



REMARKS BY THE RT HONOURABLE THE PRIME MINISTER, DR MOEKETSI MAJORO, MP DURING THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE 21ST NGO WEEK AND THE 31ST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE LESOTHO COUNCIL OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION (LCN)

08TH FEBRUARY, 2022

MANTHABISENG CONVENTION CENTER, MASERU

[Salutations]

I am pleased to be invited to the 21st Lesotho Council of Non-Governmental Organisation's Week and the 31st Annual General Meeting of the LCN. As I am aware that this NGO Week is marked in February, which is early part of the year, allow me to extend my warmest Greetings for the New Year to all of you who are converged here and convey the best wishes. 2022 is an important year in Lesotho's calendar, as Basotho will go out to cast their votes in national polls and I am sure NGO's are starting to prepare for that period.

As we are all aware, the NGO Week is a great opportunity for Basotho involved in bringing development in the country to meet and continuously forge ways of overcoming numerous challenges encountered during implementation of developmental activities as well as a time to re-dedicate the sector to the service of humanity. This gathering is no longer meant for civil society organisations in Lesotho, but it has opened doors to other sectors such as government ministries and private sector. I have been informed that other civil society organisations from our region, SADC will take part in some of the sessions later today and in the days to come.

I therefore wish to commend the LCN for keeping the promise and culture of dialogue. Dialogue is important as it allows people to forge shared understanding and it also affords citizenry an opportunity to contribute to the decision-making processes.

It is in dialogue where both development and governance issues are discussed with a view of attaining solutions. Dialogue compels people to listen to each other, learn from each other, instil a sense of respect, and to seek common ground. As we engage in Dialogue, we must be truthful to ourselves by acknowledging the mistakes and omissions we made and seek remorse.

MASTER OF CEREMONY

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

It is a fact that we all know that the world is confronted with several challenges such as weak governance, political instability, terrorism and high unemployment, poverty, and effects of climate change to mention a few. Lesotho is part of the world and these challenges do affect her. In addition, we are confronted with the challenge of human trafficking and gender-based-violence. With over 30-year experience of LCN, the Government of Lesotho is hopeful that together we can confront these challenges and the fight both locally, regionally, and internationally. LCN and her member organisations have stayed resolute in their activities by remaining a watchdog on governance issues. Indeed, your work is commendable.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to express and commend the work you have been engaged into, especially on promotion of democracy and human rights, tolerance, peace, and mediation. You are a source of inspiration to other organisations that focus mainly on development and governance. I am

grateful that I interacted with you during the past NGO Weeks, a practice that reminds us of our founding fathers' way of deliberating on issues - ***Khotla*** that bears a resemblance of today's form of dialogue.

As you are all aware, Lesotho is about to complete the Reforms process in the coming months. You will agree with me that these processes started at a slow pace but gained momentum later. I should emphasise that your role as civil society is of great importance as far as the reforms are concerned. Your role is to complement government efforts in bringing peace and stability in Lesotho. So, there is no doubt that government needs civil society and civil society needs government policy to direct its work.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am aware that Civil Society Policy under the leadership of the Ministry of Development Planning is at an advance stage. This policy is intended to improve government's relationship with the entire civil society formations in the country and to encourage self-regulation of the sector. The net effects of this is improved Aid Coordination, strategic partnership with government, improved legal regulation of the sector and deterrence to illicit and terrorism funding. I strongly encourage you to engage the

I have honoured your invitation to seek your support and commitment for promoting competitive elections that will be based on the international best practises. As I indicated in my introductory remarks that the Tiny Mountain Kingdom will be holding its general elections later this year, "**Re**

hloka boiketo bo hloekileng, moo mekha le makhotla a lipolotiki a lokelang ho fereha khetho ea lona ka maano feela e seng ho hong.”

I have noted your enticing NGO Week programme together with a well thought 21st NGO Week theme. I will make sure that my officials attend some of the sessions as they are complementing Government programmes. I am also looking forward to receiving your resolutions that will serve as a basis for engagement in moving towards the ***Lesotho We Want.***

It is therefore, my honour to declare the 21st NGO Week and 31st AGM officially opened.

Khotso Pula Nala!