



**Speech by The Minister of Finance and Development Planning,
Honourable Dr. Retšelisitsoe Matlanyane on Occasion of the Launch
of Lesotho SADC Success Stories Booklet**

5 July 2023

Good morning ladies and gentlemen.

Let me start off by paying my respects to:

His Majesty the King

The Right Honourable the Prime Minister

Honourable Ministers here present; the Minister of Information, Communications, Science, Technology and Innovation, Honourable Nthathi Moorosi; and the Minister Foreign Affairs and International Relations, Honourable Lejone Mpotjoane

Mr. Calicious Tualife, Acting Director for Industrial Development and Trade in the SADC Secretariat, Representing the SADC Executive Secretary

His Excellency the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany
Regional Director GIZ,

The Programme Manager, SADC National-Regional Linkages (SNRL),
Mr. Robson Chakwana and your Team

Senior Officials present

Participants from the various SADC Member States as well as those from our own National Regional Integration Coordination Structures

Friends from the Media Fraternity

Ladies and Gentlemen,



Good Morning,

It is a great privilege and honour to deliver a few remarks at this important occasion. Today's event is an opportunity to showcase Lesotho's achievements by virtue of being a member of Southern African Development Community, SADC.

I am excited about this launch, because it is part of writing our own history in the literal sense. We learn from it, so that we can choose to built on it. Therefore, those who to tell the story, have the responsibility to be factual, informative, interesting and thought provoking. I think the booklet ticks all the boxes.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Government of Lesotho recognizes that Information dissemination forms the foundations of good governance and accountability. Some say "information is a tool that propels people to better understanding, that leads to sound judgment and decision making" Furthermore, the booklet should assist in building SADC visibility, which in turn can engender collaboration and partnership in the implementation of the SADC agenda.

Lesotho has been a member of SADC since its establishment, when it was Coordinating Community; SADCC – with 2 Cs.

But the scoping study that was done in 2018, brought to light, the fact that many Basotho do not know what benefit Lesotho is getting from being a member of SADC. And then, after the preliminary articles were drafted, COVID-19 happened! Leading to the compilation only being finalised towards the end of 2022.



The study, therefore, made us realise that we owed it to the citizens of this country to inform them about what we, as a country, are getting out of being members of SADC. We realised that other than some of us who are right at the center of the implementation of the SADC plans, programmes and projects, very little is known by the ordinary Mosotho about what Lesotho is doing under the auspices of SADC. Most, if not all of the initiatives that we are undertaking under SADC cannot immediately and easily be identified as regional initiatives. Hence the move to undertake the project to put together stories that would attest to the benefit and justify our membership to SADC.

There was a time when for the ordinary Mosotho SADC was synonymous with the military intervention that Lesotho experienced in 1998 or the support that we are getting towards the National Reforms Programme. We therefore felt dutybound to put a few stories together in a bid to enlighten the rest of Basotho. We would have really loved to have had the stories to be written in the vernacular, for them to have the desired effect. We will prepare summary or popular versions in Sesotho. As we know we are still rebuilding a culture of reading.

It is important that the stories reach the grass roots. We embarked on this exercise to publicise SADC and the regional integration agenda in Lesotho; for Basotho.

Distinguished Guests

I wish to thank all the people who contributed to this historic achievement, I want to express my sincere appreciation to the German Government for financing the SADC National Regional Linkages Programme, through which the process of putting together these stories was finance. I'm informed that Lesotho was one of the 7



pilot Member States that benefited under the first phase of the Programme. Through you, Excellency, we thank the German Government, for their support.

I am informed that, although today we are here to launch the Success Stories booklet, this is not the only assistance that Lesotho received through the Programme! For instance during the course of the Programme's first phase we received assistance to resuscitate our national Regional Integration coordination structures the Cluster Subcommittees and to develop their terms of reference. We were also assisted to develop a "User's Guide" for Non-State Stakeholders. These are just examples of a number of projects that we implemented through the support of the SNRL Programme. Unfortunately, COVID-19 struck at a very critical time, when we were poised to put the results of the projects to the test! But we are back on track

I wish to thank the SNRL Programme staff, and the consultants for every single effort they put to assist us, not only with this publication, but also with the other projects that we have implemented. I am aware that the Programme is now expanded to cover the rest of the Member States. We have submitted projects, which we hope will meet the requirements to benefit from the second phase of the Programme.

I cannot thank enough, the people who contributed the information that enabled us to put together this publication. Ntate Khuele, through you, I would like to thank the rest of the contributors to the success stories. Thank you for taking time to tirelessly work with the Ministry staff and the consultant, without expecting any remuneration! If that is not true patriotism, I don't know what is! Lebitsong la Basotho, rea leboha!



To my colleague Honourable Minister of Information, Communications, Science, Technology and Innovation; 'Mé, our work is cut out for us! This should only be the beginning. We owe it to Basotho to inform them about the commitments that we, as the Government sign for on their behalf. And then, to publicise the benefits that the country reaps from those commitments.

To you, members of the Media fraternity, please continue to report stories such as those captured in this booklet. Let us not only fill our reports with horrific news! Reporting on SADC related news will also give you the opportunity to compete for the SADC Media Awards!

I am also aware that the past two days were spent in a “learning and sharing symposium”; where delegates for various Member States exchanged their experiences in their implementation of the SADC regional integration agenda, and on how their national coordination structures operate. I trust you all benefited and also discussed how media strategies should be improved.

Let me once again thank you all for gracing this event that is very important to us, by your presence. It is by lending support to one another; and learning from one another that we will grow our region!

I now have the pleasure to declare the Lesotho SADC Success Stories Publication launched.