



GOVERNMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI

POLICY STATEMENT 2024

1.0 PREAMBLE

His Majesty King Mswati III, during the opening of the 12th Parliament, gave a clear policy direction necessary for the country to attain a developed country status by 2030. This was also prayed for by emaSwati during their submissions at the Sibaya People's Parliament.

As the new administration for His Majesty's Government, we will rigorously pursue the Vision of Eswatini to move from a lower middle-income country to attaining high income country classification. While pursuing a broad-based sustainable development agenda, the Government will focus on a few priorities through a sustainable, and integrated approach. His Majesty's Government is committed to pursuing an Economic Transformation Strategy focused on fostering sustainable economic growth, eradicating poverty, strengthening our health systems, and ensuring transparency and accountability in governance.

We have charted a policy framework to create and support an environment that will attract mega investment, promote innovation, and foster exponential economic growth with the intention to transform our Nation into a thriving, prosperous, and equitable society where every citizen has access to economic opportunities and quality healthcare.

The country faces surmounted challenges most of which were clearly elaborated during Sibaya including, but not limited to, unemployment, poverty, domestic violence and a poor performing health sector. They are severe headwinds and major downsides facing our beautiful and peaceful country. They have emerged in recent times and can only be addressed through a new way of thinking and approach. This policy statement proposes an ambitious pathway and disruptive modus operandi for the transformation of the entire economy of the Kingdom of Eswatini.

Agile ('Nkwe!') execution of the Economic Transformation Strategy is paramount in attracting investment, ensuring progression enabled by a business ready environment in Eswatini. It is a growth-oriented strategy anchored on investment in infrastructure development to stimulate exponential growth, improvement in morality and integrity to root out corruption, and advancement in traditional and family values for nation building.

It is imperative that emaSwati and the Government they elected **chart their own path** and take a focused approach, finding home grown solutions, with the **interest of the country and its people at heart**. A strategic approach must be adopted to optimize the limited budget without spreading it too thinly in order to achieve the desired impactful results. Progressive funding models will be formulated to enable Government's transformational agenda.

2.0 PROBLEM DESCRIPTION

The Kingdom of Eswatini is confronted with surmountable multiple crises on the backdrop of poor service delivery at 0.35 (public service delivery index) and low economic growth, namely high rates of poverty at 58.9% in 2017 (CSO); unemployment at approximately 35.4% as of 2023 (Ministry of Labour); deteriorating health service; gender-based violence with approximately 1 in 3 females having experienced some form of sexual abuse by age 18 years, and 48 percent of women reporting to have experienced some form of sexual violence in their lifetime; burgeoning corruption; devastating climate change impact; increasing inequality; deteriorating education system characterised by limited Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Competencies – critical skills required by the labour market; declining national cohesion; diminishing national identity; and fiscal leegroom to fund developmental programmes. The state of these ills will worsen unless drastic measures are employed through comprehensive transformational sector strategies. Such strategies must tackle the root causes of the problems and outpace their rate of spread.

3.0 GOVERNMENT VISION & MISSION

The Vision of the Government is to ensure:

“A well developed, inclusive, peaceful, most stable, and economically prosperous Kingdom of Eswatini established on cultural values and affording well-being to all emaSwati.”

In line with the National Development Strategy and Plan, the Mission of the Government of the Kingdom of Eswatini is:

“To provide leadership and drive implementation of comprehensive strategies and programs aimed at transforming the economy and improving the lives of emaSwati”

4.0 MINDSET CHANGE

The need to inculcate a culture of excellence and patriotism reverberated throughout Sibaya submissions. Our plan for development and economic growth shall therefore be underpinned by a demonstration of patriotism and excellence. The need for an ambitious mindset and a change of world view for ordinary emaSwati is also evident in our conversations and work culture. As such, this administration will remodel the Public Service in line with the culture of operational and execution excellence to ensure efficient service delivery. A culture of patriotism, excellence and the mindset of thinking big will be embedded in Government values and will be promoted across all sectors of the economy and society. This will take many forms

including through formal education, in-service training, and rigorous promotion following the development of curricula to cover these important aspects.

5.0 SUSTAINABILITY

The Kingdom of Eswatini shall pursue the principles of broad-based sustainable development to become a green economy. The much-needed development shall be derived without destroying the capacity of the environment to support future generations. This green policy shall be reflected in our pursuit for energy self-sufficiency, and sustainable agriculture including non-Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) and chemical free Agriculture. Economic, social and environmental sustainability will be embedded in Government policy, programme, and practice by ensuring that sustainability is a prerequisite for new projects and expansion programmes. Financial sustainability shall be implemented through appropriate financing models and active participation of the private sector. Government shall strengthen and enforce Corporate Social Responsibility and sustainability reporting frameworks in line with existing legislation.

6.0 ECONOMIC POLICY

The economic policy of the Kingdom of Eswatini is firmly informed by reliable data and strong aspirations of the people of Eswatini. It is a departure from conventional strategies. A progressive investment and industrialization policy framework targeting an average economic growth rate of 12% within the next five years shall be developed and implemented.

This ambitious target will be achieved through a Government-led long-term transformation agenda of the economy promoting industrialization and supporting mega investments and growth in key sectors such as infrastructure, agriculture, manufacturing, and services. Government State Owned Entities will play a critical role and will be strengthened and closely monitored to be actively involved in the execution of the economic policy. The overall policy agenda is designed to be export-oriented and catalyzed by active private sector participation to unlock Foreign Direct Investment.

Dedicated support for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) will contribute toward economic growth. Measures will be put in place in collaboration with the private sector to provide financial and non-financial assistance for MSMEs. The role played by innovation and technology in supporting small and large enterprises and ultimately their contribution to the economy will be harnessed. This will be encouraged and supported through establishment of the innovation and technology start up centers and continued support of the Special Economic Zones (SEZs).

Restrictions to economic growth and a business-ready environment will be continuously identified and eliminated. Key to this is change in Policy and Legislation to reflect Government's ambitious agenda of harnessing FDI through a conducive business ready environment. Government will not be a passive enabler of the business environment, instead Government will be an active enabler leading in developing viable business concepts, securing partnerships with global players and innovative financing models. Government will deliberately

and proactively invest to stimulate and grow the economy through infrastructure and establish a sovereign wealth fund through which to fund development economic growth.

7.0 INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Government recognizes the role of infrastructure development as a requisite for development and will continue its investment in infrastructure to stimulate growth of the economy to create jobs and bring the much-needed services to the public. This administration's infrastructure development plan is ambitious and reflective of the mindset of thinking big. With the majority of people predicted to live in cities, the future is urban, and it is critical that we build resilient and sustainable infrastructure in line with His Majesty's Vision. Government will thus invest in bulk infrastructure.

Government will identify and prioritize infrastructure for investment to stimulate the economy. Government will also endeavor to complete all outstanding projects and ensure that new projects are cost effective, timeously completed, and responsive to the needs of the people and country.

Partnerships will be sought for the development of infrastructure characteristic of developed countries. Initial analysis prioritizes infrastructure on water development, electricity generation and distribution, referral hospital, road network, new Parliament Building and Campus, railway line extension, dry port, airport expansion, University of Technology, Vocational Institutions, Internet connectivity infrastructure, institutional housing, factory shells, National Courts, and World Class sporting facilities.

8.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

Eswatini's priority for climate change shall be to mitigate the impact of climate through the strengthening and implementation of the National Adaptation Strategy combined with the National Resilience Strategy. Notwithstanding our aspirations for exponential economic growth, Government will continue to implement the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) Implementation Plan for 2020-2030, aimed at enhancing climate action and meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement. This plan covers twelve (12) national priority areas, including agriculture, health, water, ecosystems and biodiversity, infrastructure, energy, waste, industry, forestry, gender, youth, and disaster risk reduction. It is a result of a homegrown, stakeholder-driven process, involving various ministries, development partners, UN agencies, public institutions, and civil society organizations.

The NDC Partnership with international organizations has provided and will continue providing significant support in developing and implementing the plan. The plan implementation evolution will be accessible online and will be revised continuously with inputs from all stakeholders to ensure progress and improvement. With this comprehensive approach this administration will drive inclusive climate action and ensure that Eswatini contributes effectively to global efforts to limit global warming.

9.0 FISCAL DISCIPLINE AND BUDGET STRATEGY

It is a commitment of this Government to exercise appropriate fiscal discipline and budget strategies that demonstrate stewardship and effective use of the limited resources at our disposal. A borrowing plan oriented towards investment in economic growth and infrastructure shall be developed and implemented. Advanced planning, budgeting, monitoring, evaluation, and accountability will underpin our service delivery to the nation within the capacity of the resources entrusted to this administration. A pro-growth and pro-poor budget will be maintained in line with the Sibaya submissions and call to end poverty in Eswatini.

10. WEALTH CREATION AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

Poverty was cited as one of the major crises faced by the country at Sibaya. We cannot win against poverty unless we focus our efforts on growing the economy to lift people out of poverty. To fight poverty, Government will ensure economic policies are inclusive and address the needs of the poorest citizens. Strategies will be developed to promote equitable distribution of resources and opportunities. Policies that foster wealth creation which will create employment and more opportunities for all citizens thus reducing poverty. Wealth will be created at the National level and at the household level through establishment of the Sovereign Wealth Fund as well as through relevant agriculture and vocational education programs. Government will also directly invest to create jobs as well as to stimulate investment by the private sector. Of note is government policy towards export-oriented production.

11.0 PUBLIC SECTOR MANAGEMENT AND SERVICE DELIVERY

This administration's stance is that effective service delivery is linked to efficient public sector management and performance. The public sector will be modernized to improve service delivery as mandated by Sibaya. Modernization entails rationalizing and rearranging the public sector ensuring optimal allocation of manpower, financial resources, and tools, rigorously building management capacity of civil service, professionalization, digitization, and reducing bureaucracy and inefficiencies within the government machinery.

The Procurement Act 2011 shall be comprehensively reviewed to ensure efficiency of service delivery by reducing the cost of services and commodities to Government, reducing the period of the procurement process and through digitization.

A growing entitlement mentality, low productivity, and corruption within the country's labour force will be dealt with through proactive strategies and measures such as complete roll out of a Performance Management System, review of Government General Orders, and capacity building of various forms including training on project management, monitoring, and evaluation as well as exposure to productive societies and advanced economies. The Eswatini Institute Management and Public Administration (ESIMPA) will be revamped and capacitated to train the public sector on Leadership and Governance.

12.0 FOREIGN AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The long-standing principles of Eswatini as a peace-loving country and without enemies demonstrated by non-alignment and involvement in the affairs of other countries will remain at the forefront of our international relations. The Vienna Convention on international relations will be enforced and the country's sovereignty will be proactively defended against all forms of encroachment.

The country's position on the global agenda will be informed first by the interests of EmaSwati and espoused by Regional and Pan African bodies, including SADC and the African Union. Government will promote and defend the country's Tinkhundla Governance System, Siswati values and heritage that are so often unduly disparaged and under threat.

Government will maintain diplomatic ties with friendly countries and establish new diplomatic relations with supportive and interested countries. The effectiveness of the country's foreign embassies shall be evaluated and renewed with a new and proactive impetus. Eswatini will review membership to international organizations based on the cost of membership and the value they add to the country.

13.0 TINKHUNDLA GOVERNANCE SYSTEM AND DEVELOPMENT VEHICLE

Tinkhundla Governance System will be taught locally and promoted internationally as a democratic system merging Eswatini traditional governance system with His Majesty the King as the Head of State and the western system of an elected Parliament. The advantages of the system making use of Tinkhundla as centres of representation equivalent to the county system of election will be promoted locally and globally.

Tinkhundla will be optimally funded to attain grass roots development and livelihood. New legislation will be enacted to strengthen local government and ensure decentralization and service delivery.

To stimulate productivity, the Regional Development Fund and other empowerment funds will continue to be capitalized with the deliberate intention to improve efficiency and disbursements. A review of the guidelines to attract and increase entrants and chances of success is critical as has been submitted in national forums.

14.0 ENERGY

The country is endowed with natural resources such as minerals and favourable climate conditions. The country seeks to become a green economy by pursuing renewable energy generation and supply through solar, geothermal and hydropower. 190 MW is targeted to meet the domestic household needs while 1000 MW is targeted for industrialization. Clean energy will also be pursued through the supply of gas from friendly neighboring countries. Notwithstanding the preceding aspiration, Eswatini will urgently employ abundantly available mineral resources to derive affordable baseload energy required for the industrialization of the country and for energy security.

15.0 EDUCATION

Education is indispensable for a prosperous future of Eswatini. A comprehensive review of the education system from pre-primary to tertiary education will be undertaken to make it amongst the best in the region as it was once. This review will ensure increased capacity for special education needs both in terms of facilities and instruction. The review will also entail formulation of a plan for in service teacher training for all government employed teachers.

Government will also strategize on how to ensure continuous and sustainable free access to education at primary and tertiary education level. A thorough review of the model and finance structure of the education system and scholarship will be undertaken with the objective of improving effectiveness and efficiency.

The University of Eswatini will be revitalized to meet market demands as well as to attract the best minds for training and development. This will be through a thorough review of academic programs offered by the University to be competitive in the region.

The Government will work towards establishment of a new university of technology and innovation targeting enrollment from the SADC region as well as the entire Africa Region. Government will not relent to produce more graduates but will instead promote more relevant programmes needed for the desired future as well as for human capital export.

The education curricula will be improved to reflect our African Values and instill a winning mindset. The curricula of vocational institutions will be strengthened with business acumen, introduction of new programmes relevant to local and regional industry as well as through construction of new Vocational Institutions.

16.0 HEALTH AND HIV/AIDS

Government will leverage the investment made in the health sector to ensure access to appropriate quality health care services. The Ministry of Health will be restructured for efficiency and effectiveness and to meet modern health demands of the Nation. This will be through the review of the ministry mandate to focus on keeping the population healthy through disease prevention strategies, protection from global pandemics, strengthening disaster risk management and disease surveillance, as well as establishing a National Health Insurance.

The country has made great strides in fighting HIV/AIDS but it remains a serious threat to longevity and productivity in the country. At least 4 000 people mostly young girls are infected with HIV annually, a disheartening concern for the nation. The population shall be protected from being infected and acquiring HIV through rigorous strategies. NERCHA's mandate shall be reviewed to include procurement of pharmaceuticals as well as Non-Communicable Diseases. The Central Medical Stores (CMS) will be transformed to a semi-autonomous organization to improve its efficiency, accountability, and service to the nation.

Government will prioritize the construction of a National Referral Hospital for highly specialized cases to reduce the cost of Phalala Fund while increasing access to quality and advanced health services. The capacity of the National Health Council shall be strengthened through improved research and linkages with the Center for Disease Control (CDC). Investment will

be made to increase output on training of medical doctors and strengthen nurses training programmes through partnerships with local and international tertiary institutions.

18.0 LABOUR

The Government is committed to establishing a framework to enable safe and productive export of skill to other countries that ensures maximum benefit of professional staff and their safety. Such a framework should include remittance; and build a productive workforce that is focused and unmatched in the country through continuous training and promotion of a positive work culture. To enable this commitment this administration will ensure access to scholarships for emaSwati. The efficiency of scholarship administration will be improved and innovative ways developed to ensure sustainability.

19.0 SOCIAL WELFARE AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Social Grants remain a critical catalyst for creating coping mechanisms to the marginalized, elderly, and vulnerable population of Eswatini. It is the commitment of this Government to explore and strengthen social welfare and social security in a meaningful and sustainable manner. Government will enact legislation in support of social security for the elderly, persons with disabilities, and vulnerable populations which will practically and significantly reduce abject poverty.

20.0 DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

With the increasing frequency and intensity of natural hazards that threaten life and livelihoods, damage to property, and in many instances leading to disasters, Government will prioritize disaster risk management and strengthen its institutions and funding. It is crucial that a strong disaster risk management framework that will make Eswatini resilient to common hazards is enacted. Such a framework will constitute a disaster risk finance strategy, disaster risk management fund, resilience strategy and a new law to govern disaster management. Eswatini will become a centre of excellence in disaster risk management and will have the capacity to respond to all calamities without heavily relying on external assistance.

21.0 CORRUPTION

Corruption has become endemic in the country and an incipient culture among the elite and middleclass. This pervasive cancer must be eradicated from the country. Corruption will be fought by ensuring that the public sector acts in the interest of the people and by promoting transparency and accountability. Corrupt individuals and activities will be exposed to dissuade the culture. The capacity of all Government institutions that have a role in fighting and eradicating corruption such as the Anti-corruption Commission, Human Rights Commission, Public Prosecution, and the Royal Eswatini Police Service will be significantly strengthened. Government will promote the rule of law and strengthen the capacity of the Police Service to

enforce the Laws of our land. The population will be mobilized to understand the impact of corruption and to be part of the fight against corruption.

22.0 NATIONAL IDENTITY AND FAMILY HERITAGE

It is paramount that as a people and as a country, the cultural identity of eSwatini is advanced and promoted more than that of foreign origins in all local institutions. These values include family values, spiritual values, respect, and the spirit of *buntfu* among others. The values will be advanced through the establishment of a Council on National Identity and Family Heritage and through deliberate promotion of cultural values in schools and communities and to set standards and requirements for all citizens of the country. Without a strong national identity, there can never be a strong nation and development. The Council will also work with the Nation in fighting gender-based violence and other forms of violence that have become common in the country. Government has no doubt of the urgent need to strengthen the family institution and calls upon the church and Faith Based Organizations to support this important endeavour.

23.0 NATIONAL SECURITY

Government through all its security forces will continue to uphold the rule of law and to ensure national security to maintain peace and public order. A new legislation on crime prevention will be enacted. Security forces will be capacitated to enforce the law through training and provision of adequate equipment needed for carrying out their function. All security forces will be trained to meet international standards associated with security, promotion of the rule of law, crowd control, and efficient service delivery. Security forces will be thoroughly equipped to suppress terrorism as per the Suppression of Terrorism Act No.3 of 2008, prevent organized crime, as well as to fight sexual and domestic violence as per Act No. 15 of 2018.

24.0 AGRICULTURE

The potential of Agriculture will be harnessed to create wealth for the ordinary citizen and employ many of our unemployed youth as it did in the past. Agriculture will be repositioned as a profession that has high returns. This will be through large projects of commercialization, mechanization and building strong market systems that offer attractive returns to individual farmers. We will ensure that our agriculture systems are adapted to climate change while fostering resilience and ensuring food security and sovereignty.

Government through the Ministry of Agriculture and State-Owned Entities will be directly involved in agricultural production through projects making sure that all government farms are productive to attain food sovereignty over and above providing a policy environment that promotes production by eSwatini. The Agricultural Extension Policy will be reviewed in line with the new strategy developed by the Ministry of Agriculture.

Government will develop strategies that will ensure sustainable production and consumption of healthy food. Government's policy framework on Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) will be strengthened to ensure that Eswatini is organic and a green economy.

25.0 PARLIAMENT

This administration recognizes the crucial role the Parliament of Eswatini plays in the country's development and economic growth. It remains our commitment to continue working with and recognizing the key functions of Parliament. Parliament's strategic plans, such as the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, provide a clear guide on how to execute its functions effectively and efficiently in line with the country's constitution. Government will proactively support capacity building initiatives and efforts of Parliament especially as it relates to carrying out their constitutional mandate. We will enable Parliament to fulfill its critical functions with a view to create a stable and predictable environment that is essential for economic growth and development.

26.0 JUDICIARY

In line with the constitution of the Kingdom of Eswatini, Tinkhundla democratic system recognizes the independence of the judiciary in executing their function. It is of utmost importance that investors have confidence in the justice system for the country to attract mega Foreign Direct Investment. Government will therefore work with the Judiciary to ensure that the justice system is effective in delivering justice timely and that confidence is restored to the justice system in the country. The Judiciary will be supported to improve efficiency within the court system by intruding electronic systems as well as capacity of personnel. The capacity and operations of National courts will be supported in line with the laws of the Land.

27.0 CONCLUSION

His Majesty's Government has formulated a short to medium-term plan anchored on the Sibaya submissions and the Speech from the Throne. This plan precedes the development of the country's long-term plan, the Grand Plan.

Embedded in the long-term plan will be the country's socio-economic development approach and the investment models that will be at the center of government's plans and operations and will transform both the economic and social outlook through investment attraction and job creation.

A national transformational committee shall be established to fast-track National Transformation of critical sectors and ensure that government policy is implemented.

Within the next five (5) years, and building on the work of our predecessors, Government, the private sector and all emaSwati will together transform our economy, create wealth and jobs for all thus reducing poverty and the dominant social ills, and build strong institutions that deliver quality services efficiently.

This policy statement will not yield the intended outcomes without the support of the civil service, Members of Parliament, the private sector, and all emaSwati. I appeal therefore that we rally behind this policy for its implementation.
