

Speech for Dr. Axel Bayer, the Representative of the German Ambassador to South Africa, Eswatini and Lesotho on the launch of SADC Success Stories in Lesotho

Your Excellency, Dr. Retselisitsoe Matlanyane, Honourable Minister of Finance and Development Planning,
Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Relations,
Representative of the SADC Executive Secretary,
Senior Government Officials from the Kingdom of Lesotho,
Senior Government Officials from SADC Member States,
Officials from the SADC Secretariat,
GIZ Colleagues,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour and privilege to stand before you today on behalf of the German Ambassador to Lesotho, on this momentous occasion of the launch of the SADC success stories in Lesotho. This event marks an important milestone in our collective efforts to foster regional cooperation and development within the Southern African Development Community (SADC). I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Minister of Finance and Development Planning for presiding over this ceremony, as well as to the SADC Secretariat officials for their presence here today.

At the outset, I must emphasize the significance of the successful collaboration between the German Government, through the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), through the Strengthening National Regional Linkages in SADC Programme (SNRL) and the Government of Lesotho, in particular the Department of Regional Integration, in supporting the production of these success stories. This collaboration underscores the unwavering commitment of both nations towards supporting the sustainable development and progress of SADC member states. It is through such partnerships that we can leverage our collective strengths and work towards achieving our shared vision of a prosperous and integrated region.

Through the German Government's partnership with SADC through GIZ, we have been privileged to support Lesotho's efforts in realizing these success stories. We firmly believe that regional development is not only a national endeavor but also a collective responsibility. By investing in Lesotho's progress, we are investing in the prosperity and stability of the entire SADC region.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,
The SADC success stories we are launching today serve as a testament to the incredible strides made by Lesotho in various sectors, ranging from agriculture, infrastructure, water, trade, labour and beyond. These stories summarize the innovative approaches, dedication, and resilience of the Basotho people and the transformative policies implemented by the Government. They showcase the positive impact of regional cooperation and highlight Lesotho's exceptional achievements within the SADC community. These stories provide inspiration and valuable lessons

that can guide us to work together to overcome challenges we face on our path to development.

We are gathered here not only to celebrate these successes but also to recognize the invaluable role of Lesotho as a beacon of progress and inspiration within the SADC region. Lesotho's accomplishments have not only elevated its own status but have also contributed to the overall advancement of our shared regional goals. It is crucial that we acknowledge and learn from these achievements, as they provide us with valuable insights and models that can be replicated across the SADC member states.

Furthermore, these success stories are not merely a record of accomplishments but also serve as a call to action. They remind us of the potential that lies within our region and the immense opportunities waiting to be seized. They urge us to continue working together, to build upon these achievements, and to address the challenges that lie ahead. By sharing these stories, we inspire others to strive for greatness, fostering a culture of innovation, collaboration, and development.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we reflect on the achievements to be presented today, let us also recognize that our work is not complete. There are still hurdles to overcome, and there are still sectors where progress is needed. However, with the spirit of collaboration and determination that has brought us this far, I have no doubt that we will continue to achieve even greater success in the future.

On behalf of the German Government, I am immensely proud of the partnership between Germany and Lesotho, which has enabled the realization of these success stories. The German Government remains committed to supporting Lesotho and the broader SADC region in their pursuit of sustainable development. We firmly believe that through continued collaboration and investment in key sectors, we can create a brighter future for all.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to express my deepest appreciation to all the individuals, organizations, and government agencies involved in the production of these success stories. Your dedication, hard work, and unwavering commitment have been instrumental in bringing about these positive changes. I urge you to continue your efforts in driving sustainable development, fostering regional integration, and building a better future for the people of Lesotho and the entire SADC community.

In conclusion, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Government of Lesotho for the remarkable achievements highlighted in these success stories. I also commend the SADC Secretariat for their tireless efforts in promoting regional integration and development. May this launch serve as a catalyst for renewed dedication and collaboration among SADC member states as we work towards a prosperous, inclusive, and sustainable future.

Thank you for your attention, and I wish you all a fruitful and inspiring launch event.