



REMARKS OF THE SENATE PRESIDENT OF ESWATINI

**SESSION ONE: “THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA 25
YEARS ON: PERSISTING CHALLENGES AND THE WAY FORWARD”
AT THE IPU WOMEN SPEAKERS CONFERENCE**

PRESIDENT OF IPU DR TULIA ACKSON

PRESIDENT OF NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SWITZERLAND &
PRESIDENT OF SUMMIT: HON MAJA RINIKEN

SECRETARY GENERAL OF IPU MR MARTIN CHUNGONG

HON WOMEN SPEAKERS AND PRESIDENTS OF PARLIAMENTS

DIRECTOR GENERAL OF UN OFFICE IN GENEVA

DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

IT IS WITH GREAT HUMILITY AND PRIDE THAT I STAND BEFORE THIS
EXTRAORDINARY ASSEMBLY OF TRAILBLAZERS, UNITED BY PURPOSE AND
GUIDED BY THE TRANSFORMATIVE SPIRIT OF
RESOLUTION 1325.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO, THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL LIT A PATH TOWARD A NEW PARADIGM, ONE THAT RECOGNIZED WOMEN NOT SIMPLY AS VICTIMS OF CONFLICT, BUT AS AGENTS OF PEACE, LEADERS IN REBUILDING, AND ARCHITECTS OF RESILIENCE.

RESOLUTION 1325 GAVE VOICE TO WHAT MANY OF US ALREADY KNEW: SUSTAINABLE PEACE CANNOT BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT THE FULL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS.

TODAY, WE CELEBRATE THE PROGRESS MADE FROM POLICY REFORMS TO NATIONAL ACTION PLANS AND APPLAUD THE COURAGE OF WOMEN WHO HAVE SHAPED PEACE PROCESSES IN COMMUNITIES TORN APART BY VIOLENCE. YET, THIS MILESTONE ALSO CALLS FOR DEEP INTROSPECTION. FOR ALL OUR VICTORIES, THE CHALLENGES PERSIST. IN MANY REGIONS, THE INCLUSION OF WOMEN IN PEACE NEGOTIATIONS REMAINS TOKENISTIC. THE GENDERED IMPACTS OF CONFLICT DISPLACEMENT, SEXUAL VIOLENCE, ECONOMIC EXCLUSION CONTINUE TO DEVASTATE LIVES AND DISPROPORTIONATELY AFFECT WOMEN AND GIRLS.

IN ESWATINI, WE HAVE WITNESSED FIRSTHAND THE RESILIENCE OF WOMEN IN POST-CONFLICT AND TRANSITIONAL SPACES. THEY ARE COMMUNITY ORGANIZERS, JUSTICE ADVOCATES, CARETAKERS OF RECONCILIATION. AS A WOMAN LEADER IN PARLIAMENT, I VIEW MY ROLE NOT SIMPLY AS REPRESENTATION, BUT AS RESPONSIBILITY TO CHAMPION LEGISLATION THAT PROTECTS, EMPOWERS, AND ELEVATES WOMEN; TO HOLD INSTITUTIONS ACCOUNTABLE FOR GENDER EQUITY; AND TO BUILD COALITIONS THAT PLACE WOMEN AT THE HEART OF DECISION-MAKING.

MOVING FORWARD, WE MUST DEMAND MORE THAN VISIBILITY , WE MUST INSIST ON INFLUENCE. THIS MEANS EXPANDING THE LEADERSHIP PIPELINE FOR WOMEN IN SECURITY AND PEACEBUILDING, INVESTING IN MENTAL HEALTH AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY FOR SURVIVORS, AND CRAFTING POLICIES ROOTED IN INTERSECTIONALITY. IT ALSO MEANS CREATING PARLIAMENTARY MECHANISMS THAT MAINSTREAM THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA ACROSS ALL SECTORS OF GOVERNANCE.

LET THIS CONFERENCE NOT MERELY BE A COMMEMORATION, BUT A RECALIBRATION. A RENEWAL OF OUR SHARED COMMITMENT TO BUILD INCLUSIVE, JUST, AND PEACEFUL SOCIETIES, NOT IN THEORY, BUT IN PRACTICE.

I THANK YOU.