

THE

COALITION

AGREEMENT

THE
COALITION AGREEMENT
FOR
STABILITY AND REFORM
LESOTHO'S SECOND COALITION
GOVERNMENT AGREEMENT
APRIL, 2015

This agreement is made by and between the following Political Parties:

The Democratic Congress (DC),

The Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD),

The Popular Front for Democracy (PFD),

The Basotho Congress Party (BCP),

The Lesotho People's Congress (LPC),

The Marematlou Freedom Party (MFP), and

The National Independent Party (NIP).

This document is the agreement of the coalition of parties commanding a majority in the National Assembly and thereby entitled to form a Coalition Government pursuant to s87(2) of the Constitution of Lesotho.

This document sets out the agreement for the operation of the Coalition Government for the duration of the five years of the ninth parliament.

A. BROAD OBJECTIVES

The Coalition Government adopts the following broad objectives:

- A1 To be a reformist government addressing fundamental issues of development in the Kingdom of Lesotho
- A2 To restore national peace and political stability
- A3 To deepen democracy and respect for human rights

- A4 To make transparency and good governance a hallmark of the government
- A5 To drive economic growth with a view to leading Lesotho out of the group of least developed nations within ten years
- A6 To place a greater focus on consultation and citizen participation
- A7 To enhance equality of opportunity for all citizens
- A8 To eliminate corruption at all levels of society and government
- A9 To make government more accountable to the people
- A10 To deepen national pride amongst Basotho
- A11 To deepen the relationship with regional and international partners

B. SPECIFIC COMMITMENTS

More specifically the Coalition Government commits itself to:

- B1 Growing the economy faster through institutional reforms, effective use of natural resources, infrastructure development, attracting investment on a basis that protects Lesotho's interests, and ensuring that a greater proportion of the earnings from natural resources remains in Lesotho
- B2 Enhancing the strategic management of natural resources through creating a Ministry of Water
- B3 Adopting a 'Lesotho Now' approach to drive economic development and create employment by results

oriented procurement practices, strategic leveraging of natural resources, and competitive regional and international negotiations

- B4 Creating a conducive environment for the growth of the Private sector through appropriate regulatory Framework Promoting the tourism industry
- B5 Promoting food security and commercial agriculture
- B6 Supporting Small, Micro and Medium Enterprises (SMMEs) through appropriate regulatory policies and access to finance
- B7 Focusing on identifying and maximising value added industries that create a balance between the export of raw materials such as diamonds, wool and mohair and job creation
- B8 Addressing social outcomes for the citizens of Lesotho by focussing on reducing poverty, reducing inequality and improving access to effective social services
- B9 Addressing the needs of vulnerable populations including orphans, children, young people, women, the elderly and people with disabilities
- B10 Addressing the welfare and needs of public servants.
- B11 Reviewing strategic bi-lateral and multi-lateral relationships to enhance the economic and social prospects of the citizens of Lesotho
- B12 Reviewing the movement and migration of Lesotho citizens

C. PRIORITY POLICY PROGRAMME

The Coalition Government agrees on the following areas of work (which are not presented in a strict order of priority):

C1 Reducing poverty and addressing the plight of villagers

The broad policy objectives and specific commitments of the Coalition Government which are identified in this agreement reflect its serious concerns about Lesotho's status of being a "least developed country". Despite the existence of the National Strategic Development Plan and Vision 2020, many Basotho, including those in villages and urban areas live in poverty, are unemployed, experience hunger, have no access to appropriate health services, and are serviced through poor infrastructure.

The plight of the poor and those living in villages will be the first priority of the Coalition Government. It will require all Ministries to prepare a detailed plan for Cabinet on how the issue of poverty reduction will be addressed. The requirement will be that this plan should reflect the National Strategic Development Plan, Vision 2020 and the Post 2015 Development Agenda.

The Coalition Government will then develop and implement an integrated programme to address poverty and the plight of villagers.

C2 Reform of the Public Service

The Coalition Government will immediately embark on a reform programme to transform the public service into a professional, independent, accountable and effective service. The Public Service Commission will be strengthened to ensure that appointments to the public service are transparent and based on merit. All accountability mechanisms for the public service will be enhanced and there will be greater parliamentary scrutiny of the public service.

C3 Reform of Parliament

Parliament and its procedures will be reformed to make it fit for purpose for a Mixed Member Proportional environment and for encouraging greater participation of citizens in the business of parliament. A Parliamentary Reform Committee will be established to examine all aspects of the parliamentary process, administration, and access for the public, including sitting schedules. Citizens will have the opportunity to make submissions to this Committee. The design process will be completed in the first year of the Coalition Government or within such extended period as circumstances may permit and be implemented thereafter.

C4 Constitutional Review

All citizens are stakeholders in the Constitution of Lesotho and look to it to provide the ultimate authority for their rights as well as for the system of government that protects those rights and enhances their well being.

This Coalition Government will establish mechanisms to review Lesotho's Constitution to ensure that it is fit for purpose to enable peace, stability and good governance. The review process will include an examination of the protection of the principle of separation of powers and the safeguards necessary in statutory appointments for the Judiciary, the Independent Electoral Commission, the Ombudsman, Armed Forces, the Police and the Government Secretary and Principal Secretaries, and all other statutory positions.

C5 Review of the Law Reform Commission

The Law Reform Commission is responsible for reviewing legislation periodically. This process ensures that the laws of Lesotho are relevant and appropriate for contemporary realities. In order to ensure a more timely and effective process for periodic review of statutes, the Law Reform Commission will be reviewed and restructured to build its capacity to meet its objectives.

C6 Review of the Judicial System

The Coalition Government believes that the judicial system must operate effectively and dispense justice in an independent, impartial and timely manner. The Coalition Government will review the judicial system to ensure it is consistent with international best practices, that its independence is guaranteed and that it is properly resourced.

C7 Security Reform

The Coalition Government will address the security situation to ensure that security services are professional, non-partisan, and fit for purpose for Lesotho's security needs.

C8 Education

Education is a priority concern for the Coalition Government. The Coalition Government believes the education system is a critical component in developing an informed citizenry and a workforce suitable for the economic and social development of Lesotho. The government will improve access to education, and will enhance educational standards in a manner that is relevant to the needs of its citizens.

C9 Health

The Coalition Government is concerned about infant and maternal mortality rates, HIV and AIDS, and the delivery of health services to vulnerable groups. The health system will focus on delivery and accessibility at the local level for all citizens, and to robustly address HIV and AIDS, infant mortality and services to the elderly and people with disability.

C10 Local Government

The Coalition Government believes there is an urgent need to build the capacity of local government and realign the relationship between central and local government. There will be a more balanced relationship between the two structures to ensure greater direct financial and technical support to local government authorities. The decentralisation of support and services to local government will be accelerated.

C11 Vulnerable Groups

The coalition government will recognize the vital role of women in development, promote gender equality and focus on the rights of women, children and people with disabilities to access services.

The coalition government will work to improve employment prospects for young people and promote programmes that deepen their understanding of good governance and political leadership.

C12 Media and Culture

The Coalition Government believes the media has an important role in society. The Coalition Government will strengthen the cultural and media sectors and develop a media policy.

C13 Civil Society Organisations

The Coalition Government will work constructively with national and international civil society organisations in order to strengthen and deepen

democracy, grow the economy, and ensure peace and stability through strategic engagement, sharing of expertise and other activities

C14 Rights of Workers

The Coalition Government believes workers should have the right to bargain salary and work conditions directly with their employers. The Government will investigate the development of a bargaining system to enable this to occur. The Coalition Government will also commit to a review of the Labour Code.

C15 Declaration of assets and interests

The Coalition Government is concerned that the law on the declaration of assets and interests has not been implemented. This matter is an important component of transparency and good governance. The Coalition Government will ensure that measures are in place within 12 months for the law relating to the declaration of assets to be complied with.

D. COALITION MANAGEMENT PROCESSES

The Coalition partners agree to work collaboratively and on the basis of **‘no surprises and good faith’**. All parties agree to be bound by the spirit of this agreement as much as by the specific provisions it contains.

The following aspects of coalition management are agreed to:

D1 Coalition Leaders will meet every month, or more often if necessary, to discuss the Government’s programmes and to inform Coalition partners on progress with particular policies and legislation. This will also be an opportunity for Party Leaders to raise any other issues confronting the Coalition. The Prime Minister will Chair this meeting.

- D2 A joint parliamentary caucus of the Coalition Parties will be held at least once a month to consider any matter they may wish to raise with each other. The Prime Minister or his Deputy will Chair this meeting.
- D3 Coalition partners agree that any Leader of a Coalition Party may directly see the Prime Minister for any matter considered necessary.
- D4 Each Coalition Party will hold its own caucus meeting as and when it considers appropriate.
- D5 The Coalition Government believes that the comprehensive programme of work identified in this Coalition agreement should be monitored and reviewed periodically. The Coalition will establish a ‘Coalition Monitoring Group’ made up of representatives of each of the Parties of the Coalition and other experts as required, who will develop a process and timeline for timely review and evaluation of the work programme. The monitoring Group will be set up within three months of the signing of this Coalition agreement. It will be chaired by a person agreed to by the Coalition Leaders.
- D6 The Parties agree that where it is known that a policy or legislative proposal is of interest to a Coalition partner, that Party will be consulted on the proposal and their views taken into account when finalising the proposal. In cases where there is a serious disagreement, the matter will be escalated to the Leaders of the Coalition partners to resolve.
- D7 All consultations will take place on a timely basis and allow for the proper processing of proposals especially when they are likely to be contentious.
- D8 Parties agree that each partner in the Coalition will be supported to maintain their particular identity. Each

Party will be allocated a fair share of questions in the House, speaking opportunities in debates and opportunities to propose Members bills.

- D9 Coalition partners will also have access to relevant Ministers on a needs basis to discuss constituent issues, policy proposals, and to receive briefings on matters of interest to their portfolios.
- D10 Coalition Parties agree that there may be occasions when they agree to disagree on a proposal or course of action. In every such case there will be prior and full discussion between the Parties to identify the area of conflict and efforts will be made to resolve it. The Coalition partners recognise that a robust democracy encourages debate. Where there are differences in policy approaches, Coalition partners agree to express those views while assuring their commitment to the Government's wider programme of work.

E. CABINET

The Coalition Parties agree to the following Cabinet related issues:

- E1 The Prime Minister will be the Leader of the Democratic Congress.
- E2 The Deputy Prime Minister will be the Leader of the Lesotho Congress for Democracy.
- E3 Cabinet portfolios will be allocated by the Prime Minister in consultation with the Deputy Prime Minister on the basis of the proportional strength of each party and negotiations between the Prime Minister and each party.
- E4 In line with E3 above, the **Democratic Congress (DC)** will have sixteen Ministers and five Deputy Ministers;

the **Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD)** will have five Ministers and one Deputy Minister; the **Popular Front for Democracy (PFD)** will have one Minister and one Deputy Minister; the **Basotho Congress Party (BCP)**, **Lesotho People's Congress (LPC)**, **Marematlou Freedom Party (MFP)** and the **National Independent Party (NIP)** will each have one Minister.

- E5 Where the need to reshuffle a Cabinet Minister arises for whatever reason, there will be prior consultations between the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Minister's party.
- E6 A Minister will be dismissed from Cabinet in the event of losing the confidence of his or her own party as indicated by the Leader of the relevant Party to the Prime Minister. In the event of the Prime Minister losing confidence in a Minister, such a Minister will be dismissed after consultation with the Leader of such a Minister's party.
- E7 The Prime Minister is responsible for all performance and disciplinary issues for Cabinet Ministers.
- E8 The Cabinet will meet regularly and is the only place where formal decisions are made on all critical issues and those that are prescribed constitutionally.
- E9 All members of Cabinet are bound by the principle of collective cabinet responsibility. Once a Cabinet decision is made no Cabinet Minister can stand aside from it unless Cabinet gives approval for a Minister to take a different position.

F. OTHER POLITICAL APPOINTMENTS

F1

All political appointments will be made by the Prime Minister in consultation with the Deputy Prime Minister on the basis of the proportional strength of each party and negotiations between the Prime Minister and each party.

- F2 Whenever a political appointment is contemplated at any tier of government it will be made by the Prime Minister after consultation with all coalition party leaders.

G. CONFIDENCE AND SUPPLY AND PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

All Coalition partners agree that they will support the Government on procedural motions in the House and in Portfolio Committees, and in particular, to be bound by the provisions in the Cabinet ‘manual’ on the conduct, public duty and personal interests of Ministers.

H. REVIEW PROVISION

The Parties to this agreement may amend any particular provision by agreement. Where this occurs an amended copy of the agreement will be forwarded to all parties affected by it and to those that have an interest in the changes.

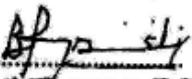
I. STATUS OF THE COALITION AGREEMENT

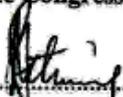
This Agreement is the key instrument of the Coalition Government that is formed in accordance with s87(2) of the Constitution of Lesotho. The Coalition Government believes as such the instrument should have legal status. Furthermore the standing of the coalition agreement

coalition agreement needs to be reflected appropriately in the Standing Orders of the National Assembly.

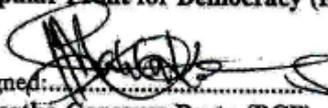
The Coalition Government will within six months of the signing of this agreement bring a Bill to the House to confirm the legal status of the coalition agreement. This Bill will reflect international best practice.

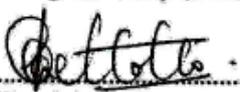
THUS DONE AND SIGNED AT MASERU ON FRIDAY THE 10TH APRIL, 2015

Signed: 
Democratic Congress (DC)

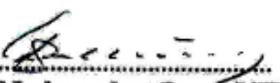
Signed: 
Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD)

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Lesotho People's Congress (LPC)

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