



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAS NOTED WITH CONCERN THE ARTICLE THAT HAS APPEARED IN THE POST NEWSPAPER PUBLISHED ON 08 APRIL, 2021 WITH THE TITLE *'FOREIGN AFFAIRS WANTS STRONGER TIES WITH CHINA'*. THIS ARTICLE PURPORTS THAT THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS WANTS LESOTHO TO DUMP THE WEST AND STRENGTHEN ITS TIES WITH CHINA.

THIS IS A MISINTERPRETATION OF THE HONOURABLE MINISTER'S PRESENTATION WHEN SHE PRESENTED THE MINISTRY'S BUDGET IN PARLIAMENT ON WEDNESDAY 07 APRIL, 2021. DURING THIS PRESENTATION THE MINISTER MADE REFERENCE TO THE REVIEW/ RATIONALIZATION OF LESOTHO'S DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS ABROAD.

THE REVIEW IS BASED ON AMONG OTHERS THE FOLLOWING:

- THE CURRENT ECONOMIC SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY ESPECIALLY THE DEVASTATING IMPACT OF THE COVID 19 PANDEMIC IN THE COUNTRY;
- THE RAPIDLY CHANGING DYNAMIC WORLD ORDER CHARACTERISED BY NEW OR EMERGING POWERS AND ALLIANCES OR BLOCS WHICH THE COUNTRY NEEDS TO ADAPT;
- THE CHANGING NATIONAL INTERESTS OF THE COUNTRY;
- THE NEED TO STRENGTHEN AND PROFESSIONALISE THE FOREIGN SERVICE;
- THE NEED FOR COST CONTAINMENT OR AUSTERITY MEASURES
- THE COUNTRY IS CURRENTLY NOT REPRESENTED IN SOME KEY REGIONS OF THE WORLD SUCH AS THE MIDDLE EAST AND LATIN AMERICA;

IT IS NOTED THAT THIS EXERCISE IS NOT UNIQUE TO LESOTHO BUT IS UNDERTAKEN BY ALL THE COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD.

THE GOVERNMENT OF LESOTHO VALUES ITS RELATIONS WITH ALL COUNTRIES IN PARTICULAR THE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND CHINA WHICH ARE THE COUNTRY'S MAJOR DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS AND HAVE CONTRIBUTED AND CONTINUE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF LESOTHO. IT IS WORTH NOTING THAT THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO HAS AND WILL ALWAYS BE KNOWN BY HER CONSISTENT FOREIGN POLICY WHICH ENCAPSULATES HER STERN DIPLOMACY THAT HAS MADE LESOTHO AND BASOTHO THE NATION WE ARE TODAY.

AS A DEMONSTRATION OF THE SPECIAL RELATIONS WITH DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS LESOTHO WILL FOR INSTANCE BE HOLDING A POLITICAL DIALOGUE WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION COUNTRIES ON THE WEEK BEGINNING 19 APRIL, 2021.

FURTHERMORE THE HONOURABLE MINISTER WILL ON THE COMING WEEK BE MEETING WITH THE DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY TO REASSURE THEM OF LESOTHO'S COMMITMENT TO MAINTAINING AND STRENGTHENING TIES WITH ALL THESE COUNTRIES.

THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS ABHORS THIS VERY DEVISIVE AND UNPROFESSIONAL REPORTING AND APPEALS TO THE NATION AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO IGNORE THESE UNFOUNDED STATEMENTS.

