

**Bayethe, wena waPhakathi! Nkhosi
Ndlovukazi, Mhlekezi**

**With your permission, Your Majesty, may I
humbly request Bishop Paulos Shabangu
from Holy Church in Zion to come and open
with a word of prayer.**

WELCOMING REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT OF SENATE, SENATOR LINDIWE DLAMINI, AT THE STATE OPENING OF THE 1st SESSION OF THE 12th PARLIAMENT, ON 09 FEBRUARY 2024

Your Majesty, The King and iNgwenyama;

Your Majesty, iNdlovukazi, the Queen Mother;

Emakhosikati;

Your Royal Highnesses, Bantfwabenkosi;

Bobabe Tikhulu;

Royal Counsellors;

My Colleague, Mr. Speaker;

Your Excellency, The Right Honourable Prime Minister;

The Right Honourable Speaker of Senate in the Republic of Kenya

Your Lordship, The Chief Justice

The Honourable Deputy Prime Minister;

Honourable Ministers;

Honourable Members of Both Houses Of Parliament;

Your Excellences', Members Of The Diplomatic Corps And Development Partners;

***Judges of the Supreme Court,
Judges of The High Court, as well as Judges of The
Industrial Court;
The Learned Attorney General;
Regional Administrator - Hhohho Region
Your Graces, The Bishops;
The Clerk to Parliament and Parliamentary Service
Staff
Distinguished Guests;
Members of the Fourth Estate
Ladies and Gentlemen***

Your Majesty, it is my high honour and privilege to extend my warm welcome to His Majesty on my own behalf and that of my colleague, Speaker of the House of Assembly, the Hon. Jabulani Mabuza, and all parliamentarians to this, the inauguration of the First Session of the twelfth Parliament. *Bayethe, Wena Waphakathi.*

It is an equal honour and privilege to extend a warm and unreserved welcome to *Mhlekezisi*, Mother of the Nation. Nkhosi.

It is my honor to also welcome the Rt. Hon. Speaker of Senate in the Republic of Kenya – Hon. Amason Jeffah Kingi and his delegation.

A special welcome to all those joining us through digital media platforms.

Mbangazitha, we are gathered here following the successful conclusion of “Imikhosi Yelive” and the “Year Opening” National Prayer Service. The ever increasing numbers at such gatherings are a very good sign that *Eswatini* are committed to their King and country. We are grateful for the Lord’s protection and guidance in the preceding year. The plentiful rains are always an encouraging precursor for a productive year ahead. Indeed we have faith, “***the Lord will show us great and mighty things***”.

Hlangalwezwe, the 12th Parliament is a product of the recently concluded National Elections. Our unique Monarchical Democracy, once again, delivered a peaceful ***change of Government***

“Emaswati aphuma ngetinkhani ayogawula tintfungo letitobambisa eMakhosi ekwakheni Live.” The Election was a first of its kind, delightfully so, because the nation was able to follow progress very closely through live broadcasts on national television and other digital platforms. It is worth noting, and equally gratifying that the membership of women in Parliament increased from the 11th Parliament. As it stands, the percentage of women members of Parliament has jumped from 21% to 28%. This trend demonstrates that indeed the kingdom is on a positive path towards equitable representation and we are confident that there will be an even greater improvement in the 13th Parliament.

Ngwenyama Ndvuna yeMaswati, the spirit of our Monarchical Democracy reverberated, yet again, when Emaswati came from all corners of the country and gathered for **SIBAYA** to drink from His Majesty’s Wisdom. *At **SIBAYA**, **Emaswati*** also exercised their constitutional right to “petition” Parliament with Policy Guidelines for the incoming Government. The Nation, with the aid of technology, also participated in the process of the formation of the Government of the day. **SIBAYA**, as always, was diverse, inclusive, and

participatory. The attendance was overwhelming, and it was pleasing that *Eswatini* in the diaspora were also able to participate. *Mbangazitha*, “*Sikhuta Libayethe asicedzi NgeSIBAYA*“. The outcome of **SIBAYA** was clear to all and sundry, and it culminated in what we perceive as His Majesty’s “***Nkwe Declaration***”.

Lwandle Olukhulu, following the mandate from His Majesty and **SIBAYA**, and in anticipation of the inauguration of the first Session of the Twelfth Parliament, Parliament was able to conduct a historic “***Induction Conference***” where all parliamentarians were empowered with tools to work efficiently. Further to that, the respective Chambers of Parliament have also completed the process of electing the Portfolio and Sessional Committees. The only outstanding process is the election of the members of the Parliamentary Service Board. The 12th Parliament has indeed hit the proverbial ground running.

I am pleased to further report that the Parliament of *Eswatini* was recently elected into a 15 Member **Standing Committee** of the Conference of Speakers

and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth (CSPOC).

Hlangalwezwe, you expressed yourself in very clear terms at the conclusion of **SIBAYA**, that the national deliberations would continue in the various Chiefdoms and Tinkhundla across the country. Therefore, Parliament is committed, in the course of the next 5 years, as part of its Strategic Plan Objectives, to implement a program of “taking Parliament to the people.” This initiative will be implemented, working in conjunction with the established structures of our Monarchical Democracy. This, we hope, will address the dominant concern at **SIBAYA**, that parliamentarians “disappear from the people” once they have been elected or appointed, only to re-emerge when canvassing for votes in preparation for the next election. We look forward to the support and collaboration of *Bobabe Tikhulu* and other relevant structures in order for this program to be a success.

Ndlal'selwa, we begin the Session with renewed hope knowing that we are a blessed nation. You have been consistent in reiterating that Eswatini is a

blessed Nation, One that should not depart from God. Ngwenyama Ndvuna yeMaswati, therein lies the **SOUL and destiny** of *ESwatini*. Integrity, respect and patriotism are the character traits that should continue to define and uphold our identity as a Blessed Nation.

Mbangazitha, as Parliament it is our collective prayer and aspiration to be sensitive and responsive to the pressing national challenges confronting the nation. The poverty crisis, and the persistent natural disasters occasioned by climate change continue to have a devastating effect on the lives of *Emaswati*. As part of our priorities, we therefore commit ourselves to expedite the formulation of youth responsive laws that will ensure an enabling environment for developing skills and upscaling employment creation for our young people. In line with the NKWE Declaration, we are cognizant of the need to fast-track legislation and resources geared towards decentralization and service delivery at the grassroots.

Your Majesty, we will not rest until your vision for first world status for the kingdom and attainment of the

Sustainable Development Goals becomes a reality. On that note, we will continue to support growing an investor friendly economy as well as strengthen laws that will help fight corruption and alleviate gender disparities. It is also imperative for the country to prepare an effective strategy for climate change that will ensure access to climate finance, expansion of the green economy and the building of national resilience to environmental disasters.

Mbangazitha, in conclusion, we give you our pledge that as Parliament, we shall embody a “solution based mindset, anchored on diligence, trust and humility.” *Mbangazitha*, Parliament further extends its gratitude for the opportunity we got “*Kuyovusela Emakhosi*, whereat we were able to introduce ourselves and share our vision for the country. We were particularly encouraged and enriched by the words of wisdom and blessings from their Majesties.

*Iphalamende yakho WenaWaphakathi ingitfume kutfula siphiso setinkhomo **letisihlanu, Letintsatfu Tembube Yemhlaba, letimbili Tendlovu Yemhlaba.***

Your Majesty, with these few remarks it is now my singular Honour and privilege to invite His Majesty to address this Joint Sitting of Parliament and the Nation to inaugurate the First Session of the Twelfth Parliament.

Ngekutifoba lokukhulu, Ngwenyama Ndvuna yeMaswati, ngicela Imbube yeMhlaba iphefumulele iPhalamende, iphefumulele Live, nemhlaba kulesicephu sekucala kuyo iPhalamende yelishumi nakubili.

Bayethe WenaWaphakathi !

Nkhosi Ndlovukazi!