



**Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Swaziland  
to the United Nations**

Statement by  
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At the

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*Please Check Against Delivery*

Madam Chair  
Excellences  
Distinguished Guests  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, my delegation commends you in the manner you have been directing the proceedings of this important session of the High-Level Forum. Let me also take this opportunity to appreciate and thank the Secretary-General for his report as well as my colleagues for the tuition in sharing country experiences in the course of implementation of the SDGs.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Representative of the Republic of Ecuador on behalf of the G77 and China.

**Chair,**

The Kingdom of Swaziland embraces and renews its commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in working towards attainment of the SDGs. In this view, the country has taken great strides in dovetailing domestic policies with essential elements required for the smooth and successful implementation of the SDGs.

The Kingdom is aware that all the goals are important and need to be implemented in order to achieve sustainable development, however, it is important to underscore that the country has prioritized and aligned its development path with the goals that leverage the concept of leaving no one behind. Further, we are more concerned with impact the goals have on the wellbeing of the general populace particularly at the grassroots level and the marginalized groups.

In doing so, the Kingdom has prioritized ensuring that the population is not only aware of the goals but they comprehend what they mean to their everyday lives. The ultimate aim is to instill ownership of the SDGs so

that the population actively participate and contribute to the implementation. Nonetheless, this has remained work in progress therefore, the Government strongly believes that as we progress towards 2030, the mindset of the population will be transformed and everyone will eventually actively participate in the implementation process.

**Chair,**

Swaziland as a small, vulnerable and developing landlocked country, the implementation of the goals continues to be a learning curve particularly in view of resources required in this regard. Allow me to articulate some progress on the goals under review in this session.

On Goal 1, the country has put in place several initiatives by prioritizing the less privileged and marginalized groups. Social security programmes are under implementation covering the orphaned and vulnerable children; children living with disabilities; and the elderly, among others. Further, the country has ensured that every school-going child is afforded an opportunity attend school being aware that they are the future generation to see implementation of the goals through in 2030 when many of us would have called it a day.

Specific programmes currently undertaken in this regard include catering for education needs for the orphaned and vulnerable children that have either lost one or both of their parents; providing free primary education to all school-going children; establishing and/or restructuring of school facilities to cater for the needs of children living with disabilities in order to ease their movement between and within classrooms; and providing grants for the elderly above the age of 60 years.

**Challenges:** The overarching challenge is sustenance of the initiatives in view of fiscal difficulties facing the country as well as the difficult of proper identification and targeting of beneficiaries.

On Goal 2 that talks about ending hunger, achieve food security and improving nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture, the country has developed a programme that supports farmers to acquire inputs at an affordable price to ensure that they maximize production especially in high yield areas. Further, the Government has ensured that all farmers receive such support in view that agriculture has continued to be the backbone of the economy, particularly rural development. Farmers are also encouraged to produce and consume nutritional food.

**Challenges:** Due to severe drought that has affected the country during the past three years, the programme has experienced some delays. Sustenance of the programme is also a major challenge because of inadequacy of resources.

Chair,

The health of a nation is a basis for achieving the 17 SDGs as well need to be healthy in order to perform.

To this end, on Goal 3 that refers to ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages, the Kingdom has put in place a number of programmes to scale up progress in the implementation of the goal. Among these, the country has ventured on the construction of hospitals and clinics to ensure that the population has access to health care services within a radius of at least 8 km; scaling up of the Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission (PMTCT) of the HIV virus thus resulting to an increase in the number of healthy babies born to HIV infected mothers; and the establishment of waiting rooms for pregnant women at delivery centres in a bid to offer free pre- and post-natal care thus addressing maternal and under-five mortality complications on time, among others.

The Government has also taken over the full financing of the ... (ART) in order to ensure sustainability of the programme and eliminate reliance on donor support.

**Challenges:** The Government is still working towards ensuring that all places are covered by the programmes.

**Chair,**

Achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls is one of the goals that the Kingdom has taken great strides in ensuring that it is not only talked about but is prioritized and implemented at all costs. Therefore, in facilitating progress of implementation of Goal 5, a gender policy has been approved and a Bill against the abuse of women and girls has been tabled in Parliament.

The Government has also prioritized integration of gender issues in policies, programmes and in the country's development framework. Further, a number of laws have been amended to align them with the objectives of the Gender Act and Policy that ensures that the disadvantaged groups and in particular women, are afforded equal economic opportunities and are protected against domestic violence.

**Challenges:** The broad challenge is the full comprehension, acceptance and enforcement of relevant laws meant for effective implementation of the programmes as well as a change in mindset to grasp the importance of the Goal.

On Goal 9, that points at building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization and fostering innovation industry, the country has put in place various infrastructure that are of acceptable environmental standards. These are aimed at facilitating trade, access to services, fast-track industrial development as well as boosting economic performance of the country.

Included among these is the construction of the new international airport; new roads and dams; construction and/or upgrading of national hospitals; construction of schools to cater for the increase in enrolment as a result of the introduction of free primary education; introduction of rural water

supply and electrification programmes; as well as computerization of constituency offices to ensure decentralization of services.

**Challenges:** The main challenge is improving the road network system, particularly in rural areas where most of the roads are not yet tarred and therefore, are occasionally in bad shape during rainy seasons thus rendering some places inaccessible. Further, the communication network system needs to be upgraded in order to ensure effective internet connection and improved service delivery.

On Goal 14, aiming at conservation and sustainably utilization of oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, I must point out that as much as the Kingdom is a landlocked country, it has suffered the ripple effects of the vulnerable nature of oceans and marine resources especially because they play a prominent part in climate change mitigation. In this regard, to abate the challenges relating to drought, the Government has invested in earth dams to ensure adequate supply of water resources for domestic purposes as well as for enhancing agricultural production.

**Challenges:** The inconsistency in the availability of adequate water required for domestic, industrial and agricultural use remains a challenge. Further, pollution of water resources emanating from industrial production also exacerbates these challenges.

In closing, let me extend my delegation's gratitude to some of our development partners that have assisted with funding to progress the implementation process.

I thank you Chair for this opportunity to share my delegation's thoughts on the implementation of the SDGs.