

MR. PRESIDENT,

YOUR EXCELLENCIES, HEADS OF STATES AND GOVERNMENT,

UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL,

DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES,

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

INTRODUCTION

MR. PRESIDENT,

I BRING WARM AND FRATERNAL GREETINGS FROM HIS MAJESTY KING MSWATI III, THE HEAD OF STATE AND INGWENYAMA OF THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI, THE QUEEN MOTHER INDLOVUKAZI AND THE ENTIRE SWAZI NATION.

HIS MAJESTY WOULD HAVE LOVED TO JOIN YOU ALL FOR THIS EMINENT OCCASION. HOWEVER, DUE TO OTHER PRESSING ENGAGEMENTS, HE HAS DELEGATED ME TO REPRESENT HIM AND DELIVER THE NATIONAL STATEMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI. OUR KINGDOM IS COMMITTED TO CONTRIBUTING TO GLOBAL ISSUES THAT AFFECT MANKIND IN THE UNIVERSE.

CONGRATULATIONS MR. PRESIDENT

MR. PRESIDENT,

ALLOW ME TO EXPRESS OUR SINCERE CONGRATULATIONS TO YOU MR. PRESIDENT ON YOUR ELECTION AS PRESIDENT OF THE 71ST SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY AS WELL AS COMMEND THE LEADERSHIP OF HIS EXCELLENCY MR. BAN-KI MOON, OUR OUTGOING SECRETARY GENERAL, WHO HAS PERFORMED A STERLING JOB AS LEADER OF OUR ORGANIZATION FOR THE PAST TEN (10) YEARS.

WE ALSO CONGRATULATE THE UNITED NATIONS STAFF FOR THE REMARKABLE WORK THEY DO IN MANY PARTS OF THE WORLD WHERE THEY PROMOTE PEACE AND CREATE A CONDUCIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR MANKIND TO LIVE IN, SOMETIMES UNDER VERY DIFFICULT SITUATIONS.

THEME FOR THE 71ST SESSION

MR. PRESIDENT,

THE THEME OF THIS SESSION: **"SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: A UNIVERSAL PUSH TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD"** CALLS UPON ALL OF US TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES AND CONTINENTS.

THE THEME OF THIS SESSION IS INDEED A CROSS-CUTTING SUBJECT WHICH COVERS EVERY ASPECT OF LIFE.

WE ARE PLEASED TO INFORM THIS AUGUST BODY THAT, THE KINGDOM HAS DONE A LOT TOWARDS MAINSTREAMING AND POPULARIZING THE SDG'S THROUGH PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS, EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT ALL LEVELS.

THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI HAS ALSO INTEGRATED THE GOALS INTO THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK. FURTHERMORE, APPROPRIATE INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN PUT IN PLACE TO ENSURE THAT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GOALS IS PROPERLY MONITORED AT ALL LEVELS.

BOTH THE EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE ARMS OF GOVERNMENT ARE FULLY INVOLVED AND PROGRESS IS PERIODICALLY REPORTED TO CABINET AND PARLIAMENT. OUR PURPOSE IS TO ACHIEVE ALL-INCLUSIVENESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SDG'S.

IN THIS WAY, WE INFUSE THE SPIRIT OF OWNERSHIP TO EVERY CITIZEN, SO THAT THEY UNDERSTAND AND APPRECIATE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SDG'S AND WHY THEY NEED TO PARTICIPATE IN THEIR IMPLEMENTATION BECAUSE WE DO NOT WANT TO LEAVE ANYONE BEHIND.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO UNDERLINE THAT THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS IS AT THE INFANCY STAGE. FURTHERMORE, AS EXPECTED, THE PROCESS IS FACED WITH TEETHING CHALLENGES DUE TO LIMITED HUMAN, TECHNOLOGICAL AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES, TO NAME BUT A FEW.

GOVERNMENT HAS TRANSLATED THE NATIONAL VISION, VISION 2022 INTO PRACTICAL AND FEASIBLE TARGETS TO EXPEDITE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND FOCUS THE COUNTRY'S EFFORTS TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS).

WE HAVE ESTABLISHED PROCEDURES FOR TRACKING PROGRESS IN THE ATTAINMENT OF THE FIRST WORLD STATUS. THE SET INDICATORS COVER EIGHT FOCAL AREAS NAMELY (1) ECONOMIC PROSPERITY, (2) EDUCATION, (3) HEALTH, (4) SERVICE DELIVERY, (5) INFRASTRUCTURE, (6) AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY, (7) GOVERNANCE AND (8) CORRUPTION.

IT IS AGAINST THIS BACKDROP THAT WE HAVE REVISED THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (NDS) WITH A VIEW OF EMPHASISING LINKAGES BETWEEN THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDA, THE SDGS AND AGENDA 2063.

FOR AN EXAMPLE, EDUCATION AND TRAINING IS ALIGNED TO GOAL 1, 4, AND 5 OF THE SDG. THE THEMATIC AREA IS ALSO LINKED TO GOAL 1, 2, AND 18 OF AGENDA 2063. THE COUNTRY WILL IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM BY ENACTING POLICIES THAT WILL REVOLUTIONISE THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THE KINGDOM.

THE STATE WILL DIRECT EFFORTS TOWARDS THE INTRODUCTION OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND INNOVATION (STI) AS WELL AS THE REDESIGN, AND PRESENTATION, OF TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL AND TRAINING EDUCATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM TO INCULCATE A CULTURE OF INNOVATION, CREATIVITY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP AT A TENDER AGE.

HEALTH IS ONE OF OUR NATIONAL TOP PRIORITY WHICH IS IN LINE WITH THEMATIC AREA 4 WHICH FOCUSES ON GOOD HEALTH. THIS THEMATIC AREA LINKS DIRECTLY TO GOALS 1 AND 3 OF AGENDA 2063 AND GOALS 1, 2, 3, AND 6 OF THE SDG.

UNDER THIS THEMATIC AREA, THE PRIORITISED STRATEGIES FOR THE COUNTRY'S HEALTH SECTOR INCLUDE PROMOTING HEALTH THROUGH THE LIFE COURSE, DISEASE PREVENTION, PROMPT AND EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT OF MEDICAL AND RELATED CONDITIONS, REHABILITATION, AND INFLUENCING HEALTH ACTIONS IN THE MAIN RELATED SECTORS.

THE COUNTRY WILL SPECIFICALLY STRENGTHEN HEALTH FINANCING AND INVESTMENT AND FAST-TRACK THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE TO GUARANTEE EQUITY, EFFICIENCY, AND EFFECTIVENESS IN THE PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES.

UNDER THEMATIC AREA 5, THE COUNTRY PRIORITISES THE CONSTRUCTION OF INFRASTRUCTURE THAT WILL ULTIMATELY ERADICATE THE HURDLES OF BEING A LANDLOCKED COUNTRY.

IN THIS SENSE, THE GOVERNMENT PRIORITISES ROAD CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE OF ROADS AND BUILDINGS; CIVIL AVIATION; SUSTAINABLE ENERGY; RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT; SAFE WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION; WATER RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT; HOUSING AND HUMAN SETTLEMENT; COMMUNICATIONS; AND THE ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE, AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT.

THESE PRIORITIES OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SWAZILAND LINK TO GOALS 7 AND 10 OF AGENDA 2063 AND GOALS 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, AND 15 OF THE SDG. THE COUNTRY WILL INCREASE THE COVERAGE OF THE RAIL NETWORK FROM 300KM TO 429KM ALONGSIDE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A RAIL SAFETY REGULATOR AND WILL FURTHER EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF MAKING RAIL TRANSPORTATION COMPETITIVE TO ROAD TRANSPORT.

THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI WILL CONTINUE WITH THE IMPLEMENTATIONS OF THESE PROGRAMMES AS THEIR KEY IN OUR DEVELOPMENT AGENDA. WE HAVE ALSO MADE A SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN A VARIETY OF SECTORS BUT OTHER CHALLENGES ARE REVERSING THE GAINS WE HAVE MADE IN THE PAST YEARS PARTICULARLY THE ISSUE OF HIV AND AIDS AND CLIMATE CHANGE AMONGST OTHER PLETHORA OF CHALLENGES THAT WE FACE AS DEVELOPING NATIONS.

CLIMATE CHANGE

MR. PRESIDENT,

THE KINGDOM IS COMMITTED TO ADDRESSING THE SCOURGE OF CLIMATE CHANGE. THE COUNTRY HAS FULLY PARTICIPATED IN ALL NEGOTIATIONS THAT CULMINATED INTO THE ADOPTION AND SUBSEQUENT SIGNING OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT.

THE NEGATIVE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE HAS BECOME A THORN IN THE ECONOMY OF ESWATINI. IT HAS DEPLETED OUR LIMITED FINANCIAL RESOURCES; KILLED AN ALARMING NUMBER OF OUR LIVESTOCK; AND DESTROYED MOST OF THE ECOSYSTEM.

THE DROUGHT HAS LED TO SERIOUS REDUCTION OF WATER REQUIRED FOR CROP PRODUCTION, HUMAN USE AND CONSUMPTION AND FOR SUSTENANCE OF THE REMAINING LIVESTOCK AND DISAPPEARING ECOSYSTEM. THIS HAS EXACERBATED FOOD AND NUTRITION INSECURITY FOR MANY OF PEOPLE NOT ONLY IN THE KINGDOM BUT THE SADC REGION AND THE AFRICAN CONTINENT AS A WHOLE.

MR. PRESIDENT, A HIGH PROPORTION OF OUR ECONOMIC ACTIVITY IS AGRO-BASED; THEREFORE, THE COUNTRY HAS CONTINUED TO FEEL THE HARSHNESS OF CLIMATE CHANGE BOTH AT THE SUBSISTENCE AND COMMERCIAL AGRICULTURAL LEVELS. IT IS AGAINST THIS BACKDROP, THE GOVERNMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI DECLARED DROUGHT, A NATIONAL DISASTER.

CO-OPERATION, INTEGRATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

MR. PRESIDENT,

INTEGRATION HAS BECOME A UNIVERSAL SUBJECT THAT TRANSCENDS ALL ASPECTS OF LIFE. IT HAS BEEN PROVEN THAT ANY DEVELOPMENT ACHIEVED BY INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES IS BECAUSE ITS NATIONALS HAVE PURPOSED TO WORK TOGETHER AS A COLLECTIVE ENTITY.

THIS IS TRUE WITH THE UNITED NATIONS FAMILY WHEREBY THE BASIS OF ALL OUR SUCCESS IS TOGETHERNESS AND UNITY IN DIVERSITY. WE HAVE COME TOGETHER IN OUR DIFFERENT SIZES AND WITH OUR DIVERSE CULTURES, TRADITIONS, ECONOMIES, POLITICAL AND SOCIAL INCLINATIONS TO COOPERATE TO BECOME A FORMIDABLE FAMILY READY TO ADDRESS ANY CHALLENGE AND ACHIEVE ANY OBJECTIVES WE SET OURSELVES.

INTEGRATION HAS SUCCEEDED IN HELPING NATIONS TO WORK TOGETHER FOR A COMMON OBJECTIVE AS REGIONS, CONTINENTS AND AS THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY.

MANY COUNTRIES HAVE SUCCEEDED IN DEVELOPING THEIR ECONOMIES BY COLLECTIVELY OBSERVING COMMON REGIONAL RULES IN ORDER TO PROMOTE A REGIONAL AGENDA.

COUNTRIES HAVE AGREED TO OPENING THEIR MARKETS IN ORDER TO FACILITATE A HIGH DEGREE OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY, BOOSTING TRADE AND JOB CREATION, AMONG OTHERS. PEACEFUL SOCIETIES HAVE BEEN CREATED THROUGH INTEGRATION. INTEGRATION IS ONE OF THE KEY INGREDIENTS THAT PROPEL THE PUSH TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD.

MR. PRESIDENT,

THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI HAS CONTINUED TO BE A BIG AND ACTIVE PLAYER IN PROMOTING REGIONAL AND CONTINENTAL INTEGRATION, ESPECIALLY ECONOMIC INTEGRATION. WE ARE A MEMBER OF SEVERAL INTEGRATION ARRANGEMENTS IN THE SOUTHERN AND EASTERN AFRICA REGION AS WELL AS AT THE CONTINENTAL LEVEL.

LAST MONTH MR. PRESIDENT, THE KINGDOM OF SWAZILAND HOSTED THE 36TH THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY (SADC) SUMMIT HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT. THE THEME OF THE SUMMIT WAS "**RESOURCE MOBILIZATION FOR INVESTMENT IN SUSTAINABLE ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR AN INCLUSIVE SADC INDUSTRIALIZATION FOR THE PROSPERITY IN THE REGION**".

THIS THEME IS IN CONGRUENCE AND INTERFACES WITH THE THEME OF THIS ASSEMBLY; IT IS A BUILDING BLOCK THAT AUGMENTS THE PUSH TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD AT REGIONAL LEVEL. THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI WAS ALSO GIVEN THE TASK TO LEAD THE REGIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR ONE CALENDAR YEAR. WE ACCEPTED THIS TASK WITH DIGNITY AND HUMILITY.

THE SADC SUMMIT THEME IS IN LINE WITH ALL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS, PARTICULARLY GOAL 7: "ENSURE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE, SUSTAINABLE AND MODERN ENERGY FOR ALL"; GOAL 9: "BUILD RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE, PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRIALIZATION AND FOSTER INNOVATION"; AND GOAL 8: "PROMOTE INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH, EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK FOR ALL", AMONG OTHERS.

THE KINGDOM OF SWAZILAND IS ALSO PARTY TO A NUMBER OF TRADE INTEGRATION ARRANGEMENTS INCLUDING THE COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA (COMESA), THE TRIPARTITE FREE TRADE AREA (TFTA), THE ONGOING NEGOTIATIONS OF THE CONTINENTAL (AFRICA) FREE TRADE AREA (CFTA) AS WELL AS THE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (EPAS).

THESE TRADE AGREEMENTS HAVE OPENED UP PREFERENTIAL MARKET ACCESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE COUNTRY TO MAXIMIZE ITS TRADE AT THE REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS.

THESE TRADE ARRANGEMENTS ARE EXPECTED TO BOOST THE PRODUCTION CAPACITY OF COUNTRIES IN THE REGION, VALUE ADDITION ON PRIMARY PRODUCTS THUS LEADING TO INDUSTRIALIZATION, JOB CREATION AND SUBSEQUENTLY, POVERTY REDUCTION. REGIONAL COOPERATION AND INTEGRATION WOULD THEREFORE, REINFORCE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND THE PUSH TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD.

DIALOGUE AND CONSULTATION

MR. PRESIDENT,

ONE OF THE KEY ELEMENTS TO ASSIST THE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS INVOLVES CONSULTATION. SINCE TIME IMMEMORIAL, THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI HAS INFUSED CONSULTATION IN ITS WAY OF LIFE.

IT IS A PROCESS THAT IS APPRECIATED, ACCEPTED AND EMBRACED BY EVERY MEMBER OF THE GENERAL POPULACE AND AT ALL LEVELS. IT IS A FORUM AVAILED TO ALL CITIZENS OF THE COUNTRY WHERE THEY LITERALLY CONTRIBUTE TO ALL ISSUES OF ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL NATURE.

THE KINGDOM'S CONSULTATION PROCESS IS A UNIQUE BUT SIMPLE AND AN OPEN BOOK PROCESS THAT ACCOMMODATES PEOPLE AT ALL STAGES AND LEVELS IN TERMS OF AGE, GENDER, SOCIAL STATUS, EDUCATION AND POLITICAL INCLINATION, AMONG OTHERS.

IT WAS ONLY LAST MONTH (AUGUST) THAT THE NATION CONVENED AT LUDZIDZINI ROYAL RESIDENCE FOR DAYS TO DISCUSS ISSUES OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE. WE CALL THIS PEOPLES PARLIAMENT OR SIBAYA. THIS IS A NATIONAL CONSULTATION PROCESS THAT AFFORDS EVERY SWAZI CITIZEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY.

SUCH AN ALL-INCLUSIVE PROCESS IS A SPRINGBOARD IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND A PUSH TO TRANSFORMING OUR KINGDOM AND, IN EXTENSION, THE UNIVERSAL PUSH TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD IN A PEACEFUL MANNER.

SYRIA

MR PRESIDENT,

THE CONFLICT SITUATION IN SYRIA CONTINUES TO BE A GREAT CAUSE FOR CONCERN TO ALL OF US. WE CALL UPON ALL PARTIES INVOLVED TO IMMEDIATELY FIND AN AMICABLE SOLUTION TO THIS IMPASSE.

MANY LIVES HAVE BEEN LOST AND THOUSANDS SYRIANS HAVE BECOME REFUGEES IN MANY PARTS OF THE WORLD. WE THEREFORE URGE THE UN TO ADDRESS THIS PROBLEM IN ORDER TO BRING A CONDUCTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR THE PEOPLE OF SYRIA TO LIVE IN.

AS WE DO SO, MAY THOSE ENTRUSTED WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY OF BRINGING ABOUT PEACE IN SYRIA NOT BE FOUND IN CONFLICT WITH ONE ANOTHER.

THEY SHOULD CONCENTRATE THEIR EFFORTS TOWARDS RESTORING PEACE IN SYRIA. THEY SHOULD ALSO SPEAK IN ONE VOICE AND ADOPT A TONE AND STRATEGY THAT GIVES HOPE TO THE SYRIANS WHO ARE DESPERATELY IN NEED OF PEACE.

CONCLUSION

MR. PRESIDENT,

IN CONCLUSION, THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI WOULD LIKE TO EMPHASIZE THAT THE PUSH TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD WILL NOT BE EFFECTIVE AND ADEQUATE IF SOME INDIVIDUALS, COMMUNITIES, COUNTRIES, REGIONS AND CONTINENTS ARE LEFT BEHIND. IT SHOULD NEVER ESCAPE OUR MINDS THAT EVERY INDIVIDUAL HAS A PART TO PLAY IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND SUBSEQUENTLY IN THE PUSH TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD.

THIS MEANS THAT THERE IS NEED FOR UNIVERSAL PARTNERING WITH EACH OTHER AT ALL STAGES AND AT ALL LEVELS AND BY ALL COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD. SUCH AN ALL-INCLUSIVE PRACTICE SHOULD ALSO BE ENHANCED AS FAR AS UNITED NATIONS FAMILY MEMBERS' REPRESENTATION IN ALL BODIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

ACCORDING TO THE UN CHARTER, THE UN MISSION IS TO REAFFIRM FAITH IN FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS, IN THE DIGNITY AND WORTH OF HUMAN PERSON, IN THE EQUAL RIGHTS OF MEN AND WOMEN AND OF NATIONS LARGE AND SMALL.

ACCORDINGLY, THE 23 MILLION PEOPLE OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA ON TAIWAN SHOULD ENJOY THE SAME FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AS OTHER PEOPLE. TAIWAN IS MOSTLY UNABLE TO ATTEND MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES OF UN SPECIALIZED AGENCIES, THE WELFARE OF ITS PEOPLE AND BY EXTENSION ALL MANKIND IS ADVERSELY AFFECTED. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THEIR MEMBERSHIP WILL ADD VALUE TO THE FAMILY'S UNIVERSAL PUSH TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD.

REFORM OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

BY THE SAME TOKEN, MY DELEGATION REITERATES AND MAINTAINS ITS CALL FOR AFRICA'S VOICE TO BE CONSPICUOUS AND HEARD IN THE UNITED NATION SECURITY COUNCIL. THIS IS AN APPEAL THAT HAS BEEN ON THE AGENDA FOR THE PAST FIFTEEN (15) YEARS, SINCE ADOPTION OF THE EZULWINI CONSENSUS IN 2005 BY THE AFRICAN UNION HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT.

MY DELEGATION BELIEVES THAT THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATION OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENT IN THIS UN ORGAN CAN IMMENSELY CONTRIBUTE TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND TO THE UNIVERSAL PUSH TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD.

FINALLY, ONCE AGAIN MR. PRESIDENT, WE WISH THE UNITED NATIONS A PROSPEROUS FUTURE AS IT ADDRESSES THE MULTIPLE CHALLENGES THAT WE ARE FACED WITH IN MANY PARTS OF THE WORLD.

THANK YOU. MAY THE ALMIGHTY GOD BLESS US ALL.