE CLIMATE CHANGE CHALLENGE PRESENTS ITSELF AS LONG-TERM. THE LATEST INTER-GOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE REPORT SHOWS THAT WE STILL HAVE A LONGWAY TO GO TO GET TO WHERE WE NEED TO BE. THE UNITED NATIONS' SECRETARY GENERAL HAS INDICATED THAT THE REPORT IS CODED RED FOR HUMANITY.

CONCLUSION

AS I CONCLUDE YOUR **EXCELLENCIES** AND HON. DELEGATES, I WANT TO INVITE YOU TO ALSO MAKE TIME TO INQUIRE ABOUT THE LUCRATIVE BUSINESS AND INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI. HIS MAJESTY AND THE GOVERNMENT HAVE MADE GREAT PROGRESS IN MAKING INVESTMENT AND OPENING BUSINESSES TO BE VERY EASY. I WAS ALSO BRIEFED THAT YOU WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY

TO VISIT SOME OF OUR INDUSTRIES AND TOURIST ATTRACTIONS PLACES. WE DO UNDERSTAND THAT YOU ONLY HAVE LIMITED TIME FOR THIS RETREAT BUT WE CAN ASSURE YOU THAT THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI WILL ALWAYS WELCOME YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES WITH WARM HANDS.

YOUR EXCELLENCIES, MAY I NOW WISH YOU FRUITFUL DELIBERATIONS DURING YOUR RETREAT AND DECLARE THE 10TH ASSECAA RETREAT IN THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI OFFICIALLY OPENED.

MAY GOD BLESS US ALL