



**SPEECH BY THE RIGHT HONORABLE THE PRIME  
MINISTER**

**DR. MOEKETSI MAJORO**

**AT**

**THE INAUGURATION OF THE OFFICE OF THE  
SECRETARIAT OF THE AFRICAN COMMITTEE OF  
EXPERTS ON THE RIGHTS AND WELFARE OF THE  
CHILD**

**IN MASERU**

**THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO**

**ON**

**WENESDAY 16<sup>TH</sup>, JUNE 2021**

HIS MAJESTY KING LETSIE 111

THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

THE SPEAKER OF THE OF THE NATIONAL ASSABLY

THE LORDSHIP CHIEF JUSTICE

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

THE CABINET MINISTERS, AND DEPUTY MINISTERS

EXCELLENCIES MEMBERS OF THE DEPLOMATIC CORPS

SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

**Good Morning**

On behalf of the Government of Lesotho, allow me to express my greatest gratitude to African Union and in a special way to the Department of Social Affairs for inviting us to this important event.

The working relations and Collaboration which we started (7) seven years ago has yielded good results, I will briefly remind you of the sweet, sour, tiring journey we have undertaken to come to this day;

In March 2010, the 15<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the African Committee on the Rights and Welfare of the Child held at the headquarters of the African Union in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia placed on its agenda the relocation of the Secretariat of the Committee. In March 2011, at its 17<sup>th</sup> Session, also held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the Committee deemed it useful to have its Secretariat relocated to enable it to have autonomy in the discharge of its mandate. Following the above, the Secretariat appealed to Member States of the African Union and State Parties to the Charter to offer to host the Secretariat and Headquarters of the Committee.

**On 4<sup>th</sup> November 2013,** The Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho and other countries in Africa officially proposed to host the Secretariat. I am happy to announce that on April 2018, the African Union acceded to Lesotho's offer to host the Secretariat and the rest is history.

The principal mandate of the committee is to promote and protect the rights and welfare of an African child, both in Lesotho and in African continent.

**Excellencies, distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,** The Kingdom of Lesotho is fully committed towards the realization of the aims and objectives of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. Lesotho ratified the Charter on 27<sup>th</sup> September 1999 and deposited its instruments of ratification a month later in October 1999 making it one of the fifteen Member States that expedited entry into force of the Charter.

In order to demonstrate its solid commitment towards its fulfilment of the aims and objectives of the Charter, Lesotho as a State Party has submitted its Initial and Periodic Report on the measures they have adopted to give effect to the provisions of the Charter and on the progress made in the enjoyment of child rights. I am aware that we should have submitted our Periodic Report in 2020 and I am charging the Honourable Minister of Social Development to speed it up as we must lead by examples as we now hold the Secretariat at the palm of our hands.

Ladies and gentlemen allow me to conclude by calling upon the Development Partners, Civil Society Organisations, the Private Sector, the Media, as well as the public at large to support this office so that it can effortlessly reach its mandate. The existing working relationship that we have as the Country and the Secretariat must be maintained and I urge

other countries to support the functionality of this office as it serves all African Countries.

The premises occupied by the Secretariat are rented. However, the Government is committed to provide a permanent home for the Committee to be its Secretariat and Headquarters.

Excellencies, distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, I now declare the Office of the Secretariat of the Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child Officially open and functional in Maseru, the Kingdom of Lesotho.

I thank you for your attention