

YOUR MAJESTY THE INDLOVUKAZI,
EMAKHOSIKATI,
YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESSES,
PRIME MINISTER,
COUNCILLORS,
CHIEFS,
CHIEF JUSTICE,
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER,
CABINET MINISTERS,
EXCELLENCIES, MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS,
PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF SENATE,
SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY,
DISTINGUISHED GUESTS,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

SIYANIVUSELA NONKHE BEKUNENE EPHALAMENDE

INTRODUCTION

IT IS A GREAT HONOUR AND PRIVILEGE FOR ME TO WELCOME YOU ALL TO THIS AUGUST OCCASION HERE AT LOBAMBA FOR THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE **THIRD SESSION** OF THE **TENTH PARLIAMENT** OF THE KINGDOM OF E-SWATINI.

WE ACKNOWLEDGE AND APPRECIATE THE PRESENCE OF ALL OF YOU, INCLUDING OUR VISITORS WHO HAVE TRAVELLED FROM ALL CORNERS OF THE GLOBE TO BE WITH US HERE TODAY.

OUR GREETINGS ALSO EXTEND TO THOSE WHO ARE FOLLOWING TODAY'S IMPORTANT PROCEEDINGS THROUGH THE VARIOUS MEDIA.

DIALOGUE IS KEY FOR PEACE TO PREVAIL

AS WE BEGIN THE NEW YEAR 2016, WE THANK THE ALMIGHTY GOD FOR THE PEACE AND STABILITY THAT PREVAILS IN THE KINGDOM.

AS E-MASWATI WE SHOULD BE GRATEFUL THAT THE HARMONY WE HAVE IN THE COUNTRY HAS CONTINUED TO BIND US TOGETHER WITH ONE COMMON PURPOSE OF ATTAINING A DEVELOPED STATUS BY 2022.

CONFRONTATIONAL BEHAVIOUR IS NOT PART OF OUR TRADITION AS E-MASWATI.

WHEN THE NATION IS NOT UNITED ENEMIES, SUCH AS TERRORISTS, GET THE OPPORTUNITY TO PENETRATE IT AND

CAUSE DIVISION THAT IS AGAINST OUR NATIONAL OBJECTIVES.

OUR SOCIETAL NORMS ARE THAT, WHERE THERE IS A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION WE NEED TO COME TOGETHER AND FIND COMMON GROUND. DIALOGUE REMAINS THE CORE FABRIC OF OUR SOCIETY. FOREIGN IDEOLOGIES AND INFLUENCES THAT UNDERMINE OUR NATIONHOOD AND INTEGRITY SHOULD BE DISCOURAGED AT ALL TIMES.

WE APPLAUD E-MASWATI FOR BEING ABLE TO STRIKE A BALANCE BETWEEN MODERNITY AND OUR TRADITIONS WHILST PROTECTING WHAT DEFINES US FROM OTHER NATIONS OF THE WORLD.

2015 THE YEAR THAT WAS

THE NATION WILL KNOW THAT 2015 WAS A YEAR OF DIVERSE ACTIVITIES SUCH AS UMKHOSI WEMAGANU, GOOD FRIDAY, UMHLANGA REED DANCE AND INCWALA CEREMONY, AMONGST OTHER IMPORTANT NATIONAL EVENTS.

FURTHERMORE, THERE WAS COMMISSIONING OF A VARIETY OF PROJECTS THAT ARE GEARED TOWARDS THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR NATION.

MESSAGE TO MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

WE WISH TO THANK ALL MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT AND STAFF FOR A JOB WELL DONE. YOU SHOULD CONTINUE UPHOLDING THE INTEGRITY OF THIS VERY IMPORTANT INSTITUTION IN HIGH ESTEEM.

WE HAVE BEEN FOLLOWING THE LIVELY DEBATES DURING THE SECOND SESSION. THE NATION IS FURTHER ENCOURAGED THAT YOU HAVE BEEN ABLE TO PLAY YOUR OVERSIGHT ROLE EFFECTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY.

YOU HAVE ALSO PASSED A NUMBER OF BILLS THAT ARE GOING TO PROPEL OUR KINGDOM TO GREATER HEIGHTS.

WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO PUT THE INTEREST OF THE COUNTRY ABOVE YOUR OWN. THE NATION IS LOOKING UPON YOU TO CONTINUE PASSING BILLS AND POLICIES THAT WILL PROVIDE THE REQUIRED IMPETUS TOWARDS OUR NATIONAL VISION OF ATTAINING FIRST WORLD STATUS BY 2022.

NATION BUILDING

THIS YEAR WE APPEAL TO THE ENTIRE NATION TO BE COGNIZANT OF THE FACT THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS COUNTRY IS IN THE HANDS OF US ALL, COLLECTIVELY AND INDIVIDUALLY.

THE NATION WILL AGREE WITH ME THAT CITIZENS OF COUNTRIES THAT ARE HIGHLY DEVELOPED, WITH STRONG ECONOMIC GROWTH, ARE HARD WORKERS.

WE ARE ALL FAMILIAR WITH THE ADAGE THAT GOD HELPS THOSE WHO HELP THEMSELVES. WHERE THERE IS NO PAIN IN THE FORM OF HARD WORK, THERE WILL CERTAINLY BE NO GAIN IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR COUNTRY.

LAZINESS MAY PAY OFF FOR ONE NIGHT, BUT HARD WORK WILL PAY OFF FOR A BETTER LIFETIME. THEREFORE, FROM THIS DAY FORTH, MAY WE ALL DOUBLE OUR EFFORTS IN EVERYTHING THAT WE DO.

OUR NATIONAL MOTTO SHOULD BE; **“HOW CAN I CONTRIBUTE TO A MEANINGFUL SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF MY COUNTRY”**. I PUT THIS CHALLENGE BEFORE ALL EMASWATI TODAY, BOTH YOUNG AND OLD.

KINGDOM'S PERFORMANCE IN GDP

AS WE TAKE A MICROSCOPIC LOOK AT OUR ECONOMY, INDICATORS POINT TOWARDS A DECLINE IN THE GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP) FROM 2.5% IN 2014 TO 1.7% IN 2015.

IN TERMS OF INFLATION, THE COUNTRY EXPERIENCED ACCELERATION FROM 4.7% TO 5.7%. THE LOCAL CURRENCY REPORTED MASSIVE LOSSES AGAINST MAJOR CURRENCIES, DUE TO THE RAND BEHAVIOUR TO WHICH THE LILANGENI IS PEGGED.

THE PRIMARY SECTOR HAS REMAINED STATIC WITH NOTICEABLE DECLINES IN CROP AND LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION.

HOWEVER, THE SECONDARY SECTOR IS ESTIMATED TO GROW FROM 1.4% TO 2.0% IN 2016 AGAINST THE PREVIOUS YEAR. LET ME HASTEN TO INDICATE THAT THE MEDIUM TERM GROWTH IS DEPENDENT ON THE EXPORT SECTOR AND EXTENSIONS OF PREFERENTIAL TRADE AGREEMENTS AND ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIPS.

FISCAL SITUATION

THE FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY CONTINUES TO CHALLENGE US, BECAUSE OF THE HIGHLY UNPREDICTABLE SACU REVENUES THAT REMAIN ONE OF THE BIGGEST TESTS OF OUR TIME.

FOR THE 2016/17 FISCAL YEAR, IT IS PROJECTED THAT SACU RECEIPTS WILL FALL FURTHER THAN THE E6.9 BILLION OF THE YEAR 2015/16. WE THEREFORE NEED TO FASTEN OUR BELTS 'TIGHTER' IN ORDER TO PREPARE FOR THIS PREDICAMENT.

OUR PLANS FOR THE PERIOD AHEAD SHOULD BE FOCUSED ON THE TRANSFORMATION IMPERATIVES THAT WILL ACCELERATE GROWTH, ERADICATE POVERTY, CREATE JOB OPPORTUNITIES, ACHIEVE FOOD SECURITY IN LIGHT OF THE PERSISTENT DROUGHT AND REDUCE INEQUALITY.

IT REQUIRES GOVERNMENT SPENDING TO BE ALIGNED TO AVAILABLE RESOURCES. EFFORTS SHOULD ALSO BE MADE TO IMPROVE THE REGULATORY FRAMEWORK IN BUSINESS BY REMOVING CONSTRAINTS WHICH HINDER PUBLIC PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS (PPPS) AND FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENTS.

WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT THE INVESTOR ROADMAP PROGRAMME WILL CONTINUE TO IMPROVE THE EASE OF DOING BUSINESS IN THE KINGDOM, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE SWAZILAND INVESTMENT PROMOTION AUTHORITY.

PENSION FUNDS 30% FOR LOCAL INVESTMENT

AS A COUNTRY FACED WITH A CHALLENGE OF COMING UP WITH ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF REVENUE, AN OPPORTUNITY HAS PRESENTED ITSELF IN THE FORM OF THE REPATRIATED PENSION FUNDS

OUR LEGISLATION CALLS UPON ALL PENSION, RETIREMENT AND INSURANCE FUNDS TO INVEST AT LEAST 30% OF THEIR ASSET HOLDINGS WITHIN THE COUNTRY.

THE INTENTION OF THIS PROVISION WAS TO ENCOURAGE DOMESTIC INVESTMENTS TO GROW THE ECONOMY WHILST PROTECTING THE RETURNS FOR THESE FUNDS.

UTILISATION OF THESE RESOURCES BY THE LOCAL BUSINESS COMMUNITY, REQUIRES CAREFUL PLANNING AND IDENTIFICATION OF VIABLE LARGE SCALE PROJECTS THAT WOULD YIELD RETURNS RANGING IN THE BILLIONS OF EMALANGENI.

WE DO RECOGNISE THE PROJECTS THAT HAVE BEEN LAUNCHED BY THE PENSION FUNDS AND WE STILL ENCOURAGE EMSWATI TO MULTIPLY THESE INITIATIVES.

WE ENCOURAGE PARTNERSHIPS WITHIN THE BUSINESS SECTOR, INCORPORATING THE SMALL, MEDIUM AND LARGE SCALE ENTERPRISES THAT WOULD ENHANCE CAPACITY TO TAKE UP AND DELIVER MULTI-BILLION PROJECTS FOR THE COUNTRY.

THE SOONER WE JOIN OUR EFFORTS TOWARDS MAXIMISING THIS OPPORTUNITY, THE QUICKER WE CAN REALISE A TURNAROUND OF OUR ECONOMY.

MINING AND QUARRY

A LOT OF WORK LIES AHEAD OF US IN DEVELOPING THE MINING AND QUARRY SECTOR IN THE COUNTRY, PARTICULARLY ON DOWNSTREAM DEVELOPMENT OF OUR MINERALS.

WE ENCOURAGE GOVERNMENT TO ENSURE THAT THE NATION BENEFITS FROM PROCESSING ZONES FOR VALUE ADDITION OF OUR MINERALS AND JOB CREATION AS SOON AS

POSSIBLE, GUIDED BY AN APPROPRIATE POLICY IN THIS REGARD.

THIS POLICY SHOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY LEGISLATION THAT WILL ADEQUATELY SAFEGUARD THE NATIONAL INTERESTS AND PREVENT EXPORT OF OUR RAW MINERALS. THE CENTRAL BANK AND ALL RELEVANT STRUCTURES MUST ALSO PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE SAFEKEEPING OF OUR PRECIOUS STONES.

THE COUNTRY LOOKS FORWARD TO THE COMMISSIONING OF THE GOLD MINE AT LUFABA AND THE MULTIPLE BENEFITS TO ACCRUE FOR THE COUNTRY.

CLIMATE CHANGE

THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY CONTINUES TO BE SERIOUSLY CONCERNED WITH CLIMATE CHANGE AS IT REMAINS A THREAT TO EVERY LIVING ORGANISM AND SOCIO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE CAN BE OBSERVED IN A CROSS RANGE OF SECTORS, FROM WATER, ECOSYSTEMS, BIODIVERSITY, HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND SETTLEMENT, FOOD PRODUCTION AND SECURITY, TO HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT.

WE ARE PLEASED THAT, THE PARIS AGREEMENT WHICH WAS ADOPTED DURING COP 21 RECOGNIZES THAT THERE IS A

NEED TO STRENGTHEN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES' ABILITY TO DEAL WITH THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND BUILD RESILIENCE.

DEVELOPING COUNTRIES LIKE OUR KINGDOM REMAIN ON THE FRONTLINE OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND ARE ALREADY EXPERIENCING IMPACTS SUCH AS THE CURRENT DROUGHT AND SEVERE AND LONGER HEATWAVES THIS SEASON.

THIS IS ALREADY JEOPARDISING GAINS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY, HUNGER, AND HIV/AIDS THAT THE COUNTRY HAS ACHIEVED OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS.

WE ARE PLEASED THAT THE WORLD FURTHER AGREED TO COMMIT DEVELOPED COUNTRIES TO PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR ADAPTATION TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES THROUGH THE PROVISION OF FINANCE, TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND CAPACITY BUILDING.

WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS SUPPORT SINCE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES LIKE THE KINGDOM SUFFER THE MOST AND YET WE DO NOT POLLUTE THE ENVIRONMENT.

AGRICULTURE

OUR MAJOR SOURCE OF EMPLOYMENT, THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR, WHICH IS THE TRADITIONAL BACKBONE AND KEY DRIVER OF OUR ECONOMY, HAS BEEN HARDEST HIT BY THE DROUGHT SITUATION.

IN 2015 AGRICULTURE SHOWED A DISAPPOINTING PERFORMANCE, ESTIMATED TO BE JUST ABOUT STATIC AT

0.3%. SUGAR PRODUCTION HAS BEEN LARGELY AFFECTED WITH THE LIVESTOCK SECTOR EXPERIENCING SIGNIFICANT LOSSES.

HOWEVER, WE CANNOT AFFORD TO THROW OUR HANDS IN THE AIR IN DESPAIR. THE EFFECTS OF THE DROUGHT VARY IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE COUNTRY, PROVIDING US WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO UTILISE EXISTING LAND AND PRODUCTIVE SOILS TO INCREASE FOOD PRODUCTION.

A CAREFUL ANALYSIS NEEDS TO BE CARRIED OUT TO DETERMINE WHICH PRODUCTS CAN BEST YIELD ECONOMIC BENEFIT AND GENERATE EMPLOYMENT.

LET EVERY HOMESTEAD MAKE AN EFFORT TO PLANT A CROP WHILE AREAS THAT ARE BLESSED WITH WATER ARE ENCOURAGED TO FULLY UTILISE THE AVAILABLE LAND TO SUPPLEMENT THE FOOD SHORTFALL IN OTHER AREAS.

THE LESSONS TO BE DRAWN FROM THIS EXPERIENCE IS THE NEED TO INVEST IN WATER HARVESTING TECHNOLOGIES AND IRRIGATION SYSTEMS THAT WILL HELP US COPE WITH ANY ADVERSE WEATHER PATTERNS IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

THE NATION SHOULD ALSO PURSUE THE PROGRAMME OF UTILISING AVAILABLE FARMS FOR FOOD PRODUCTION. ONCE ALL APPROPRIATE LOGISTICS HAVE BEEN PUT IN PLACE, THE

NATION WILL BE INFORMED OF THE TASK TEAM TO DRIVE THIS PROGRAMME.

ITS MANDATE WILL EXPAND TO RURAL COMMUNITIES TO ENCOURAGE SUBSISTENCE FARMERS TO COMMERCIALISE AND ALSO ASSESS SUITABLE AREAS FOR MASS FOOD PRODUCTION IN ORDER TO MINIMISE THE EFFECTS OF THIS BARREN SPELL.

HEALTH

AS A NATION WE ENCOURAGE CITIZENS TO ADOPT HEALTHY LIFESTYLES. WE NEED TO ENGAGE IN THE PRACTICE OF PHYSICAL EXERCISE, UNDERTAKING REGULAR CHECK-UPS FOR EARLY DETECTION OF DISEASES AND ADOPTING PROPER EATING HABITS, AS THIS WILL SAVE LIVES AND HELP US LIVE LONGER.

AS COMMUNITIES, WE ALSO NEED TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT DECENT STANDARDS OF LIVING WITH ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER AT REASONABLE DISTANCES. WHERE THERE ARE WATER SHORTAGES, WE MUST MAKE MEANS TO AVOID THE POSSIBLE OUTBREAK OF DISEASES.

GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO ENSURE THAT APPROPRIATE FACILITIES, AMBULANCES AND MEDICATION

ARE PROVIDED TO SUPPORT QUALITY HEALTH SERVICE DELIVERY.

THE NATION WILL BE PLEASED TO KNOW THAT THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW NATIONAL REFERRAL HOSPITAL IS AT AN ADVANCED STAGE.

THE COMPLETION OF THIS HOSPITAL WILL ENSURE THAT THE REFERRALS THROUGH PHALALA AND CIVIL SERVICE FUND ARE REDUCED TO A VERY MINIMAL LEVEL.

FURTHERMORE, A CHEMOTHERAPY UNIT HAS BEEN COMPLETED AT THE MBABANE GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL AND IS PROVIDING SERVICES FOR BREAST CANCER TREATMENT.

WE NEED TO DEVELOP THIS FACILITY SO THAT MORE CANCER PATIENTS CAN BE TREATED LOCALLY, CONSIDERING THE FACT THAT THESE FORM THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF REFERRALS THROUGH THE PHALALA FUND TO NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES.

WE APPLAUD GOVERNMENT, WORKING WITH ALL STAKEHOLDERS, FOR ENHANCING THE CORDIAL PARTNERSHIPS IT HAS WITH A VARIETY OF MEDICAL SPECIALISTS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO EXTEND SERVICES WITHIN THE PUBLIC SECTOR HOSPITALS.

ENDING AIDS IN SWAZILAND:

THE YEAR 2016 SETS THE PACE FOR IMPLEMENTING INITIATIVES AIMED AT ENDING AIDS THROUGH STRATEGIES THAT ARE INCLUSIVE OF ALL INDIVIDUALS AND DEEPLY ROOTED IN COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP.

MASWATI YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO KNOW YOUR HIV STATUS AS ONE OF THE BASIC REQUIREMENTS OF HEALTHY LIVING. LIKewise, NO LISWATI SHOULD BE DENIED ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE, INCLUDING HIV TREATMENT.

OUR FIRM RESOLVE TO MAKE THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI AN AIDS FREE SOCIETY BY 2022, CONTINUES TO INSPIRE AND MOTIVATE US AS A NATION TO TAKE CONCRETE ACTIONS TOWARDS SAVING EVERY SINGLE SWAZI LIFE WITH RESPECT AND DIGNITY.

I WISH, THEREFORE, TO RENEW OUR COMMITMENT TO INCREASE THE ALLOCATION OF DOMESTIC RESOURCES TO THE AIDS RESPONSE WITH AN EMPHASIS THIS YEAR ON INVESTING IN HIV PREVENTION PROGRAMMES SO THAT OUR DREAM OF A NATION WITH ZERO NEW HIV INFECTIONS IS MET AND REALIZED.

WE ARE ENCOURAGED BY THE DECREASING RATE OF NEW INFECTIONS BUT THIS DOES NOT MEAN WE SHOULD RELAX. WE MUST REACH A STAGE WHERE WE CAN CELEBRATE LIKE THOSE COUNTRIES THAT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ACHIEVE 100% ERADICATION OF EBOLA.

WE ARE AWARE THAT AIDS TREATMENT REQUIRES EXPENSIVE DRUGS SO INVESTMENT IN DRUG MANUFACTURING TO REDUCE THIS COST IS AN AREA THIS COUNTRY NEEDS TO FOCUS ON.

WE EXTEND OUR APPRECIATION TO OUR FRIENDS AND PARTNERS FOR THE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE FIGHT AGAINST HIV AND AIDS.

WELFARE OF CHILDREN AND THE ELDERLY

GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO INVEST TIMELY AND APPROPRIATELY IN THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN BECAUSE THEY ARE KEY TO THE FUTURE OF THIS COUNTRY AND THE ATTAINMENT OF THE CONTINENTAL VISION 2063.

IT IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE THAT THE PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN WHO ARE EXPOSED TO VIOLENCE IS REDUCED BOTH AT HOME AND SCHOOL.

TO ENSURE EQUITY IN OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL CHILDREN, GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE SOCIAL PROTECTION SERVICES TO ORPHANED AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN.

DESPITE THE MEAGRE FINANCIAL RESOURCES, GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO CONTINUING THE SOCIAL SUPPORT FOR OUR SENIOR CITIZENS FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR KINGDOM.

THE NATION AT LARGE IS URGED TO SUPPORT THE WELFARE OF THE ELDERLY AS WELL. THE YOUNG AND THE WORKING CLASS HAVE TO MAKE AN EFFORT TO TAKE CARE OF THE SENIOR CITIZENS OF THE COUNTRY, PARTICULARLY THEIR PARENTS.

EDUCATION

THE KINGDOM RECOGNIZES THE IMPORTANCE OF RELEVANT EDUCATION AND SKILLS IN THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE ECONOMY.

TO THIS END, EFFORTS ARE BEING MADE TO BROADEN THE CURRICULA AT GENERAL SCHOOL LEVEL AND TO RE-ALIGN PROGRAMMES AT POST-SECONDARY LEVEL.

THE GLOBAL ECONOMY IS CHANGING RAPIDLY AND AS NEW TECHNOLOGIES ARE BEING INTRODUCED, MORE APPROPRIATELY TRAINED HUMAN RESOURCE IS REQUIRED.

CLEARLY EDUCATION PAVES THE WAY TO ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR ANY COUNTRY. WE ENCOURAGE GOVERNMENT TO CONTINUE PRIORITIZING EDUCATION BY PROVIDING SUFFICIENT RESOURCES TO THIS SECTOR.

STRENGTHENING HUMAN CAPITAL FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

THE NATION WELCOMES THE COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN THE UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND AND THE ROYAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY PARK.

THIS RELATIONSHIP WILL HELP TO UPSCALE HUMAN CAPITAL, STRENGTHEN UNISWA PROGRAMMES AND HELP TO ESTABLISH LINKS WITH INNOVATION, INCUBATION, PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING PROGRAMMES.

THROUGH THE INNOVATION PARKS, THERE IS GREAT POTENTIAL FOR THIS COUNTRY TO IMPROVE AGRICULTURE, AGRO-PROCESSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THROUGH INDUSTRIALISATION, INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND INVESTMENT.

WE ENCOURAGE GOVERNMENT TO DEVELOP THIS SECTOR AS WE CAN BENEFIT A LOT AND FURTHER CREATE JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY THE YOUTH.

WE ALSO LOOK FORWARD TO THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE FIRST PHASE OF THE SCIENCE AND BIO-TECHNOLOGY PARK THIS YEAR.

CORRUPTION

FOR THE COUNTRY TO ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, THE ROOT CAUSE OF CORRUPTION MUST BE DEALT WITH AND ERADICATED COMPLETELY, ONCE AND FOR ALL.

THERE ARE SIGNS OF PROGRESS, BUT THERE IS PLENTY OF ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT. WE NOW NEED TO LOOK INTO THE AREAS THAT ARE FRUSTRATING THE MEANS TO END CORRUPTION, SO THAT WE ADDRESS THESE SHORTCOMINGS AND ENSURE THE COUNTRY IS TOTALLY FREE FROM THIS PROBLEM.

GOVERNMENT MUST ENFORCE STRINGENT CONTROLS TO ENSURE VALUE FOR MONEY AND SERVICE DELIVERY OBJECTIVES THAT ARE SUPPORTED BY PRUDENT PURCHASES OF GOODS AND SERVICES.

THOSE WHO ARE BENEFITING FROM THIS SINFUL SCOURGE SHOULD BE ASHAMED BECAUSE THEY ARE ENEMIES OF OUR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

WE URGE THE ANTI-CORRUPTION ORGAN TO CONTINUE SHARPENING ITS APPARATUS TO ARREST THIS SYNDROME.

THE ANTI CORRUPTION UNIT AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS, SHOULD WORK TOGETHER TO ENSURE CORRUPTION IS ELIMINATED.

SADC SUMMIT

THIS COUNTRY IS A MEMBER OF MANY INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS, INCLUDING OUR OWN REGIONAL ORGANISATION SADC, WHERE WE PARTICIPATE MEANINGFULLY.

THIS YEAR THE COUNTRY WILL HOST THE 36TH SADC SUMMIT OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT. THE NATION HAS BEEN HONOURED TO HOST THIS SUMMIT ONCE AGAIN AND WE URGE EVERY CITIZEN TO CONTRIBUTE TO THIS MEMORABLE SUMMIT.

THE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF SADC, IS TO MAKE SURE THAT ALL OUR PEOPLE IN THE REGION GET TO ENJOY AN ACCEPTABLE STANDARD OF LIVING WHERE ISSUES OF EMPLOYMENT, FOOD SECURITY, QUALITY HEALTH AND GOOD EDUCATION, AMONG OTHERS, ARE GUARANTEED.

WE ARE WELL AWARE THAT THERE IS NO COUNTRY THAT CAN ACHIEVE THIS GOAL AND SURVIVE IN ISOLATION.

THEREFORE, THROUGH SADC, WE ARE ABLE TO COME TOGETHER TO DISCUSS IMPEDIMENTS TO OUR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

OUR MESSAGE TO THE NATION IS, LET US ALL WELCOME OUR DELEGATES WITH LOVE AND KINDNESS. WE SHOULD PROVIDE THEM WITH ALL THE FACILITIES THAT WILL MAKE THEIR VISIT TO THE COUNTRY A MEMORABLE ONE. WE SHOULD MAKE THEM FEEL AT HOME AWAY FROM HOME.

GLOBAL ISSUES

TODAY THE WORLD IS FACED WITH NUMEROUS WARS THAT HAVE DEVASTATED THE LIVES OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN, INCLUDING THE ELDERLY, CAUSING MIGRATION, SOME THROUGH THE SEA WHERE OTHERS HAVE PERISHED BEFORE THEY EVEN REACH THEIR INTENDED DESTINATIONS.

THIS HAS FORCED THEM TO BECOME REFUGEES IN OTHER COUNTRIES. TERRORISM IS AN ENEMY OF PEACE AND CO-EXISTENCE IN THE WORLD.

THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY IS LIVING UNDER PERPETUAL FEAR OF TERRORISM AND REVOLUTIONS ALL OVER THE WORLD; IN THE MIDDLE EAST, EUROPE, ASIA, NORTH AMERICA AND AFRICA, TO NAME BUT A FEW REGIONS. PEOPLE NO LONGER TRAVEL PEACEFULLY AS THEY DO NOT KNOW WHERE TERRORISTS WILL STRIKE NEXT.

THESE ARE SITUATIONS THAT ARE NOT DESIROUS FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD. THE AU AND UN HAVE TO TAKE A LEADING ROLE TO END THIS.

THERE IS A NEED FOR A VERY UNITED FRONT WITH A COMMON POSITION TO CONFRONT THIS ENEMY THAT IS MAKING THE LIVES OF THE PEOPLE DIFFICULT.

AS THE AU PURSUES THE 2063 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA, IT NEEDS TO STRENGTHEN THE PEACE AND SECURITY ARCHITECTURE TO ENABLE IT TO PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN MAINTAINING PEACE AND STABILITY IN OUR BELOVED CONTINENT.

TO OUR INTERNATIONAL FRIENDS AND PARTNERS, WE THANK YOU MOST HEARTILY FOR THE SUPPORT YOU CONTINUE TO EXTEND TO THE KINGDOM OF E-SWATINI.

MANY OF YOUR PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS HAVE GIVEN A LIFE LINE TO OUR CITIZENS. WE REQUEST YOU TO TAKE OUR SINCERE APPRECIATION TO YOUR RESPECTIVE HEADQUARTERS YOUR EXCELLENCIES.

CONCLUSION

IN CONCLUSION WE WISH TO THANK ALL E-MASWATI FOR WORKING TOGETHER WITH A COMMON OBJECTIVE OF SUPPORTING NATIONAL PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS THAT ARE MEANT TO CONTRIBUTE TO SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF OUR NATION.

WE ALSO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO THANK EVERYONE WHO HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN THE PREPARATIONS OF TODAY'S EVENT AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO ANOTHER EVENTFUL YEAR OF LIVELY DEBATES IN PARLIAMENT.

THEME FOR 2016

NOW THAT WE HAVE SET OUT THE ROADMAP FOR GOVERNMENT, THE THEME FOR 2016-17 IS;

GROWTH FOR ALL, WITH ALL, BY OPTIMISING, INNOVATING, BOOSTING DOMESTIC REVENUE AND SPENDING EFFICIENTLY.

THIS THEME SHOULD BE A GUIDING PRINCIPLE AS GOVERNMENT PREPARES THE BUDGET FOR THIS FINANCIAL YEAR.

DECLARATION

IT NOW GIVES ME THE GREATEST PLEASURE TO DECLARE THAT THE 3RD SESSION OF THE 10TH PARLIAMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI IS OFFICIALLY OPENED.

I THANK YOU, MAY THE ALMIGHTY GOD BLESS US ALL.