

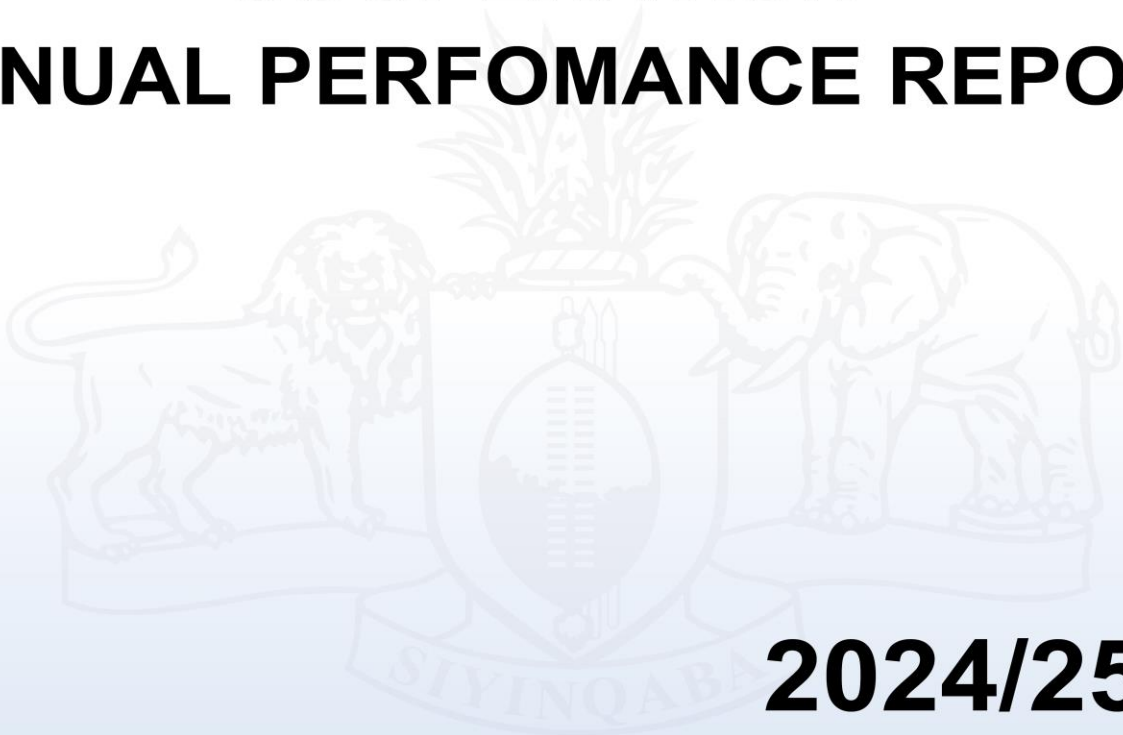


KINGDOM OF ESWATINI



**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS &
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT



2024/25

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Acronyms

ATEF - Africa Taiwan Economic Forum

ASAN

CCA - Corporate Council on Africa

CEO - Chief Executive Officer

CERD - Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

CFC - Common Fund for Commodities

COSP - Conference of States Parties

EB Executive Board

ECOSOC - Economic and Social Council

EDF European Development Fund

EU SADC EPA European Union and the Southern African Development Community

Economic Partnership Agreement

EIPA - Eswatini Investment Promotion Authority led

EPA - Economic Partnership Agreement

ESE Eswatini Stock Exchange

ESWACAA - Eswatini Civil Aviation Authority

FAO - Food and Agriculture organization

GB Governing Body

HLC - High-level Committee

HLDE - High-level Dialogue on Energy

ICC Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council

ICPD - International Conference on Population and Development

IEA - International Energy Agency

IFC - International Finance Corporation

IRENA - International Renewable Energy Agency

JPA Joint Parliamentary Assembly

MS Member States

MOEA Ministry of Economic Affairs

NDCs Nationally Determined Contributions

NDMA National Disaster Management Agency

NGO Non-Governmental organization

OPCW Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

QCPR Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities for Development

RCs Resident Coordinators

RPA Regional Parliamentary Assemblies

RPD Rights of Persons with Disabilities

SSC South-South cooperation

SDGs Sustainable Development Goals

TAITRA Taiwan External Trade Development Council

TECO Taipei Economic and Cultural Office

TEMES Taiwan Electrical and Mechanical Engineering Services Inc.

TCDC Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries

TCX Taiwan Carbon Solution Exchange

TWSE Taiwan Stock Exchange

UNCTs United Nations Country Teams

UNCTAD United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

UNOSSC United Nations Office of South-South Cooperation

UKEF UK Export Finance

WHO World Health Organization

1, 0 MINISTER'S PREAMBLE

Preamble

I am greatly humbled to appear before the Honourable House. I am here to present the annual performance report for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation for the Financial Year 2024/2025.

Part of our Foreign Missions' functions is to bring new investment into the country and further showcase the country as the ideal investment destination for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) across different sectors such as; ICT, Energy, Investment, Agriculture, Mining, Tourism etc. Therefore, in the period under review:

- Our Mission in Taiwan has facilitated the signing of the Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) between the Eswatini Stock Exchange (ESE) with the Taiwan Stock Exchange (TWSE) and the Taiwan Carbon Solution Exchange (TCX). The two MoUs will focus on sharing information related to financial technology and business experience to strengthen the capital markets in both countries.
- Furthermore, our Mission in Taiwan facilitated the negotiation and conclusion of the contract between CECI Engineering and Eswatini National Petroleum Company (ENPC) related to the Phuzumoya Strategic Oil Reserve project. The two Governments are working on the finer details for the implementation of the project.
- Our Consulate in Johannesburg facilitated contacts between a Zimbabwean importer and Eswatini Sugar Association for the exportation of 3500MT brown and 6000MT white refined sugar.

CULTURE AND TOURISM PROMOTION

Honourable Chairperson, part of the Ministry's functions is to promote the Kingdom of Eswatini as a tourist destination, a country endowed with a unique cultural heritage.

➤ 2024 Africa Day Celebrations

- Our Mission in Washington D.C participated in the 2024 Africa Day Celebrations hosted by the African Union Office in Washington D.C. The Celebrations had panel discussions that focused on cooperation on higher education, science, technology and innovation between Africa and the United States of America; areas of cooperation which are in line with the Government Programme of Action.

➤ African Diaspora Day on Capitol Hill

- Our Mission in Washington D.C participated in the African Diaspora Day, a forum hosted by United States lawmakers with the aim to unite African and Caribbean leaders as part of the Diaspora Heritage Month, which is celebrated annually in the Month of September. The theme of the Forum was *"The rise of global Africa: forging a new U.S economic partnership with Africa and the Caribbean"*.

➤ Africa Day Celebrations in Kuwait

- Our Embassy in Kuwait participated in the celebration of Africa Day whereby the Embassy of Eswatini was part of the main organizing committee of this colorful and vibrant event. The Embassy was able to exhibit various Eswatini handicraft materials and products which drew a lot of attention and interest because of their colorful and unique designs. Tourism promotional pamphlets and videos, provided by Eswatini Tourism Authority, were also on display to promote the country.

- **Africa – Malaysia Business Forum: 03 July 2024**
 - The African Missions in Malaysia celebrated the Africa – Malaysia Business Forum, through a one-day event for the promotion of Africa’s growth and economic development, guided by the spirit of South-South Cooperation and the African Union Charter, as well as the African Union Agenda 2063. During the one-day event, the African Missions in Malaysia held the Second Africa - Malaysia Business Forum (AMBF 2024) with the aim of promoting Africa- Malaysia opportunities and cooperation in several identified priority sectors, namely investment on (infrastructure, agriculture, mining, and energy), tourism, health, and education sectors. The Forum provided our mission with the opportunity to engage the Malaysian Government and potential investors in the identified sectors.

- **2024 International Day at Tshwane University of Technology (TUT)**
 - Our mission in Pretoria was able to assist Emaswati Students from the Tshwane University of Technology to participate at their Annual International Day. The International Day celebration showcased a variety of cultures including our own, through traditional foods, dances and fashion shows.
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- **Africa Day at Kempton Park**
 - Furthermore, our mission participated in the Africa Day Commemoration organized by the African Diplomatic Corps accredited to South Africa. This event was organized in collaboration with an events company called Mo Afrika, under the theme: "Showcasing the best in African food, music, arts, culture and fashion".

- **UMHLANGA REED DANCE**
 - Our mission in Mozambique noted an increased participation of tourists to the Kingdom of Eswatini for this year’s Umhlanga Reed Dance. Five tourist buses travelled from the Republic of Mozambique to Eswatini for the national reed dance and bikers from Mozambique also travelled to Eswatini for the Swazi Rally 2024 which took place on the same weekend at Rider’s Ranch.

TRADE AND INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES

The African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) Mid -Term Review

Our Mission in Washington D.C participated in the 2024 African Growth and Opportunity Act Mid-Term Review (AGOA MTR) hosted by the African Union Mission in the United States. The 21st AGOA Forum under the theme “Beyond 2025: Reimagining AGOA for an Inclusive, Sustainable and Prosperous Tomorrow”, was discussed at length.

Ambassadors stressed the importance of an expeditious renewal of AGOA with an emphasis on the non-controversial enhancements and amendments for a minimum of 16 years which is needed to provide the required predictability and certainty to the trade and investments relationships between the two regions.

UNGA

Eswatini participated in this years United Nations General Assembly, themed “Summit of the Future”. The Eswatini delegation was led by Rt. Hon. Prime Minister Russell M. Dlamini, accompanied by senior officials.

- **Eswatini’s Advocacy for Inclusivity and Reform:** Prime Minister reinforced Eswatini's support for the Ezulwini Consensus, advocating for reforms that allow greater representation for Africa, including Taiwan’s inclusion in international forums. The Prime Minister emphasized the need for a more inclusive and responsive global system to address amongst others food security, climate change.

**World Food Forum 2024, Rome, Italy, 14th to 18th October 2024, under the theme
*“Good food for all, for Today and Tomorrow”***

The Kingdom of Eswatini led by His Majesty King Mswati III, participated in the **World Food Forum 2024**, where His Majesty made a keynote statement addressing the challenges and opportunities related to food security and sustainable agrifood systems.

A bilateral meeting was held on the margins of the World Food Forum, where His Majesty and the Director General of FAO engaged in conversations focused on the collaboration projects that the Government of Eswatini and the Food and Agriculture Organisation are involved in, the implementation of the country programme framework between Eswatini and FAO, opportunities and challenges, and lastly possible areas for further collaboration.

Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, APIA, Independent State of Samoa, 25-26 OCTOBER 2024

The 2024 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) was held in Apia, Samoa and marked its 75th year Anniversary. This meeting underscored a commitment to fostering resilient societies and economies, addressing global challenges, and promoting democratic values. In health and education, leaders held discussions towards strengthening their dedication to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for universal health coverage, and pandemic preparedness. They also prioritized access to STEM education and lifelong learning in safe and inclusive environments. The Kingdom of Eswatini was represented by His Majesty King Mswati III. The next CHOGM will be hosted by Antigua and Barbuda in the capital city of St John’s in 2026.

United Nations Climate Change Conferences (COP 29)

The United Nations Climate Change Conferences (COP 29) was held in Baku, Azerbaijan. The Prime Minister, His Excellency Russell Mmiso Dlamini led the delegation to the COP

29. The Prime Minister presented a statement to the gathering in which he lamented the distressing effects of climate change. He recalled the UN Summit in September in which there was call for unity in fighting climate change and urged the gathering to unite to safeguard our planet. He stressed that joint mitigation effort is required without placing undue burden on poorer nations. He emphasized the need for equitable solutions for all people. Finally, the Prime Minister appealed for the inclusion of the Republic of China on Taiwan in the collective climate response.

World Government Summit (WGS) 2025

The World Governments Summit convened in Dubai 2025 under the theme '*Shaping Future Governments.*' This Summit brought together Governments, International Organizations, thought leaders, and private sector leaders from around the globe to foster international cooperation and identify innovative solutions for future challenges, ultimately inspiring and empowering the next generation of Governments.

His Majesty, King Mswati III graced this occasion where he was engaged in the Government Experience Exchange Forum where he engaged with individuals from various industries to explore real-world experiences, innovative strategies and valuable lessons learned. The core mission for these discussions, was to cultivate knowledge-sharing that empowers both individuals and organizations to excel in today's fast-paced environment.

African Union

His Majesty King Mswati III led a High Level Delegation to the African Union Headquarters to attend the 38th Ordinary Session of AU Heads of State and Government Summit. Eswatini was elected a Member of the Peace and Security Council representing the Southern African Region for 2025-2028.

Honourable Chair, we extend profound appreciation to Their Majesties and Government

for the support given during the campaign for Eswatini's candidature for the position of Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment. In this regards, we congratulate Commissioner Moses Vilakati for his appointment and wish him well as he executes his duties in this vital role within the AU.

We continue to be committed to realizing our mandate through the implementation of our strategic objectives. The Ministry has laid good plans for implementation and we request the Portfolio Committee to approve the budget allocation of **E 738,415,183.00** that is **E 697,015,183.00** for recurrent and **E 41,400,000.00** for capital project.

I thank you

2.0 MINISTRY MANDATES, PORTFOLIO AND ORGANIZATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

2.1 Vision Statement

To advance the interests of Eswatini through contributing to national security; growth in the economy; job creation and standard of living; assisting Eswatini nationals abroad; strengthening global cooperation; nurturing public understanding of the country's Foreign Policy and projecting a positive brand of the Kingdom.

2.2 Mission Statement

The Ministry seeks to provide a professional diplomatic service, capable of delivering quality advice and services to all clientele on international issues, projecting a positive image of the country on political and socio-economic issues in a rapidly globalizing world and suitably poised to promote and effectively represent Eswatini internationally.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation has a Master Goal and eight Strategic Objectives from which its strategy is developed.

2.3 Strategic Objectives

- a) To promote and protect the interests of Eswatini regionally and globally.
- b) To observe and promote the policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of other nations.
- c) To promote peaceful settlement of international disputes.
- d) To uphold the principles, aims and ideals of international organizations to which Eswatini is a member.
- e) To empower Eswatini nationals by sourcing education opportunities from our partners regionally and abroad for onward transmission to line Ministries.
- f) To provide professional diplomatic service.
- g) To strengthen and deepen bilateral relations (existing and potential) between Eswatini and other countries.
- h) To project a positive image of the country on political and socio-economic issues.

2.4 Core Values

The overriding disaggregated core values that will guide the behaviour of staff are:

a) Commitment

- We face and serve all customers with quality services provided by our departments.
- We provide correct and effective information, in the right time, within minimum cost.
- We are punctual at work, attend to all enquiries and are dedicated to our mandate.

b) Professionalism

- We exhibit excellence in service delivery.
- We demonstrate appropriate dress and language code.
- We are prepared and willing to serve objectively, without bias.
- We exercise efficiency, effectiveness and economic use of financial resources and working tools.

c) Integrity

- We are honest in our dealings and display self-respect to one another.
- We are dedicated to the task at hand and uphold the Mission of the Ministry.
- We demonstrate confidentiality, non-disclosure of Government secrets and information.

d) Teamwork

- We work and deliver results as one big seamless team across all departments.
- We respect the chain of command and thrive on peer coaching and support.
- We emphasize sharing of work and support each other in delivering our tasks.

2.5 Portfolio Responsibility

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation's Portfolio and responsibilities are articulated under Legal Notice No. 189 of 2015. They include the following:

- a) International Relations and Cooperation
- b) International and Regional Organizations
- c) Protocol
- d) Management of Eswatini Diplomatic Missions Abroad
- e) International Treaties and Conventions
- f) Foreign Policy

2.6 Functions

To carry out the above-mentioned portfolio and tasks, the Ministry undertakes the following functions:

2.6.1 Functions of the Capital

- a) Develop protocol standards and procedures and apply these consistently to enhance Eswatini's foreign policy and foreign relations objectives.
- b) Establish and manage Eswatini's foreign Missions as external arms for realizing the objectives of Eswatini's Foreign policy and relations.
- c) Analyze and keep the Government including the general public informed about politics abroad and how they affect national interests and development programmes.
- d) Safeguard the interests of Eswatini nationals abroad and provide consular services.
- e) Ensure effective performance and efficient management of the Ministry, both at headquarters and Missions abroad.

2.6.2 Functions of Missions Abroad:

- a) Maintain good relations between Eswatini and the countries and/or organizations of accreditation.

- b) Represent or attend relevant meetings in countries of accreditation as part of Eswatini Delegations representing the country.
- c) Promote Culture, Trade, Investment and Tourism.
- d) Promote Tinkhundla system practiced in the country.
- e) Search for markets for Eswatini goods and services as mandated by Government Ministries and agencies through MFAIC.
- f) Serve the interests of Eswatini nationals residing or travelling abroad, particularly those travelling on official duties.
- g) Arrange and facilitate travel logistics for His Majesty the King, Her Majesty the Queen Mother, Royalty and the Right Honourable Prime Minister's Visits in countries of accreditation by way of soliciting appropriate accommodation, transportation and setting up relevant appointments and activities. All this is done in full consultation with the Ministry.

2.6.3 Functional Structure Abroad:

- a) Head of Mission
- b) Counsellor/Head of Chancery
- c) Consul General
- d) First Secretaries (First Secretary Information, First Secretary Administration, First Secretary Trade, First Secretary Legal)
- e) Defence Attachés (DAs)
- f) Third Secretaries (Financial Controllers/Accountants)
- g) Administrative Attaché (Secretaries to head of Mission)

2.6.4 Entities

- a) Minister's Office
- b) Principal Secretary
- c) Ministry's Administration
- d) Political
- e) Protocol

- f) International Relations
- g) Missions Abroad

Missions Abroad:

1. Embassy of the Kingdom of Eswatini to the United States of America in Washington
2. Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Eswatini to the United Nations in New York
3. High Commission of the Kingdom of Eswatini to the United Kingdom in London
4. Embassy of the Kingdom of Eswatini to the European Union in Brussels
5. High Commission of the Kingdom of Eswatini to the Republic of Mozambique in Maputo
6. High Commission of the Kingdom of Eswatini to the Republic of South Africa in Pretoria
7. Consulate of the Kingdom of Eswatini in the Republic of South Africa in Johannesburg
8. Embassy of the Kingdom of Eswatini to the United Arab Emirates in Abu Dhabi
9. Embassy of the Kingdom of Eswatini to the Republic of China on Taiwan, in Taipei
10. High Commission of the Kingdom of Eswatini to Malaysia in Malaysia
11. Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Eswatini to the United Nations in Geneva
12. Embassy of the Kingdom of Eswatini to the African Union in Ethiopia
13. Embassy of the Kingdom of Eswatini to the State of Kuwait in Kuwait
14. Embassy of the Kingdom of Eswatini to the State of Qatar in Qatar
15. Embassy of the Kingdom of Eswatini to the Kingdom of Morocco
16. Embassy of the Kingdom of Eswatini to the State of Saudi Arabia

3.0 FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENTS (FDI)

Part of our Foreign Missions' functions is to bring new investment into the country and further showcase the country as the ideal investment destination for Foreign Direct Investment across all the sectors namely; ICT, Services, Energy, Agriculture, Agri-business, Mining, Tourism etc.

Eswatini Stock Exchange (ESE)

The Taiwan Stock Exchange (TWSE) and the Taiwan Carbon Solution Exchange (TCX) signed a separate MoU with the Eswatini Stock Exchange (ESE) in Taiwan. The exchanges facilitated by these new MoUs will focus on sharing information related to financial technology and business experience to strengthen the capital markets in both countries.

Eswatini Central Bank

The Central Bank of the Republic of China (Taiwan) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Central Bank of Eswatini, pledging to forge closer ties and boost cooperation. The MoU was signed by the Governors of the two States in the presence of His Majesty King Mswati III and HE the President of Taiwan Lai Ching-te.

Under the MoU, the local central bank and CBE would conduct fieldwork and case studies together, as well as share other relevant information. The local Central Bank appreciates the fact that Eswatini is one of Taiwan's diplomatic allies and the newly signed MoU demonstrated a new cooperation milestone between the two. The two countries are expected to deepen their partnership and achieve mutual long-term benefits through the MoU.

Eswatini – Turkiye Business Chamber of Commerce

Our Mission in Brussels was able to successfully operationalise Eswatini – Turkiye Business Chamber of Commerce - DEIK Memorandum of Understanding. The Agreement in its implementation foresees the conducting of joint meetings in both Turkiye and Eswatini by business representatives on a periodic basis. The Mission will continue to monitor activities to the best of its ability given the finite resources available.

Investment Promotion Outreach

In January 2025, our Mission in Brussels undertook an investment promotion outreach to Bratislava, Slovakia upon the invitation of the Honorary Consul of the kingdom of Eswatini to Slovakia, Dr Jozef Dolinský. During the visit, targeted conversations were held with the owner of one of Slovakia's most successful diversified investment holdings. Discussions prior to the visitation had focused on Cargo Wagon production to be carried out in the kingdom of Eswatini, including the possibility of manufacturing pharmaceuticals in the kingdom of Eswatini following discussions with Eswatini authorities.

Phuzumoya Strategic Oil Reserve Project

This project's implementation can commence at any given time since all arrangements and agreements related to it have been inked and submitted with the pertinent authorities and stakeholders and the budget which currently stands at 290 Million American Dollars and has been submitted to Eswatini Government for accomplishment. The signing of the contract between CECI and ENPC on November 26, 2024 denotes a significant milestone in Taiwan-Eswatini bilateral relations, with Taiwan supporting Eswatini's infrastructure development and energy security goals. The facility represents a significant leap in Eswatini's energy infrastructure, transforming the country's current limited 2–3-day fuel storage capacity into a robust 60-day strategic reserve system.

Finally the Chief Operations Officer will be leading a delegation of four in attendance of the design meetings with CECI officials on 4th - 5th February 2025, with the aim of finalizing the state-of-the-structure interior designs and specifications.

Roundtable discussion with Sugar Industry and local businessmen

On the 25 November 2024, Eswatini High Commission in London met with executives from the Eswatini sugar industry and British investors to discuss potential partnerships, market opportunities, and value addition in sugar production. The meeting was held alongside the International Sugar Organisation (ISO) Program, providing a strategic platform to engage in discussions on the future of sugar trade and investment between Eswatini and the UK.

The meeting provided a valuable opportunity to strengthen trade and investment ties between Eswatini and the UK in the sugar sector. The discussions reinforced the mutual benefits of collaboration, setting the stage for future investments, market expansion, and sustainable growth in the industry.

2024 Regional Investment Conference

Our High Commission in Pretoria participated in the 2024 Regional Investment Conference held in Knysna, Western Cape from 14th to 16th November 2024. The conference was a pivotal event aimed at unlocking the full economic potential of the Garden Route. The conference was attended by a distinguished group of Government Officials, Business Leaders, and Industry Experts, marked as a significant step in positioning Knysna as a key investment destination, not only in the Western Cape but across South Africa.

Led by a strong partnership between the Greater Knysna Business Chamber, the Garden Route District Municipality, the Knysna Local Municipality, and

the Yona-Yethu Initiative, the conference focused on attracting investment and fostering growth across multiple sectors. The initiative also received support from key sponsors, including the Services SETA and Takealot, who highlighted the importance of skills development and capacity building as central to economic progress in the region.

Meeting with Air Asia: 25th November 2024, Malaysia

In a bid to lure investors and boost tourism in Eswatini, our Mission in Malaysia undertook a visit to the Headquarters of AirAsia in Malaysia. AirAsia is a Malaysian multinational low-cost airline, operating in 140 destinations, with a fleet of 255 aircraft. The Airline recently launched a route to Nairobi, Kenya, thus the Mission extended an invitation to the carrier to explore the establishment of a strategic partnership with Eswatini. The aim of the partnership would be for Eswatini to become a hub whereby the airline can service, refuel and park its airlines as they explore opening up other routes in the SADC region. Furthermore, H.E. the High Commissioner met with the Principal Secretary of the Ministry of Public Works and Transport together with the Chief Executive Officer of Eswatini Air to brief them about the need to prepare a proposal to attract the interest of Air Asia.

Meeting with RP Design Group of companies – December 2024, Malaysia

In furtherance of the cause to lure investors to Eswatini, our Mission in Malaysia held a meeting with the Founder and CEO of RP Design Group of Companies. The nature of their business ranges Architectural and Construction Design, Pharmaceutical Industry, to Minerals, Oils and gas. An invitation has been extended to the company to embark on a feasibility study in Eswatini, to view possible avenues for investment such as in ICT, Sugar Industry, Energy Sector and Farming amongst others.

MOU between Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce and Business Eswatini

A virtual meeting was held between Business Eswatini and the Consulate whereby Business Eswatini informed the Consulate of their intention to revive a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that was signed with the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce and Industry in the past years. To this extent the indication was that the Consulate could assist in this and thereafter a visit could be arranged for Business Eswatini to hold discussions on same. To this extent the Consulate still awaits the MoU from Business Eswatini.

Discussion with Fair and Square

The Consulate has established links with Fair and Square which is an organization that was started in 2007 as Swaziland Fair Trade (SWIFT) to help grow the economy of Eswatini through creation of sustainable jobs which will bring economic justice and dignified work for communities and create an equitable space for women and youth economic empowerment. In 2022, Fair and Square rebranded from Swaziland Fair Trade to Fair and Square in line with constant changes in the corporate and commercial worlds that often necessitate a wide range of complex decisions and adaptations.

The organization currently has a presence in eight African countries (South Africa, Zambia, Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, Mozambique, Malawi, and Angola). They now boast of 189 companies throughout these countries, 87 of which are Eswatini- based. In addition to the handmade sector, Fair and Square has expanded into the natural cosmetics and food manufacturing sectors, giving them a new brand and reputation.

Meeting with USA CG

The Consulate received the USA Consul General who had come to pay a courtesy visit at the Consulate. During her visit, the USA CG was interested in a number of issues touching on the Eswatini trade and investment environment including the country's participation in AGOA and other regional trading blocs. Discussions revolved around the following:

- The need for a seamless and continuous AGOA arrangement for Africa, including the Kingdom of Eswatini post 2025
- AGOA and value chain development, and job creation in Eswatini
- Foreign direct investment requirements for Eswatini
- Trade between the US and the Kingdom of Eswatini
- Challenges regarding SACU dependency
- The Eswatini MSME Sector
- Culture and Tourism
- Labour
- Technical assistance and other assistance for private sector development

In this regard, the CG promised to make a case for AGOA even post 2025 in her capacity as CG in SA, and she also emphasized the need for Eswatini to maximize utilization of the opportunity available for trade under the Act.

4. CULTURE AND TOURISM PROMOTION

Part of the Ministry's functions is to promote the Kingdom of Eswatini as a tourist destination, a Kingdom endowed with a unique cultural heritage.

2024 Taiwan International Travel Fair

Eswatini significantly benefit from participating in international travel fair exhibitions in Taiwan. These events provide a valuable platform to showcase the country's unique tourism offerings to a large and receptive audience. By showcasing its diverse landscapes, vibrant culture, and warm hospitality, Eswatini can attract Taiwanese tourists, boosting tourism revenue and creating economic opportunities within the country.

Furthermore, these exhibitions offer a chance to establish valuable connections with Taiwanese travel agencies, tour operators, and media outlets. These partnerships can facilitate the development of customized travel packages to Eswatini, increasing accessibility and attracting a wider range of travelers. Moreover, the exposure generated through media coverage and online promotion can enhance Eswatini's global tourism image, attracting visitors from other parts of the world.

Ultimately, participating in international travel fair exhibitions in Taiwan provides Eswatini with a unique opportunity to increase its visibility in the Asian tourism market, attract new visitors, and foster sustainable tourism growth. By effectively leveraging these platforms, Eswatini can position itself as a desirable and accessible travel destination for Taiwanese and international travelers alike.

World Travel Market 2024

The High Commission in London, in collaboration with officials from the Eswatini Tourism Authority (ETA), participated in the World Travel Market (WTM) 2024 held in London

from 5 – 7 November 2024. This premier global event brought together key players in the tourism industry, including travel agents, tour operators, media professionals, and representatives from various countries.

During the event, the Eswatini delegation showcased the country's unique cultural heritage, scenic landscapes, and adventure tourism offerings. Promotional materials highlighting Eswatini's key attractions, such as its wildlife reserves, vibrant festivals, and authentic cultural experiences, were distributed to attendees. The team also engaged in networking sessions, meetings with travel operators, and panel discussions focused on sustainable tourism practices and emerging travel trends.

By enhancing its presence at international events like WTM, Eswatini can position itself as a must-visit destination in Africa, ultimately increasing tourist arrivals, boosting revenue, and contributing to the growth of the economy. The Ministry's support in sourcing updated product samples of all that Eswatini has to showcase would considerably strengthen the Missions ability to adequately promote the Kingdom

Cultural Exhibition

This is a cultural gathering hosted by Kuwait University for the purpose of showcasing different cultures and customs from various countries represented in Kuwait. The Embassy together with two Eswatini students had an opportunity to showcase Eswatini products and also exchange views relating to our traditions and culture with the Kuwaiti community.

International Diplomatic Women's Group

The Embassy was also able to exhibit traditional and modern clothing materials made in Eswatini in an event which was organized by a non-profit organization of ambassadors' spouses in Kuwait. The event was meant to market products made in other parts of the world to citizens of Kuwait. Fortunately, the spouse of the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Eswatini is currently the President of the International Women's Group in Kuwait and this enabled Eswatini products to get more mileage in terms of coverage.

2024 International Day at Tshwane University of Technology (TUT)

The High Commission in Pretoria was able to assist Eswatini Students from the Tshwane University of Technology towards their Annual International Day. The 2024 International Day at Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) took place on 22 October 2024. The International Day celebration showcased a variety of cultures through traditional foods, dances, fashion shows, and more namely:

- Cultural performances including traditional dances, fashion shows and music from around the world
- Display of international food stalls offering varieties and delicious cuisines from different countries
- Conducting of workshops and demonstrations on various cultural crafts and traditions and;
- Engaging in various sports activities and games that promote cultural exchanges and teamwork.

To these end students were provided with a variety of artifacts for display, traditional regalia and funds to procure and cook traditional Eswatini food for the event.

Africa Day at Kempton Park

The High Commission in Pretoria participated in the Africa Day Commemoration organized at Kempton Park by the African Diplomatic Corps accredited to South Africa, in collaboration with an events company called Mo Afrika, under the theme: "Showcasing the best in African food, music, arts, culture and fashion". The High Commission was able to present a cultural performance at this event. The performers comprised of Eswatini students based in the Republic of South Africa. The Mission also displayed

Eswatini traditional material including the traditional attire. Eswatini Air pamphlets were distributed. Video clips of the country's tourist attractions were shown to market it as a tourist destination.

Other Cultural Activities/Events

The High Commission and Consulate managed to undertake the following cultural activities:

- Offered assistance and support to Emaswati students at the University of Pretoria and University of Johannesburg during their cultural activities.
- Attended and supported the Umphakatsi weMaswati Culture Day in Kwa-Thema, Springs. This event was also attended by the Border Determination Committee from Eswatini. This cultural event was recognized and supported by the Department of Traditional Affairs and Corporate Governance.
- Attended and supported the official recognition of Prince (Inkosi) Sisitwako II of eSandleni Traditional Council held at Esandleni Royal Kraal in Mpumalanga. Inkosi Sisitwako was officially recognized by the Traditional Governance Authority of South Africa and presented with a certificate.
- The High Commission and the Consulate attended a Cultural Heritage Celebration at the invitation of the Social Auxiliary Unit under the Department of Social Development. In the context of South Africa's rich cultural diversity, the Department believes that celebrating heritage is vital and encourages its employees to learn about one another's values and traditions, gradually creating a more inclusive society.

Maputo Spotlight workshop

During the period under review the Mission together with Tourism sectors from Eswatini namely, Tourism Authority, Hotels and by Game Park participated in the Expo Travel promotion Indaba held in Maputo Raddison Hotel. The Expo was attended by many tourism stake holders from Mozambique and South Africa. During the Expo the Eswatini sector managed to forged friendship and partnership with their counterparts from both countries and promised to formulate tourism packages to attract more tourists.

5.0 TRADE AND INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES

The African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) Mid -Term Review

The Mission in Washington D.C participated in the 2024 African Growth and Opportunity Act Mid-Term Review (AGOA MTR) hosted by the African Union Mission in the United States in Washington D.C. The 21st AGOA Forum under the theme “Beyond 2025: Reimagining AGOA for an Inclusive, Sustainable and Prosperous Tomorrow”, was discussed at length.

The Forum aimed to provide the opportunity for a meaningful discussion between the African Trade Ministers and the U.S. Government representatives on the renewal and enhancement of AGOA, with a particular focus on the need to improve AGOA utilization to advance inclusive and responsive trade and investment policies and practices to make it more transformative whilst promoting sustainable economic growth and development throughout Africa. In addition, the Forum would feature discussions on regulatory reforms and trade facilitation which have a critical impact on all sectors, in particular agricultural trade, regionally and intercontinentally.

The main objectives of the meeting were; to identify the critical challenges and opportunities that need to take center stage and seized to expedite the process of AGOA’s renewal, discussion on the potential improvements and reforms that can be presented to the U.S Congress and a critical examination on the nexus between AGOA and the AfCFTA and how to effectively leverage their complementarities to develop regional value chains and promote investments in Africa.

Over the course of the 2-day Meeting, the group of African Ambassadors had a wide range of critical issues to deliberate on and discuss, not only amongst themselves but with stakeholders from the U.S. Government and leaders of American think tanks based in Washington D.C. At the end of the Meeting there was an array of recommendations on the renewal and utilization of AGOA and the nexus between AGOA and AfCFTA as enumerated below;

- Ambassadors stressed the importance of an expeditious renewal of AGOA with an emphasis on the non-controversial enhancements and amendments for a minimum of 16 years which is needed to provide the required predictability and certainty to the trade and investments relationships between the two regions.
- Ambassadors highlighted the necessity for the United States to scale up technical assistance to support the work of AGOA beneficiary countries to carry out the development of national AGOA utilization strategies as suggested in the AGOA Renewal and Improvement Bill of 2024, introduced by Senators Coons and Risch on April 11, 2024 requesting Congress to allocate \$10 million for Fiscal Year 2025 to enable USAID to support the work of AGOA beneficiaries to carry out the development of utilization strategies.
- Ambassadors also pointed out how crucial U.S investment in Africa's productive capacity is, in ensuring that AGOA achieves its intended objectives, changes the industrial profile of AGOA beneficiary countries, and encouraged the U.S to prioritize an investment led-trade strategy in its relations with African countries.
- Ambassadors highlighted the use of non-trade considerations in the eligibility determination of countries and further stressed the need to ensure the

developmental dimension of AGOA program, particularly in relation to infrastructure, industrial development, and technology transfer.

- Another major highlight was the importance of the review of the AGOA conditionalities, which should make sure that countries are not graduated out of AGOA based on their economic progress using high GNI per capita measured at a shorter period of one fiscal year, whereas an adequate determination for graduation requires an extended observation period no less than five consecutive years that assures a sustained high-income status for each AGOA-eligible country.
- Ambassadors also highlighted the importance of the harmonization of the rules of origin between AGOA and AfCFTA in facilitating a seamless trade and reduction in administrative burdens on exporters whilst also urging for the recognition of AfCFTA rules and adoption of the cumulation principle in order to foster regional value chains and enhance trade efficiency. They also supported the idea that in light of the AfCFTA, AGOA country strategies should go beyond national strategies to regional and continental AGOA strategies that are sector based.

The 2024 African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) Forum

The Mission in Washington D.C participated in the 2024 African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) Forum under the theme *"Beyond 2025: Reimagining AGOA for an Inclusive, Sustainable and Prosperous Tomorrow"*. The forum brought together Ministers from AGOA-eligible countries and senior Government officials from the U.S., as well as representatives from regional economic organizations, labor, civil society, and the private sector.

Major discussions focused on modernizing AGOA to better address the realities of a 21st century U.S.-Africa economic partnership. Topics included increasing the use

of the program, promoting worker-centric trade policies, and overcoming barriers faced by women, youth, and small enterprises. The forum also emphasized the importance of reauthorizing AGOA beyond 2025 to ensure continued economic growth and opportunity for Africa.

Although a select group of Members of the U.S. Congress, from the Ways and Means Committee were also present to reaffirm the commitment of the U.S. government in the modernization and reauthorization of the program, they did not however take a firm position on the renewal of the program by the U.S. government. They only informed Ministers that Congress is currently fully engaged with this year's elections and was unlikely to approve the reauthorization in 2024 but would certainly look into it in the early days of 2025. The Committee members reassured the African Ministers that it was working hard to facilitate a thoughtful renewal process that will yield maximum benefit for both United States and sub-Saharan Africa. They further highlighted the importance of transitioning towards a more permanent reciprocal trading relationship that will put workers and businesses in both continents in the strongest prosperity position whilst also making sure that the program realizes its full potential as a tool for development as well as a support structure for regional economic integration. The Members further went on to make mention of the AGOA Renewal and Improvement Act of 2024 introduced by Senators Chris Coons and Jim Risch which sought to extend the program by 16 years and also integrate AGOA with the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) to support the development of intra-African supply chains, making lofty promises that it would pass during the lame-duck session after the November elections, whereas this session is envisaged in early 2025.

6.0 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE & SCHOLARSHIPS

a) Scholarship programme

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

COUNTRY/ORGANIZATION	TYPE	TITLE
United States of America	Short-term training	Essential Elements of Nuclear Security for Nuclear and other Radioactive Material of Regulatory Control
Arab Republic of Egypt	Short-term training	-The Development of Leadership Skills -VIP and Vital Installation Protection
Republic of Singapore-Singapore Cooperation Programme Training Award (SCPTA)	Short-term training	-Singapore Skills Transformation 4.0 -Healthcare Management -Fostering Social Cohesion -Sustainable Financing of Cities -Technopreneurship: Enabling Innovation and A Start-up Ecosystem - Carbon Accounting
UN-IDEP	Short term training	Gender Responsive Economic Policy Management
India	Short-term training	-Taxation on E-Commerce Industry -Sharing Indian Accounting Profession Story -Systems Approach and Tools to Support Investment Decisions for Scaling Climate Resilient and Sustainable Farm and Food Systems -Landscape Resource Conservation for Achieving Land Degradation and Carbon Neutrality and Sustainability of Smallholder Farming Systems -Detection and Integrated Management of Aflatoxin Contamination in Crops for Safe Food and Fair Trade

		-Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Principles in Research for Development
Austria	Short-term training	-Introductory Course on Radionuclide IMS Data and IDC Products
Italy	-Short-term training -Short-term training	-Environmental Prevention and Management in Pre & Post-Conflict and Crises Areas -
World Trade Organization (WTO)	Short-term training	-Advanced Trade Policy Course
Egypt	Short-term training	-Countering International Terrorism -Explosive Ordnance Disposal and Post-Blast Investigation -Countering Organized Crimes -Anti-Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances
India	Short-term training programme (60)	-Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC)
World Trade Policy	Short-term training	-Trade Policy Course
Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)	Short-term training	-Associate Programme
International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)	Short-term Training	Ocean Alkalinity Enhancement-Assessing the Impacts on Marine Organisms

(C) INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS

COUNTRY/ORGANIZATION	TYPE	TITLE
State of Kuwait	Scholarship (2)	Scholarship offer of 2 scholarships
Mauritius	Scholarship (15)	Mauritius-Africa Scholarship Scheme (MASS)
Cuba	Scholarship (1)	Scholarship for Medicine
Commonwealth	Scholarship (8)	Queen Elizabeth Commonwealth Master's Scholarship 2025/2026
Brunei Darussalam	Scholarship	Government of Brunei Darussalam
Thailand	Scholarship (2)	Thailand International Postgraduate Programme (TIPP)
Taiwan	Scholarship	-Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) -International Cooperation and Development Fund (ICDF)

- The Kingdom of Eswatini benefits from two scholarship programs administered by the Moroccan Agency for International Cooperation (AMCI). This is a south-south cooperation initiative extended to selected countries that have relations with the Kingdom of Morocco in Africa, the Caribbean, Asia and Eastern Europe. The sponsorship is extended to qualifying students at the undergraduate, Masters, and PhD levels.
- For the Kingdom of Eswatini, the current arrangement entails sponsorship extended to fifteen (15) qualifying students. The current annual quota extended to Eswatini students pursuing studies in Moroccan Institutes of Higher Learning in the Kingdom of Morocco stands at fifteen (15).
- There are currently 41 Emaswati students enrolled in universities throughout Morocco. Of the aforementioned students, 15 are currently undergoing the prerequisite French language programme. After the successful completion of the language programme, the students will then proceed to their various universities. These students will commence their university studies in the 2025/2026 academic year.
- However, beginning 2026/2027 academic year, a new dispensation of quota will be introduced, whereby the sponsorship will be divided into three (3) categories as follows: Five (5) students in French universities; Five (5) students in French Technical and Vocational and Education Training institutions); and Five (5) in Al Khawayn University of Infrane (English and private). This is merit scholarship admitting students who scored no less than 90% in their Form V/Matric examination. This is an American curriculum based semi-public university, learning in English.

Training on Artificial Intelligence

The Permanent Mission of the Africa Union in Brussels recently hosted training for Brussels-based AU Embassies on Artificial Intelligence, which was attended by the Counselor. The training was on the effectiveness of AI in problem-solving and offering solutions towards development. The EU Strategy on AI was shared, as well as the framework on which it is based. The question of whether Africa is ready for AI was discussed and a robust discussion ensued. Harmful AI practices were also discussed including social scoring, subliminal techniques or exploitation of vulnerabilities, biometric categorization, individual predictive policing, emotion recognition, and others. The impact of fundamental rights was assessed as well as the most recent advancements in AI.

Scholarship Programs Overview;

The following scholarship programs are available for students from Eswatini:

Taiwan International Cooperation and Development Fund (ICDF) Scholarship

Purpose : To support talented individuals in pursuing higher education in Taiwan.

Coverage : Tuition fees, living expenses, and other related costs.

Taiwan Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) Scholarship

Purpose: To encourage outstanding international students to study in Taiwan.

Coverage: Monthly stipends and tuition support.

Number of Scholarships Awarded as registered from January to date;

Bachelor's Degree - 23 students

Master's Degree - 21 students

Doctoral Degree - 5 students

The impact of Taiwan scholarships on the academic and professional careers of students from Eswatini can be summarized as follows:

Academic Impact

Access to Quality Education: Scholarships provide Eswatini students with opportunities to study at reputable Taiwanese universities, which are known for their high academic standards and diverse programs. This exposure enhances their knowledge and skills in various fields, including technology, business, and international relations.

Cultural Exchange and Language Skills: Studying in Taiwan allows students to immerse themselves in a different culture and learn Mandarin, which is increasingly valuable in global business contexts. Bilingualism or multilingualism is considered an asset that can enhance employability.

Completion Rates: Many scholarship recipients successfully complete their studies despite challenges, such as those posed by the pandemic, indicating resilience and adaptability among Eswatini students.

Professional Impact

Career Opportunities: Graduates of Taiwan's scholarship programs often find better job prospects upon returning to Eswatini or elsewhere. The skills and qualifications gained during their studies make them competitive candidates in the job market. Networking and

Collaboration: Students benefit from building international networks during their studies, which can lead to collaborative projects and opportunities in their professional careers. This networking is crucial for career advancement in an increasingly globalized economy.

Contribution to Socio-Economic Development: By acquiring advanced knowledge and skills, these graduates contribute to the socio-economic growth of Eswatini. They are positioned to take on leadership roles in various sectors, thereby influencing positive change within their communities.

While the scholarships have numerous benefits, some students have reported challenges related to work-study balance or adverse working conditions associated with certain programs. These experiences highlight the need for continuous monitoring and support for scholarship recipients.

Lastly, the scholarships provided by the Taiwan Government represent a significant opportunity for students from Eswatini to enhance their education and skills as well as, continued collaboration between Eswatini and Taiwan in this area is encouraged to maximize educational benefits for Eswati citizens. It is recommended that further engagement with Taiwan MOFA and Taiwanese educational institutions be pursued to facilitate more scholarship opportunities. Regular updates on scholarship statistics by the relevant offices should be maintained for transparency and planning purposes. The scholarship aims to support socio-economic growth by cultivating talented individuals and enhancing international educational exchanges amongst different countries.

High Commission in London

The High Commission in London continues to prioritize facilitating educational and professional development opportunities for Swazi citizens, recognizing the transformative impact of such initiatives. Over the years, Swazi scholars and professionals have greatly benefitted from prestigious programs like the Chevening and Commonwealth Scholarship Commission scholarships and fellowships. These opportunities are pivotal in empowering talented individuals with the potential to drive meaningful change in Eswatini and beyond.

The Commonwealth Scholarship Commission annually offers approximately 800 awards globally for postgraduate study and professional development. These include:

- **Commonwealth PhD Scholarships** for full-time doctoral study in the UK for candidates from low- and middle-income Commonwealth countries.
- **Commonwealth Split-site Scholarships**, allowing PhD candidates to spend up to 12 months at a UK university as part of their doctoral studies.

- **Commonwealth Master’s Scholarships** for full-time master’s study at UK institutions.
- **Commonwealth Shared Scholarships**, jointly supported by UK universities, for selected master’s courses targeting candidates from the least developed and lower-middle-income Commonwealth countries.
- **Commonwealth Distance Learning Scholarships**, enabling part-time master’s study via distance learning for candidates from least developed and lower-income countries.
- **Commonwealth Rutherford Fellowships**, supporting postdoctoral researchers in establishing independent research programs.

Similarly, the Chevening Awards, funded by the UK Government and partner organizations, provide a unique platform for aspiring leaders to develop academically and professionally while building extensive networks and fostering enduring ties with the UK. Swazi citizens have consistently benefitted from both Chevening Scholarships and Fellowships, further enhancing their capacity to lead and influence.

In addition to these flagship programs, other institutions offer competitive funding opportunities for Swazi students seeking to pursue studies in the UK and abroad. Updated details on such opportunities are available through the UK Government websites and the British High Commission in Ezulwini.

While applications for most scholarships for the 2025/2026 academic year have closed, the High Commission in London is actively monitoring and disseminating information on upcoming opportunities for the 2026/2027 academic year. The Mission remains committed to identifying and promoting scholarships and research opportunities that align with the Kingdom’s development priorities, ensuring that Swazi citizens continue to access pathways for personal growth and national contribution. To this end, presenting Credentials in the other countries of accreditation will be vital in assisting the Mission with reaching out to its diplomatic partners in order to seek out other opportunities for Eswatini students.

Eswatini Embassy in Kuwait

The Embassy welcomed for the first time two Eswatini students that were awarded a one-year scholarship to study Arabic language at Kuwait University for the academic year 2024/2025. It is anticipated that two more scholarships for undergraduate studies will be awarded to two other Eswatini students before the end of the academic year. Considering that the four scholarships are the first to be offered to the Kingdom of Eswatini by the State of Kuwait, since the two countries entered into an Agreement in the Field of Higher Education and Scientific Research in 2009, more effort will be made to secure more scholarships for Eswatini students.

The Embassy was also witness to a graduation function at Kuwait's College of Aviation and Technology, where one employee of Eswatini Civil Aviation Authority was part of graduates that received certificates relating to a short-term training in maintenance of aircrafts.

Follow up meeting with the University of Limkokwing: 13th December 2024.

The Mission engaged the Institution in an effort to explore possibilities of further strengthening education diplomacy. The University pledged to work on a program to upgrade the degree programs to bachelor level and more post graduate degrees, following a concern that was raised by the Mission in Malaysia with associate degrees as they are no longer contributing significantly in economic development in Eswatini. Furthermore, the University made an undertaking to offer a minimum of five scholarships in their next intake to the Eswatini Campus based students to come and further their studies in Malaysia. The Mission also underscored the importance of the Institution to consider engaging the Emaswati lecturers in the Malaysia Campus following the over a decade old relationship between the Institution and Eswatini. The Institution assured to present a strategy to the Education Ministry and the Eswatini Higher Education Council (ESHEC) in 2025, that will

take the Institution to the next level as it seeks to contribute to the economy of Eswatini through education.

High Commission in Pretoria

The High Commission in Pretoria continues to receive scholarship offers from the following countries: Republic of Serbia

- Twenty-five (25) World in Serbia full scholarships to students from Member States and Observer States of the Non-Aligned Movement

Republic of Türkiye

- Türkiye Scholarships for the undergraduate Scholarship Programme in Engineering, Health Sciences, humanities and Social Science.

Kingdom of Morocco

- One (1) Scholarship for Economic Diplomacy for Young Diplomats at the Moroccan Academy for Diplomatic Studies in Rabat.
- Fifteen (15) Scholarships for the Moroccan Public Institutions of Higher Technical and Vocational Education.
- Five (5) scholarships of Excellence at Al Achawayn University in Ifrane majoring in Bachelor of Arts in International Studies, Bachelor of Science renewable Energy and Bachelor of Business Administration.
- Two (2) scholarships for capacity building programme under the theme “Food Security”
- Two (2) scholarships for capacity building programme under the theme “Climate Change”

Mexico

- Ten (10) Excellence Scholarships for foreign postgraduate students under the 2024 Mexican Agency for International Development Co-operation

Republic of Colombia

- BECA Colombia scholarship programme for foreigners 2024 through ICETEX (an institution of the Colombian state that promotes Higher Education).

Malaysia

- Two (2) scholarships for Executive Certificate in Smart Clean Water Management.
- Two (2) scholarships for Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Explosive Terrorism 101 Programme

10TH Diplomatic school for junior diplomats, held 21-25 October 2024 in Peje, Republic of Kosovo

In October 2024, First Secretary-Political in our Embassy in Addis Ababa attended the 10th Edition of the Diplomatic School Course for Junior Diplomats in Peje, Kosovo from 21 – 25 October 2024, organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora of Kosovo which aimed to equip emerging diplomatic leaders with the skills and insights necessary to effectively address global crises. This year's theme was, *“A Role for Humanity: The Vitality of Diplomatic efforts in Crisis Response.”*

The training underscored the essential role that diplomats play in facilitating humanitarian efforts, fostering international cooperation, and ensuring that humanity remains at the heart of crisis management. The programme was designed to familiarize participants with the current state of affairs on matters of Security and Peace in Kosovo, Europe and beyond. It provides a unique opportunity for the participants to meet and exchange views with state leaders, experts, professionals and colleagues from over thirty countries across all continents as well as explore touristic attractions of the newest country in Europe.”

7.0 CONSULAR MATTERS

Visa application and issuance

Our Embassy in Morocco has been receiving requests for entry visas to the Kingdom of Eswatini. The Embassy has designed and produced relevant documents to facilitate visa application as well as, a template for a visa stamp has been designed and presented to the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and Home Affairs for consideration. However, it has not yet been able to issue visas to travelers wishing to travel to Eswatini. The Embassy humbly seeks the granting of authority by the Ministry of Home Affairs to facilitate issuance of entry visas to the Kingdom of Eswatini.

Number of visas issued

The Embassy issued 15 visas to nationals from five countries during the reporting period. The two most common purposes to travel to Eswatini were tourism and technical cooperation.

Table: Number of visas issued by the Embassy

Month	Number of Applicants	Nationality	Purpose	Date of request
November 2024		2-Moroccan	Tourism	21 days
December 2024		1-Moroccan	Tourism	1 day
January 2025		2-Moroccan	Technical Cooperation (CBE)	42 days

Brussels

Our Mission in Brussels performs consular services as part of its public diplomacy role. This includes the preparation of apostilles in the authentication of documents for use in countries that participate in the Hague Convention of 1961. Furthermore, the Mission through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation, and in collaboration with the Ministry of Home Affairs; assists with passport renewals, marriage registrations, issuance of birth certificates etc. The collaboration with the Ministry of Home Affairs is excellent and their support in issuing the documents speedily enables the legitimate existence of EmaSwati in Europe, as the European countries are very strict about regularized migration. Documents issued during the reporting period:

- 1 Marriage registration
- 64 Tourist visas
- 11 Passports
- 2 Birth certificates

Contact with Honorary Consuls

Further to application for the positions of Honorary Consul from Mr Sabri BORA of Izmir, Türkiye and Mr Cis PAELINCK from Flanders in Belgium, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation concluded the vetting processes and issued letters of commission for both candidates, however conclusion is pending on the part of both their Governments. For Mr BORA the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Ankara is undertaking consultations whilst for Mr PAELINCK the Belgian Embassy in Pretoria advised that authority has to be sought from the Government of Belgium regarding establishing an honorary office prior to a candidate being identified. The Embassy has submitted this correspondence to the Belgian government and awaits further guidance.

Taiwan

The Embassy in Taiwan continued to assist EmaSwati on consular matters. In the period under review, we facilitated passport applications for ten (10) EmaSwati living in Taiwan.

Emaswati in Taiwan

The Kingdom of Eswatini currently has approximately 800 registered Emaswati diaspora in Taiwan. A vast majority of these Eswatini nationals are students. Those who are in Taiwan on employment are employed in different professional fields including teaching, engineering, construction, IT and medical research amongst others.

Students in Taiwan

The Embassy works closely with students in Taiwan. Situations in the universities are stable but the Embassy collaborates closely with the students and universities to ensure that the relationship is kept at a healthy level to avoid disputes which might end up involving Governments.

The students continue to provide assistance to the Embassy when we need their assistance in culture promotion. We are still assisting Emaswati Nationals in Taiwan with any documentation they require, for example help with lost or destroyed passports, birth certificates and many more. The Embassy greatly appreciates their help with all the activities they provide during shows and other events whereby Eswatini is promoted.

London

During the period under review, different nationalities indicated interest in exploring the beautiful Kingdom, ranging from tourists on vacation and students embarking on school trips. The Mission also issued business Visas and for those travelling on official work assignments. The issue of e-Visa establishment continues to be a thorn for a significant number of travelers wishing to travel to the Kingdom of Eswatini.

Consular activities undertaken during the 01 **APRIL 2024- 31 MARCH 2025** are as follows:

Consular activities undertaken during the period under review as follows

Service	Number of Application
Passports	20 (Twenty)
Visa	9 (Nine)
Child registration	2 (Two)
Police Clearances	10 (Ten)
Temporary/ Emergency Passports	3 (Three)
Birth Certificates	8(Eight)
Drivers' Licences	-
Repatriation	-

Visa Applications for non-British passport holders

Nationality	Visa Single Entry	Multiple Entry
Romania	3 x £16	
Nigeria	1 x £16	
Cameroon	3 x £16	
Pakistan	1 x £16	
Mainland China	7 x £16.00	1 x £38 1 x £24
Sri Lanka		4 x £24
Congo DRC		1 X £38

Revenue Collected for the different applications processed amounts to £532.

OCTOBER 2024 – JANUARY 2025

Consular activities undertaken during the period under review as follows:

Application

- Passports –twenty- five (25)
- Child registration – three (3)
- Temporary/ Emergency Passports – Two (2)
- Birth Certificates –ten (10)
- Drivers Licences – None
- Repatriation – one (1)

Visa Applications

Country	Single Entry	Multiple Entry
Iceland	1 x£16	
Nigeria	2 x £16	1 x£24
Philippine		1 x £24
Egypt	1 x £16	
Somalia		1 x £38
Mainland China	1 x £16	
Pakistan		1 x £24

Revenue Collected for the different applications processed amounts to £190.

The Mission kindly requests for electronic transfer payment method for Consular matters services.

Kuwait

In line with the country's drive to promote Eswatini as an investment and tourist destination, the Embassy continued to facilitate travel for non-Kuwaiti nationals through issuance of entry visas to the Kingdom of Eswatini for both business and leisure purposes. It is worth noting that Kuwaiti citizens do not require entry visas to enter the Kingdom of Eswatini, thus the figures reflected below do not reflect the number of Kuwaiti citizens that

have visited the Kingdom over the reporting period.

The table below shows the number of entry visas issued and revenue collected at the Embassy from 01 April 2024.

MONTH	VISAS ISSUED	COLLECTION
June	3	KWD 60
August	2	KWD 40
January	1	KWD 55
TOTAL	6	KWD 155

Malaysia

During this annual year the Mission has managed to issue forty (40) single entry visas and one (1) multiple entry visa, to nationals from Thailand, India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan, Philippines, and Hong Kong.

Pretoria

EmaSwati Illegal Immigrants

During the period under review, a drastic increase was experienced on the arrest and proscription of EmaSwati illegal immigrants for violating the South African immigration laws, as a total number of One Hundred and Sixty-Two (162) were arrested and deported by the Department of Home Affairs, Immigration Office. They were all slapped with bans and undesirable status.

Recommendations

It is noted with great concern the high number of requests forwarded to the High Commission to assist with uplifting of undesirable status imposed on EmaSwati by the South African Home Affairs for overstaying in South Africa, a process that is quite extensive and

cumbersome as it requires that an Appeals Board convenes, which sits only once a month to evaluate each request, not only for eSwatini nationals, but for all the nationalities that find themselves in a similar situation.

Fraudulent Passports

The period under review reflected a decline in the leakage of ESwatini official documents to foreign nationals who are usually exposed at the ports of entry in the Republic of South Africa, with eSwatini passports where upon verification, prove to be fraudulently or illegally obtained.

During the period under review, only Seven (7) foreign nationals were found in possession of suspected fraudulent documents whilst entering or exiting South Africa.

Consular Documents Issuance

During the period under review, the High Commission issued a total of Four Hundred and Forty (440) assisting documents to EmaSwati, who receive such services at a variant fee of one hundred and twenty (E120.00) and one hundred (E100.00) per document, except for repatriation of Eswatini Nationals as there is currently no fee on such services, and a total revenue of fifty thousand five hundred and twenty Emalangenani (E50,520.00) was collected.

The Embassy executed its mandate of taking care of the welfare of the Kingdoms citizens residing within its jurisdiction and beyond. Other than the families of the members of the Diplomatic staff, the Kingdom's citizens include those employed by the African Union, United Nations Economic Commission Agency, students studying in institutions of higher learning in Ethiopia and in the region as well as those in countries of accreditation. The Embassy has also continued to respond to a number of consular matters, including but not limited to, issuance of entry visas into the Kingdom to deserving applicants and also

assisting EmaSwati Officials on related emergencies entering Ethiopia to attend African Union meetings, workshops, seminars and conferences during this period. During this period under review, the Mission received a total of one hundred twenty-nine visa applications and were all successfully processed and issued.

Johannesburg Consulate

- Processed 41 letters of non-impediment for EmaSwati marrying SA nationals
- Processed 28 requests for emergency travel certificates for Ema Swati stranded in SA
- Verified 74 Eswatini-issued documents
- Verified 6 Eswatini issued driver's license for conversion to South African driver's licenses
- Issued 8 permits to transport deceased EmaSwati to Eswatini
- Provided protocol services to Eswatini's VIPs and VVIPs

United Arab Emirates

Entry visas are continuing to be issued ranging from 3 months single entry visas to 12 months multiple entry visas. Under the period being reviewed, about 42 visas were issued and their fees amounting to 2180 AED, (equivalent to about 7957 Emalangeni) are in the process of being remitted back to the Government Account.

Washington D.C

The Mission collects revenue through the issuance of VISAs for US nationals and residents, nationals of other countries of accreditation and all other persons eligible to visit Eswatini for business and personal reasons.

Item 21705 – VISA Fees

Revenue item	Actual (US\$)	Rate	Actual (Szl)
21705	1 520.00	17.4299	26,493.45
TOTAL	1 520.00	17.4299	26,493.45

***The collection is from April 1,2024 to December 31,2024**

Mozambique

VISAS

During the period under review, the Mission issued (...) visas ranging from one Month single entry to twelve months multiple entries to different foreign national residents in the Mission countries of accreditation. The Mission further issued thirty (30) Diplomatic and Gratis visas to Diplomats accredited to Eswatini and their dependents. The Mission also assisted fourteen (02) Emaswati who happen to lose their passports while in Mozambique for various reasons and circumstances by issuing Emergency passports to them. Total amount of money collected amounted to **E**.

The increase in the visa issuance is because of the vigorous Eswatini Tourism marketing collaboration between the Mission, Eswatini Tourism Authority and Mozambique Travel Agencies. Also, the Eswatini traditional and cultural events such as Umhlanga and Incwala coupled with the major tourist's attraction social entertainment events such as Bush Fire, Luju Festival and Mlawula Camp Fire. Furthermore, the Mozambican Political Situation also contributed since most of the foreign nationals went out to spend their festive holidays outside Mozambique due to the banning of festive celebration in Mozambique by the Presidential contender Venancio Mondlane who lost to the incumbent President.

Month	Visa issued	Emergency passport	Money collected
April			R89490.00
May		-	R100270.00
June		-	R68040.00
July			R58940.00
August		-	R136220.00
September		-	R77520.00
October		-	R92 140.00
November		-	R65 570.00
December		-	R135010.00
Total			R830 900.00

During the period, the Mission experience an increase in the number of Emaswati being arrested and sentenced by Mozambican for various crimes namely found in possession of cannabis, illegal entry and stay in Mozambique. The Mission facilitated release and repatriating of some of the prison back to Eswatini while some are still serving their sentences or awaiting trial. The Mission in collaboration with the prisoners’ relatives pays visit at given intervals and provide assistance where necessary to those who are still languishing in the Mozambique jail centres.

8.0 INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Courtesy call to the Pope

On the side-lines of the World Food Forum 2024, His Majesty King Mswati III had the opportunity to pay a courtesy call to Pope Francis. His Majesty was accompanied by Liphovela make LaZuma. The visit to His Holiness was held on 18th October 2024. Discussions covered various topics including religion, governance and developments in the geopolitical arena.

Thereafter His Majesty had a bilateral discussion with the Cardinal Secretary of State. His Majesty was accompanied by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Honourable Dlamini-Shakantu; Ambassador Mngomezulu, and the Private Secretary to His Majesty the King, Mr Mbongeni Simelane.

State Visit to the Republic of Serbia: 18 – 22 October 2024

The Kingdom of Eswatini and the Republic of Serbia significantly deepened their bilateral relations through the signing of six new agreements during His Majesty's visit to Serbia. The agreements, announced at a press conference held at the Serbia Palace on January 13, 2025, marked a milestone in strengthening cooperation across various sectors. His Majesty and Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić underscored the importance of mutual support and collaboration during discussions at the event, which also featured a Guard of Honour for His Majesty.

Agreements: Key agreements signed were on: Trade and Investment Cooperation; ICT and Innovation; Tourism Cooperation; Communications and IT; Education; Science and Technology. During high level engagements between His Majesty King Mswati III and President Vučić the latter expressed gratitude for Eswatini's unwavering support in international matters and emphasized the importance of shared prosperity. He highlighted Serbia's achievements in ICT and its growing start-up ecosystem, which he believes can inspire Eswatini's technological development. Both leaders committed to furthering the signed agreements through annual meetings and additional engagements, including a planned visit by Serbian businesspeople to Eswatini in April 2025.

Serbia extended an invitation to Eswatini to participate in the upcoming Expo 2027 in Belgrade, emphasizing it as an opportunity to showcase global unity and innovation. The King's visit also included meetings with Serbia's parliamentary leadership and a tour of the National Assembly, further cementing the bonds between the two nations.

Meeting with students: His Majesty King Mswati III hosted a dinner for Eswatini students studying under the World Serbia Scholarship programme. His Majesty encouraged the students to pursue opportunities that will enhance development in Eswatini. He also commended them for holding on to their roots as they had introduced themselves in the proper way that emaSwati should.

Implementation of the Samoa Agreement

Eswatini appended signature to the Samoa Agreement in December of 2023, at a signing ceremony where OACPS Member States and the EU pledged another 20 years of cooperation, post the Cotonou Agreement. The successor Agreement to the Cotonou Agreement now known as the Samoa Agreement, effectively forges a strategic alliance between the OACPS Member States and the European Union aimed at strengthening the existing ties between the EU and its developing country partners.

The Agreement is focused on unlocking benefits ranging from economic advancement to infrastructural development and enhanced cooperation in crucial sectors like education, health and technology. The Agreement also creates opportunities for vital partnerships, knowledge exchanges and support in areas critical for development.

- a) Honourable Minister attended the **High Level Conference on Strengthening Counter-Terrorism Cooperation and Building Agile Border Security Mechanisms**, Kuwait City, Kuwait 4-5 November, 2024.

This Conference intended to broaden the scope and impact of the Dushanbe Process beyond Central Asia, with a view to enhancing coordination and cooperation, primarily within and across the countries and regions of Central Asia, the League of Arab States, Africa, and Association of Southeast Asian Nations, (ASEAN). It represented a new and significant development in counterterrorism cooperation around the

world. It provided a platform for countries to pledge their commitment in the fight against this phenomenon.

Eswatini's Intervention: highlighted the importance of international counter-terrorism cooperation and establishing agile, adaptive border security mechanisms. Since terrorist networks often exploit gaps in national borders, this necessitates a robust collaborative framework among nations to effectively share intelligence, resources, and strategies. This cooperation should encompass not only the exchange of information regarding known threats but also collaborative training programs to equip security personnel with the skills needed to address emerging challenges.

- b) **The Minister further led a delegation to the First Ministerial Conference of the Russia-Africa Partnership Forum, 9-10 November, 2024, Sochi, Russia,** which aimed to discuss the Russia-Africa Summits implementation challenges and solutions to foster better collaboration between Russia and the African region.

Eswatini's intervention: highlighted collaborative efforts by the Russian Federation for the development of the African region and committed to global cooperation with likeminded partners.

- c) **The Minister subsequently participated in an official working visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 10-13 December, 2024, Riyadh,** which was primarily aimed at establishing the groundwork for opening Eswatini's Embassy in Riyadh, to deepen Eswatini's diplomatic presence in the gulf region. A major achievement of the visit was also the signing of the General Cooperation Agreement between the Government of the Kingdom of Eswatini and the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Furthermore, the visit positioned Eswatini as a strategic partner for Saudi Arabia with the Kingdom's Vision 2030, which focuses on economic diversification and sustainable development. The establishment of the Eswatini's Embassy in Riyadh will serve as a diplomatic bridge, facilitating more efficient communication and collaboration between two governments while creating new opportunities for trade, investment and cultural engagement.

118th Council of Ministers Meeting

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Honourable Pholile Dlamini-Shakantu attended the 118th Session of the Organization of African, Caribbean, and Pacific States (OACPS) Council of Ministers, held 4 - 6 December 2024 in Brussels. Two difficult issues that were discussed in the meeting were those of the appointment of the new Secretary General of the Secretariat and the Financial situation of the Organization.

During the meeting Eswatini called for procedural reforms and inclusivity, recommending in-person meetings to rebuild trust, and advocating for consensus and adherence to sound governance standards. The meeting highlighted the urgency for the OACPS to enhance transparency, unity, and procedural integrity to effectively address its shared challenges.

World Health Assembly

The Taiwanese Embassy requested the Ambassador to participate in an event related to the World Health Assembly. In his remarks the Ambassador applauded the relationship between the Kingdom of Eswatini and the Republic of Taiwan. He observed that for almost 6 decades Taiwan has been a faithful friend and partner to the Kingdom of Eswatini, and that within this period there has been a spate of infectious diseases like SARS, H1N1 and the most recent covid-19 pandemic; wherein Taiwan has continued to excel in mitigation and disease control interventions. He reiterated the commitment of the Kingdom of Eswatini to remain committed to supporting Taiwan's endeavors to deservedly become a valued contributor to the global health community by enhancing collaboration, sharing knowledge and resources, and improving the health and well-being of people around the globe. In conclusion, he expressed the profound confidence of the Kingdom of Eswatini in the capability of Taiwan, as an able contributor not only to be granted observer status but as a full member of the World Health Organisation and WHA.

ORGANIZATION FOR THE PROHIBITION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS (OPCW)

The 29th Session of the Conference of State Parties to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) took place from 25 to 29 November 2024 in The Hague, Netherlands. Representing the Kingdom of Eswatini, His Excellency Ambassador, accompanied by the First Secretary, delivered a comprehensive statement reflecting the nation's commitment to the principles of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

During the session, the Kingdom of Eswatini reaffirmed its support for enhancing international cooperation, assistance programs, and scientific partnerships, particularly those facilitated by the newly established ChemTech Centre. This facility is expected to bolster the capacity of the OPCW Technical Secretariat in aiding State Parties in fulfilling their obligations under the Convention effectively. Eswatini also acknowledged the critical role of designated laboratories, such as Algeria's National Institute of Criminalistics and Criminology, in strengthening regional capacity and called for the establishment of similar facilities globally.

United Nations Climate Change Conferences (COP 29)

The United Nations Climate Change Conferences (COP 29) was held in Baku, Azerbaijan on 11 – 22 November 2024. The Prime Minister, His Excellency Russell Mmiso Dlamini led the delegation to the COP 29. He was accompanied by the Minister of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation, Senator Pholile Dlamini-Shakantu; the Minister of Tourism and Environmental Affairs Honourable Jane Mkhonta-Simelane; the Minister of Labour Honourable Phila Buthelezi, and senior government officials.

The Prime Minister presented a statement to the gathering in which he lamented the distressing effects of climate change. He recalled the UN Summit in September in which there was call for unity in fighting climate change and urged the gathering to unite to safeguard our planet. He stressed that joint mitigation effort is required without placing undue burden on poorer nations. He emphasized the need for equitable solutions for all people. Finally, the Prime Minister appealed for the inclusion of the Republic of China on Taiwan in the collective climate response.

2025 TexRay Co. Ltd Annual Gathering;

TexRay has been collaborating with the Taiwan ICDF to support Young Heroes, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) in Eswatini. Their joint efforts focus on several key support areas:

Program Support Areas;

Monthly Life-Support Grants	: Providing financial assistance to vulnerable children
Comprehensive Healthcare	: Ensuring medical support for orphans
Educational Support	: Helping children access education
Social Protection	: Creating stable household environments
Vocational Training	: Preparing children for self-sufficient adulthood

TexRay's involvement goes beyond this specific program. The company has been a critical economic partner in Eswatini, creating approximately 13,000 jobs and being recognized by the Eswatini Government for its community contributions. In fact, Tex-Ray is considered the centerpiece of bilateral relations between Taiwan and Eswatini, with its chairman even receiving the Friend of Foreign Service Medal in 2016 for promoting bilateral relations.

➤ Cooperation between ICDF with Eswatini.

Women's Microenterprise Mentoring and Capacity Building Project in Eswatini

According to the official data of Eswatini, there are 59,283 Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) in the country, whose output value accounts for about 60% of GDP, of which 84% are micro-enterprises, and the majority of these enterprises are owned by female entrepreneurs. The development of MSMEs has been identified by the Government as a key point for economic development. The implementation of this project will help to improve women's micro-enterprises through business counseling and mentoring. Therefore, this will improve the performance of the micro-enterprises in rural areas, leading to increased income and sustainability.

The key points of the implementation of this project plan include: (1) Micro-enterprise capacity building; (2) Improving the capacity of micro-enterprise training and counseling institutions; (3) Providing funds needed for the development of micro-enterprises in Eswatini, to assist in strengthening the counselling and mentoring capabilities for Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, thus improving people's livelihood and as well as national economic development. livelihood and as well as national economic development.

Eswatini Technical and Vocational Skills Certification Enhancement Project

The determination of this project is to increase specialized skilled personnel in key occupation categories such as electrical/mechanical engineering, auto repair, machinery, as well as tourism and hospitality in a bid to accommodate the Kingdom of Eswatini's national development needs, the project will focus on the skill certification authority of Eswatini, the Directorate of Industrial and Vocational Training, to enable it to provide high-quality and industry-oriented technical certification examinations and apprentice training programs. In order to strengthen the level of certification to meet the market demand; update certification contents and standards to produce adequate human resources for the industry; improve the management efficiency of Eswatini's Directorate of Industrial and Vocational Training (DIVT); and ensure that the evaluation content and skills testing venue comply with the Southern African Development Community Qualifications Framework (SADCQF) and the expectations of key industry occupations, the project implementation contents will include:

1. Conducting skills certification for occupations with high demand;
2. Implementing upskilling and lifelong training education after the skills certification system is updated;
3. Providing certification standards that cater to the needs of key occupations;
4. Improving certification facilities and venues used for key occupation certification based on the updated certification standards;
5. Empowering key occupation certification planning committee and evaluation committee panel members;
6. Introducing information systems for the sake of improving license management system efficiency.

Emerging Fruit Tree Production, Marketing and Capacity Building Project in the Kingdom of Eswatini

Kingdom of Eswatini takes agriculture and animal husbandry as one of the main economic pillars. However, agricultural production activities are biased towards sugarcane monocrops, which have been affected by the decline in international sugar prices and the withdrawal of sugarcane trade preferences in the European Union, which has affected farmers' livelihoods. To diversify agricultural production and farmers' income, Taiwan ICDF introduced emerging crop technologies, mentored farmers in the country to cultivate market-oriented crops such as bananas, guava, pitaya, papaya, strawberries, etc., and strengthened the industrial chain development and sales system, successfully assisting 800 farmers to achieved the goal to increase income per-hectare of 39.48 percent in the past.

2024 Africa Group Business Networking

This event is annually hosted by the African Group of Ambassadors with the intention of exploring the current trends, shared experiences and best practices from the Taiwan as well as encourages practical partnership building between the African and Taiwan entrepreneurs and innovators.

ATEF is committed to the strengthening of bilateral relations between Taiwan and Africa in Trade and Investment, Tourism and Culture. ATEF works closely with the Embassy of the Kingdom of Eswatini, Liaison Office of South Africa, Nigeria Trade Office in Taiwan R.O.C., and The Republic of Somaliland Representative Office in Taiwan to develop all kinds of possibilities to benefit bilateral relations. ATEF work on projects of international trade fair, trade and investment, tourism and culture promotional events and seminars, potential business develop and corporate visit, missions to Africa. We hope our efforts from ATEF and partners will strengthen our relationship and toward to a fruitful future between Taiwan and African diplomatic allies.

The 26TH Economic and technical cooperation conference between the Republic of China (Taiwan) and the Kingdom of Eswatini co-chaired by the Taiwan Economic Affairs Minister JYH-HUEI KUO and Eswatini Economic Planning and Development Honourable Minister Dr. Thambo Gina

The two sides discussed a range of topics, such as cooperation on business digitalization, science parks, trade exhibitions, textile waste management, standards and inspection, and carbon credit capacity building, achieving fruitful outcomes.

Since the Taiwan-Eswatini Economic Cooperation Agreement came into effect in 2018, bilateral trade between the two sides has grown rapidly. In 2023, two-way trade totaled US\$8.85million, representing an increase of 16.6% compared with 2017. In the same period, Taiwan's imports from Eswatini increased significantly by more than 17-fold.

The Taiwan Government continues to actively assist in promoting Eswatini products in the Taiwan market and in facilitating industrial cooperation between the two sides, while Eswatini continues to voice support for Taiwan's participation in the international community. The two sides will continue engaging in bilateral cooperation in order to generate even greater mutually beneficial outcomes moving forward.

CECI Engineering Consultant, Inc OidC and Eswatini Petroleum Company Contract Signing on 26th November 2024 at the CECI Offices.

The Eswatini delegation led by Tinkhundla Administration and Development Honourable Minister Sikhumbuzo T. Dlamini witnessed the signing of the contract by the ENPC Chief Executive Officer Mr. Nhlanhla S. Dlamini alongside with the Kingdom of Eswatini Ambassador Promise S. Msibi as well as ENPC Chief Operations Officer Mr. Sihle M. Mavimbela marked a significant milestone in the oil storage project contract signing.

The facility signifies a critical step towards national energy self-sufficiency, transforming Eswatini from a highly vulnerable importer to a country with strategic fuel reserves. By developing this infrastructure, Eswatini will significantly reduce its economic exposure to regional and international fuel market volatilities.

The project underscores the government's commitment to enhancing energy security and creating a more resilient national economic infrastructure.

The contract denotes a significant milestone in Taiwan-Eswatini bilateral relations, with Taiwan supporting Eswatini's infrastructure development and energy security goals. The facility represents a significant leap in Eswatini's energy infrastructure, transforming the country's current limited 2–3-day fuel storage capacity into a robust 60-day strategic reserve system.

The Strategic Oil Reserve Facility (SFRF) will contribute to Eswatini's socio-economic development through multiple key dimensions:

- I. Job Creation
- II. Economic Security
- III. Infrastructure Development
- IV. Strategic Objectives

AMITOFU CARE CENTER 20 YEARS CELEBRATION

Amitofo Care Center founder Hui-li and 28 children from the Amitofo Care Center's branch in Eswatini visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on November 27, 2024. The group was received by MOFA Secretary General Daniel Diann-wen Tang. The Eswatini group of children sang folk songs in our language, Taiwanese, and Bunun and performed an indigenous dance. The performance demonstrated the results of their exposure to Taiwanese education and culture. MOFA staff in the audience gave the children a rapturous reception, adding to the warmth and joy of the occasion.

In his remarks, Tang expressed his appreciation to the Amitofo Care Center for its years of hard work and contributions in Africa. He also thanked the visitors for coming so far to share their stories and the results of their schooling. In a supportive and affirmative way, MOFA has long assisted the Amitofo Care Center and its Pu-Hsien Educational Foundation in promoting a traditional Chinese language education program in Africa. The initiative has advanced Chinese language learning among African children, built

bridges for cultural exchanges and friendship between Taiwan and Africa, and contributed significantly to bilateral interactions.

Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, APIA, Independent State of Samoa, 25-26 OCTOBER 2024

The 2024 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) was held in Apia, Samoa and marked the 75th Anniversary of the Commonwealth. This meeting underscored a commitment to fostering resilient societies and economies, addressing global challenges, and promoting democratic values.

Several key thematic areas were discussed, and leaders emphasized a human-rights-based approach to development, prioritizing the needs of vulnerable groups such as women, children, youth, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. They also reaffirmed support for small states, particularly Small Island Developing States (SIDS), through advocacy for debt sustainability and simplified financing mechanisms. Efforts to achieve gender equality were bolstered, with leaders committing to eliminating gender-based violence and empowering women and girls. Youth empowerment was also a key theme, highlighting the importance of including young people in decision-making processes, especially concerning climate action.

In health and education, leaders strengthened their dedication to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for universal health coverage, and pandemic preparedness. They also prioritized access to STEM education and lifelong learning in safe and inclusive environments.

Economic resilience was a central focus, with the adoption of the landmark 2024 Apia Commonwealth Ocean Declaration, which reaffirmed commitments to the Commonwealth Blue Charter and the sustainable use of oceans. Leaders acknowledged economic challenges such as geopolitical conflicts, the lingering effects of COVID-19, and rising public debt, committing to robust economic cooperation and post-pandemic recovery efforts. Additionally, the Commonwealth reaffirmed its commitment to fair multilateral trade and intra-Commonwealth trade goals, with plans to increase trade to USD \$2 trillion by 2030 while promoting gender-responsive economic policies.

CHOGM addressed pressing country-specific challenges, including support for Bangladesh in managing the Rohingya refugee crisis, territorial disputes involving Belize and Guyana, and Cyprus settlement efforts. Leaders reiterated their dedication to peaceful resolutions through international legal frameworks, respect for sovereignty, and protection of human rights.

The 2024 CHOGM reaffirmed the Commonwealth's commitment to inclusivity, resilience, and sustainability. Leaders resolved to take collective action to address global challenges, ensuring a prosperous and equitable future for all member states. Emphasizing cooperation, innovation, and adherence to shared values, the meeting set a robust agenda for the Commonwealth's continued growth and solidarity.

Heads of Government commended the Rt Hon Patricia Scotland KC, the outgoing Secretary-General, for her dedicated service to the Commonwealth and her leadership in promoting its values. They unanimously appointed Ghana's Foreign Minister, the Honourable Ms. Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey, as the seventh Secretary-General of the Commonwealth.

The next CHOGM will be hosted by Antigua and Barbuda in the capital city of St John's in 2026.

Commonwealth Ministerial Meeting on Small States, Apia, Independent State of Samoa, 23 October 2024

Noteworthy is Eswatini's leadership in the Commonwealth Ministerial Meeting on Small States, one of the key elements of the 2024 CHOGM. Eswatini assumed this leadership role as Samoa, the co-chair, took on the CHOGM chairmanship.

In line with ongoing collaboration with the Small States Division, the Minister of Economic Planning, Honourable Dr. Tambo Gina, presented a report on the work of the Commonwealth Ministerial Meeting on Small States during the CHOGM Executive Session. In addition to his ministerial role, Dr. Gina serves as an Advocacy Champion.

World Food Forum Meeting, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Headquarters, Rome, Republic of Italy, 14-18 October 2024.

The High Commission which is concurrently accredited to the Republic Italy, played a pivotal role in facilitating His Majesty King Mswati III's successful visit to Italy from 13 to 18 October 2024. This high-profile visit, which included engagements at the Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) World Food Forum, and other key events, underscored Eswatini's commitment to strengthening its international partnerships and promoting its national interests.

The visit of His Majesty King Mswati III to Italy was successfully coordinated, with careful attention to logistical and protocol arrangements. Seamless travel arrangements were made for His Majesty King Mswati III and the delegation, including their arrival and departure from Fiumicino International Airport, as well as transfers to and from event venues.

Eswatini's presence was showcased on multiple global platforms during the visit, including a keynote address by His Majesty at the World Food Forum, where he highlighted Eswatini's agricultural priorities under the theme "Good Food for All, for Today and Tomorrow" as well as the Kingdom's commitment to sustainable food systems.

Additionally, a series of important diplomatic engagements were facilitated, including courtesy calls with high-ranking dignitaries such as His Holiness Pope Francis at the Apostolic Palace, reinforcing Eswatini's respectful relationship with the Holy See. Bilateral meetings were also arranged with the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and efforts were made to pursue a potential meeting with the President of Italy, H.E. Sergio Mattarella, to explore further collaboration opportunities. Furthermore, a business seminar hosted by the Eswatini Investment Promotion Authority (EIPA) was organized to position Eswatini as an attractive investment destination to Italian business executives.

The High Commission's meticulous planning, effective coordination, and strategic engagement ensured the success of His Majesty King Mswati III's visit to Italy. This visit bolstered Eswatini's international standing, promoted investment opportunities, and reinforced the country's commitment to addressing global challenges such as food security and sustainable development.

Commonwealth Meeting on Sustainable and Regenerative Tourism, Marlborough House, London, 04 November 2024

The High Commission in London, in collaboration with officials from the Eswatini Tourism Authority, participated in the Commonwealth Meeting on Sustainable and Regenerative Tourism held on 4 November 2024 at Marlborough House, London.

The meeting, themed “*Towards Regenerative Tourism: Rebalancing for Sustainable Development*”, highlighted the importance of regenerative tourism for Commonwealth small states, including Eswatini. Regenerative tourism aims to actively improve destinations by fostering environmental restoration, empowering local communities, and promoting diversified and resilient tourism economies. The event provided a platform for Commonwealth countries to share best practices, discuss challenges, and explore opportunities for collaboration in advancing sustainable tourism.

65th Meeting of the International Sugar Council and International Sugar Council Meeting

The High Commission in London, in collaboration with officials from the Eswatini Sugar Association (ESA) and key business leaders in the sucro-energetic sector, participated in the 65th International Sugar Seminar and the meeting of the International Sugar Council held from 26 – 27 November 2024 in London. These events provided an important platform for discussing global trends, challenges, and opportunities within the sugar industry, with particular emphasis on sustainability, diversification, and regional perspectives.

Key discussions at the seminar included India’s sugar industry challenges, Europe’s forward-planning strategies, and Brazil’s insights on trade and policy. Notably, Eswatini played a significant role in the Sessions, focusing on producing clean energy. Nick Jackson, CEO of the Royal Eswatini Sugar Corporation, delivered a presentation highlighting Eswatini’s advances in biomass cogeneration and its contribution to sustainable energy solutions.

Honorary Consulate in Palermo, Italy.

Following sustained efforts by the Ministry, the Mission has recently been informed of the approval of the Government of Italy of the nomination of Mr. Massimo Motisi as Honorary Consul of the Kingdom of Eswatini in Palermo, Italy. The consular jurisdiction will encompass the region of Sicily, taking into account the necessity to provide consular services and promote the interests of the Kingdom of Eswatini in areas not presently covered by existing diplomatic and consular representations. The Honorary Consulate will focus on promoting commercial, economic, cultural and scientific cooperation between Eswatini and Italy as well as assisting Eswatini citizens residing in or travelling to Sicily.

The High Commission is looking forward to the establishment of the Honorary Consulate and engaging with Mr. Motisi to take full advantage of the consular presence of Eswatini in the region of Sicily.

Launching ceremony of the logo and theme of ASEAN-Malaysia: 22nd October 2024

As a Member State of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Malaysia has assumed the annual Chairmanship of the Association for the fifth time from 1st January 2025. The Mission and all other Missions and International Organizations represented in Malaysia were invited to participate at the launching ceremony of the logo and theme for the Chairmanship in Putrajaya, Malaysia. Also in attendance was Minister of Foreign Affairs Dato' Seri Utama Haji Mohamad bin Haji Hasan as host, Minister of Investment,

Trade and Industry (Coordinating Minister for ASEAN Economic Pillar), Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture (Coordinating Minister for ASEAN Socio-Cultural Pillar), Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and senior Government officials. This Association is comprised of the following member states; Indonesia (Headquarters), Malaysia the incoming chair, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Darussalam, Viet Nam, Lao PDR the outgoing chair and Myanmar. With Malaysia at the helm this year, it shall chair the Summit, the Coordinating Council, the ASEAN Community Councils, Ministerial, Senior officials and Permanent Representatives under the theme Inclusivity and Sustainability. Malaysia will also be responsible for promoting the interests of the ASEAN, ensuring effective response to urgent matters of the Association and strengthening relations with external partners of the ASEAN.

Courtesy visit from the Ambassador of Japan: 21 November 2024.

The Ambassador of Japan in Malaysia, H.E. Excellency Shikata Noriyuki paid a courtesy visit to the Mission, whereby several areas of mutual cooperation between the two countries were explored and discussed. Amongst these areas of cooperation were the use of the TICAD forum to continue the bilateral partnership, and to ensure the importation of start-up companies to Eswatini. Further, the JICA partnerships would also be strengthened and be utilized for projects that would stabilize the economy in Eswatini. Lastly, the issue of how Eswatini can gain best practice from Japan regarding energy security was discussed, particularly to reduce carbon emissions and assist Eswatini to generate its own energy and reduce the reliance on neighboring South Africa.

Meeting with Amitofo Care Centre: 26 November 2024, Malaysia.

The Mission held a meeting with officials from Amitofo Care Centre (ACC), a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting vulnerable children across Africa. The ACC operates in several countries across Africa, including Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique and Namibia, and is currently planning to embark on a **Medical Mission** to Eswatini from the **19th – 30th May, 2025**, to provide Pro-Bono Medical Services to underprivileged communities. The ACC works with a team of specialized doctors from the Global Clinic in Singapore, and offers free medical services in the fields of Gynecology, General Surgery, Cleft Lip and Palate Surgery, Dentistry and Medical Care. The Malaysia Mission is leading a team of preparations for the event which includes the doctors from Singapore, Chief medical officer in Eswatini to ensure the medical mission is a resounding success.

Courtesy call to Minister of State for External Affairs of the Republic of India, 10 December 2024.

The High Commissioner H.E. Menzie S, Dlamini paid a courtesy call to the Minister of State for External Affairs of the Republic of India, H.E. Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh, in New Delhi on 10th December 2024. Their Excellencies exchanged views on how to strengthen the long-standing bilateral cooperation between Eswatini and India. Several areas of cooperation were discussed including; the opening of a Mission in India, Fertilizer production and other matters of bilateral interest. The major issue discussed

was that of the construction (loan) of the new Parliament as all documents were in the hands of the Indian Government.

Second preparatory committee session for the fourth international conference on financing for development: 06 December 2024.

In lieu of Ministerial representation from Capital, the Mission participated in this session which in essence is a build-up to the 4th International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) to be held in Seville, Spain, on 30 June to 03 July 2025, at the level of Head of State or Government. The session largely deliberated on the elements paper for the outcome document of the FfD4. Member States, through their various groupings, are expected to finalize an outcome document in the lead up to FfD4.

Group of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs)

Following two failed attempts to host the Third United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDC3) in Africa in 2024, it was resolved that the new Programme of Action for 2024 – 2034 be adopted in New York by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2024. Following this adoption, **the Mission will in January 2025 officially assume membership of the Bureau of LLDC under the chairmanship of Bolivia, and immediately begin implementation of the Programme of Action.** Meanwhile, it is anticipated that the LLDC3 will be hosted by Turkmenistan in mid-2025.

Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs

The High Commission in Pretoria attended a lecture hosted by the Embassy of Norway and the University of South Africa (UNISA) where the keynote speaker was the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway, Mr Espen Barth Eide.

The Minister spoke about how Norway is launching a new strategy to deepen its engagement with African countries, building on its post-apartheid relationship with South Africa. The strategy focuses on strengthening political and economic ties, with an emphasis on equality, mutual understanding, and collaboration in areas like security, climate change

and green energy investments. He further highlighted that development co-operation and humanitarian efforts remain an integral part of Norway's relations with many African countries.

Launch of the European Investment Bank's (EIB) Regional Hub for Southern Africa

The High Commission in Pretoria was invited to the launch of the European Investment Bank's Regional Hub for southern Africa and the Indian Ocean. The launch of the EIB signifies the strength of the close partnership between the European union and the Southern Africa Region, and the huge potential ahead to further deepen and expand it.

The Regional hub team comprises investment and policy specialists, supported by economists, engineers and other experts in the EIB's headquarters in Luxembourg. It joins the EIB's three other regional hubs on the continent in Nairobi, Abidjan and Cairo covering East Africa, West and Central Africa and North Africa respectively.

In 2019 the EIB provided a credit line facility of up to 10 million Euros (approx. 160 million Emalangeni) to fund small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Eswatini who wanted to start to grow their existing businesses.

Denmark's United Nations Security Council Pre-Election Seminar

The High Commission in Pretoria was invited to a UNSC Pre-election Seminar conducted by the Embassy of Denmark at the Freedom Heritage Park in Pretoria, under the title "Prioritising Equality, Security and Action with African Countries". The event was attended by forty (40) participants from the African Diplomatic Community in Pretoria.

The purpose of the session was for the Embassy of Denmark to sensitize and share perspective on ways in which members can advocate for more representation, with the aim of lobbying the African states for support in Denmark's campaign for a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council. Denmark was elected to the United Nations

(UN) Security Council as a non-permanent member on 06 June 2024 and their term will run from January 1, 2025, through 2026.

South Africa's Assumption of the Presidency of G20

South Africa will make history as the first African country to preside over the G20, with approximately 130 meetings planned for 2025. The G20 was founded in 1999 after the Asian financial crisis of 1997 – 1998 as an informal forum for the Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors of the most important industrialized and developing economies to discuss international economic and financial stability.

The forum initially focused largely on broad macroeconomic issues, but it has since expanded its agenda to inter-alia include trade, climate change, sustainable development, health, agriculture, energy, environment, and anti-corruption.

It comprises the following nineteen (19) countries: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Türkiye, United Kingdom, and United States and two regional bodies, namely the European Union (EU) and African Union (AU).

The G20 members represent around 85% of the global Gross Domestic Product, over 75% of the global trade, and about two-thirds of the world population. The G20 was upgraded to the level of Heads of State/Government in the wake of the global economic and financial crisis of 2007, and in 2009, when it became apparent that the necessary crisis coordination would only be possible at the highest political level. Since then, the G20 Leaders have met regularly, and the G20 has become the premier forum for international economic cooperation.

South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA) & African Union Development Agency G20 dialogue – 8th November, 2024

The South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA) & African Union Development Agency held a G20 dialogue session chaired by the Dean of the African Diplomatic Missions in Pretoria which focused on key issues pertinent to both the African continent and the global community.

Department of Water and Sanitation hosts Ambassador and High Commissioners accredited to the Republic of South Africa

The Department of Water and Sanitation hosted Ambassadors and High Commissioners accredited to the Republic of South Africa under the theme: “Celebrating 30 years of sustainable partnership, strengthening partnerships with international partners and forging a shared future”. The meeting aimed to brief the Ambassadors on the state of South Africa’s water sector and water reforms, and to fortify international collaboration and capacity-building endeavors in the water sector.

Countries represented at the meeting included China, Japan, Cuba, Egypt, the Kingdom of Eswatini and the Kingdom of Lesotho, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Botswana, Senegal, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Kingdom of Sweden, the Kingdom of Denmark and Finland.

The Deputy Minister of Water and Sanitation David Mahlobo acknowledged the international community’s support, which helped South Africa to achieve the democracy it enjoys today. He commended the international community for their contribution to the country’s water and sanitation sector, which has guaranteed a sustainable and equitable water supply to all South Africans.

Regional roundtable on the Kampala Declaration with Stakeholders from the SADC region

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Secretariat collaborated with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to engage Member States and stakeholders on the route-based approach to strengthen protection and solutions for refugees and migrants in the context of mixed movements, in Pretoria, Republic of South Africa, from 03-04 December 2024.

The regional platform aimed to support Member States in managing and responding to mixed movements along migratory routes through a route-based approach. Mixed movements present significant challenges for host, transit and destination countries, necessitating a coordinated and comprehensive approach that addresses both immediate protection needs and long-term solutions.

SADC Extraordinary Summit of SADC Head of State and Governments Harare, Zimbabwe

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) convened an Extraordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government on 20th November 2024, in Harare, Republic of Zimbabwe, that reviewed security situation in the region, with focus on the situation in the Eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The Summit was chaired by His Excellency Dr. Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, and Chairperson of SADC. The Summit received an update on the progress of the SADC Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (SAMIDRC). The SADC region deployed the SAMIDRC on 15th December 2023 on a one year mandate as a regional response to address the security situation in the DRC and restore peace, security, and stability to pave the way for sustainable development.

The Extraordinary SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government preceded by the Extraordinary SADC Organ Troika Summit, which was Chaired by H.E Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi, President of Zanzibar and Chairman of the Revolutionary Council representing

Her Excellency Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan, the President of the United Republic of Tanzania and Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics Defence and Security Cooperation.

The Summit was preceded by the meetings of SADC Senior Officials, the Ministerial Committee of the Organ on Politics Defence and Security Cooperation and the SADC Council and Council of Ministers.

23rd COMESA SUMMIT BURUNDI

Burundi hosted the 23rd COMESA Summit under the theme "**Accelerating Regional Integration, through the development of regional value chains in climate-resilient agriculture mining and tourism**".

The Summit was attended by Heads of State, Government and representatives from twenty-one Member States, the Right Honourable Prime Minister Russel M. Dlamini represented His Majesty and the government of the Kingdom of Eswatini.

The High Commissioner, and the First Secretary Information preceded the Eswatini delegation during the Summit for information logistically purposes and further participated in all the programme of the Summit which included Business Forum, Senior Officials, Ministerial Meetings and the Summit. The Mission further facilitated several appointments for the Eswatini Candidate for the AU Commissioner of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Development (ARBE) – Moses Vilakati to lobby for votes during the AU Summit next year. Vilakati was accompanied by the government support campaigned agents, Hon. Minister Phila Buthelezi, Minister of Labor and Social Welfare.

During the Summit, the President of the Republic of Zambia His Excellency Hakainde Hichilema handed over the Chairmanship of the Organization to the President of the Republic of Burundi, His Excellency Evariste Ndayishime and further presented a detailed report of success and pending and future plans for the organization.

The Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Eswatini during his remarks shared the Kingdom of Eswatini unique cultural heritage that can vitalize and stimulate the African Economy through tourism and the need to

ease movements of goods and people by removing some of the movements barriers such as visa restriction. He further shared the Eswatini spirit of "Nkweee" which he urged the Summit to embrace too.

The Prime Minister also had a private meeting with the President of Burundi His Excellency Evariste Ndayishime at the Presidential Palace accompanied by Honourable Minister Phila Buthelezi, Minister of Labour and Social Security, His Excellency Mlondi S. Dlamini and Moses Vilakati, former Minister and AU-ARBE Candidate and delivered a special message from His Majesty King Mswati III. The Prime Minister further had a chance to meet with the Burundi Chairman of Chamber of Commerce who also happened to be a member of Parliaments whereupon a number of experiences and practices were shared, and future plans of cooperation were discussed of lengthy. The Summit in conclusion resolved that the next Summit will be held in Kenya in October 2025 whereupon President Ruto will assume Chairmanship.

Pan African Parliament 20th Anniversary Commemoration.

His Excellency the Right Honourable Prime Minister attended the Pan-African Parliament 20th Anniversary commemoration under the theme “Two Decades of the Pan-African Parliament: Reflecting on the Future and Charting a Path Forward,” The event was held on 01 July 2024 and provided an opportunity to outline a vision for the future of the Pan-African Parliament, identify key areas for improvement and expansion, and emphasize the Parliament's role in the African Union's Agenda 2063 and other regional development initiatives.

The Prime Minister addressed the august Parliament focusing on "Unpacking the Issue of Pan-Africanism" and the role of the Pan-African Parliament. He noted that the foreign democratic system had failed to bring Africa peace, stability, and prosperity. He pointed out that it often leads to frequent leadership changes, partisanship, and instability, recycling leaders without transforming societies. Instead, he called for home-grown systems that unite Africans and focus on growth, development, peace, and unity. He further cited

Eswatini's unique blend of western and traditional democracy, the Tinkhundla system, as an example.

Pan African Parliament Fourth Ordinary Session of the Sixth Parliament

The Fourth Ordinary Session of the Sixth Parliament of the Pan-African Parliament opened on 04 November, 2024 and concluded on 17 November, 2024. The theme was “Educate an African Fit for the 21st Century: Building Resilient Education Systems for Increased Access to Inclusive, Lifelong, Quality, and Relevant Learning in Africa,” This session underscored the pivotal role of education in advancing Africa's development and addressed the need for resilient and inclusive educational systems across the continent.

In his opening remarks, H.E. Chief Fortune Charumbira, President of the Pan-African Parliament, called on African legislators to enhance their oversight capabilities. This, he stressed, is essential for the successful implementation of Africa’s Agenda 2063, a comprehensive strategy for sustainable development in Africa. He emphasized the importance of the Parliament's role in ensuring accountability and progress toward these long-term goals, urging members to act decisively and without fear in holding Governments accountable.

The Second Edition of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Business Forum, branded as BIASHARA AFRIKA 2024

During the period under reporting, His Excellency, the Right Honourable Prime Minister Russell Mmiso Dlamini, attended the Second Edition of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Business Forum on behalf of His Majesty King Mswati III. The forum took place from 9 – 11 October, 2024, at the Kigali Convention and Exhibition Village, under the theme "Dare to Invent the Future of the AfCFTA." This significant event was a collaborative effort organized by the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Secretariat in partnership with the Government of Rwanda. It brought together key players from Africa's public and private sectors, multinational corporations, and other stakeholders to explore the challenges and opportunities of building regional and continental value chains. These discussions are

essential for establishing strong supply chain networks, a critical step towards unlocking the full potential of intra-African trade.

Eswatini's Intervention:

The Prime Minister committed to rallying his fellow leaders at the upcoming AU Summit to advocate for the full and faithful implementation of the AfCFTA—the world's largest free trade area. This agreement seeks to boost intra-African trade by reducing tariffs on 90% of goods, with the ultimate goal of eliminating tariffs on all product lines, promoting the movement of people and goods, and creating a single African market. He emphasized the need to expedite negotiations on critical sectors like automobiles and textiles and called on countries that have not yet deposited their instruments of ratification of the Agreement to do so without delay.

Eswatini highlighted that it is proud to be among those committed to inventing the future of the AfCFTA. The Prime Minister declared Eswatini's readiness to trade under the AfCFTA framework and announced that Eswatini has joined the Guided Trade Initiative, paving the way for Eswatini traders to actively engage in African commercial activities. Prime minister stated that he looks forward to welcoming the AfCFTA Secretariat to the Kingdom for further discussions and collaborations under this initiative.

The Twelfth Session of the AU Annual Humanitarian Symposium, held from 18 – 21 November 2024 in Nairobi, Kenya

During the period under reporting, the Department of Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development of the African Union Commission (AUC) in collaboration with the Government of the republic of Kenya and the AU Humanitarian Partners, namely, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) hosted the Twelfth (12) Session of the AU Annual Humanitarian Symposium from 18 – 21 November 2024, in Nairobi, Kenya under the theme “Addressing the Specific Needs of Children and Adolescents Affected by Humanitarian Crises”.

The Symposium was attended by His Excellency the Ambassador in Addis in his capacity as Chairperson of the African Union PRC Sub-committee on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displace Persons and the Counsellor from the Embassy of the Kingdom of Eswatini.

The symposium focused on strategic approaches to advancing effective and inclusive humanitarian action in Africa, especially the specific need of Children and Adolescents affected by Humanitarian Crises. It also held a segment on the specific humanitarian situation in Sudan.

AU and RECs Senior Officials Capacity Building Workshop towards combatting irregular migration, especially trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants; 13 to 14 November 2024, Dar Salaam, Tanzania

The Kingdom of Eswatini participated in the African Union and Regional Economic Communities Senior Officials Capacity Building Workshop towards combatting irregular migration, especially trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants which took place in Dar Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania from 13 to 14 November 2024. The country was represented by Mr Kingdom Mbuso Mamba, Deputy Commissioner of Labour (DCL), Ministry of Labour and Social Security, a member of the Inter Agencies Tasks force on Combating Human Trafficking and Mr Sabelo Kenneth Dlamini- Embassy in Ethiopia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

The Workshop discussed about the need to build the capacity of States to effectively combat the scourge of increasing threats of irregular migration, particularly trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants, including the highly expanding network of criminal gangs perpetuating the above transnational organized crimes in Africa. The negative effects of advancement of technology, particularly, the expanding social media networks, which has further provided an opportunity for criminal networks to circumvent the law, evade justice, and expand their illegal activities.

The Second Meeting of the Conference of the States Parties to the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, 22 to 23 November, 2024 Nairobi, Kenya

The Second (2nd) Meeting of the Conference of the States Parties to the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa was held from 22 to 23 November, 2024 in Nairobi, Kenya. The Kingdom of Eswatini was represented by the Counsellor from the Embassy of the Kingdom of Eswatini in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The protection and assistance of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Africa has emerged as a priority for Africa. African Union Member States are committed to developing long lasting solutions for this issue and have expressed this several times in continental strategies, plans, laws and policies. The most vivid reflection of this is the development of the African Union Convention on the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention), which was adopted at the AU Special Summit on Refugees, Returnees and IDPs in Africa on 23 October, 2009.

Official Trip by The Right Honourable Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Eswatini, Mr. Russell Mmiso Dlamini to The Republic of Ghana from 23rd – 25th November 2024 in Kunasi, Ghana

On 23 – 25 November 2025, His Excellency Russell Mmiso Dlamini, the Right Honourable Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Eswatini undertook an Official Visit to the Republic of Ghana, where he was representing His Majesty King Mswati III in the Ashante Kingdom in celebration of 100th anniversary of the return of King Prempeh I from exile in Seychelles. King Prempeh I, was exiled to the Seychelles by the British colonial government in 1896. His return in 1924 marked a fundamental moment in the history of the Ashanti Kingdom, symbolising resilience and the enduring spirit of the Asante people.

The event was graced by the King of the Ashante Kingdom, Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, the President of Seychelles, the Right Honorable Prime Minister of Eswatini, H.E. Russell Mmsiso Dlamini, as well as President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo of Ghana. Also present along with the Right Honourable Prime Minister was HRH Prince Lindani, HRH Prince Simelane and H.E. Mahlaba Mamba, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Eswatini in Addis Ababa.

Leading up to the event, His Excellency Russell Mmiso Dlamini and his delegation visited the Manhyia Palace Museum, where they explored the rich history and culture of the Ashanti kingdom. Following the Museum tour, His Excellency, HRH Prince Lindani and HRH Prince Simelane were guest of honour at the durbar hosted by His Majesty Otumfuo Nana Osei Tutu II, King of the Ashanti Kingdom. Other dignitaries who witnessed the durbar, included Her Majesty the Queen Mother, President of Seychelles, Ghanaian ministers, former President John Kufuor, senior palace chiefs, and other notable individuals.

World Government Summit (WGS) 2025

The World Governments Summit will convene in Dubai from 11th to 13th February, 2025 under the theme 'Shaping Future Governments.' This Summit will bring together governments, international organizations, thought leaders, and private sector leaders from around the globe to foster international cooperation and identify innovative solutions for future challenges, ultimately inspiring and empowering the next generation of governments.

His Majesty, King Mswati III will also grace this occasion where he is expected to engage in the Government Experience Exchange Forum on the 11th February, 2025, where he will be engaging with individuals from various industries to explore real-world experiences, innovative strategies and valuable lesson learned. The core mission for this discussion, is to cultivate knowledge-sharing that empowers both individuals and organizations to excel in today's fast-paced environment.

It is during the WGS 2025 that the Kingdom's very own Honorable Minister Savannah Maziya, of the Ministry of Information Communication and Technology, will be joining the 3rd Cohort of Global Councils on SDGs as Chairperson of the Global Council focusing on the Sustainable Development Goal 5 on Gender Equality. The Honorable Minister there will be entrusted with leading national efforts within Eswatini and aligning these efforts with global best practices through the Government Exchange Experience Programme, which will serve as a platform for fostering collaboration creating an environment to enable the drive of impactful initiatives and contribute to projects that advance the sustainable development goals.

The 2024 Goodness of Hemp Summit

The Mission in Washington D.C participated in the Goodness of Hemp Summit in Great Falls, Montana from October 15 to 17, 2024. This Summit brought together experts in the hemp industry from all over the U.S., Canada and some parts of Europe, sharing their expertise and experiences in the manufacturing sector. Key stakeholders from across the industrial hemp supply chain and major Hemp Advocacy Groups were brought together, taking part in various strategic networking sessions as well as hyper focused presentations on hemp policies, commercial scale production and manufacturing at the forefront. Key presentations included one from Hemp Advocacy Groups such as the National Hemp Association (NHA), National Industrial Hemp Council of America (NIHC) and the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research (FFAR), with a focus on overarching industry updates and objectives and also the progress being made to standardize testing methods and understanding the compliments and differences between hemp fiber and cotton fiber.

The Summit also had panels and networking sessions which were focused on market and production data, construction opportunities, supply chain challenges, fiber and hurd conversion technologies, and the introduction of a new hemp marketing and education initiative. Panels showcased experts from across diverse sectors and regions of the world including Marmara Hemp, a successful textile-focused business from France, and Forvia, a leader in automotive part supply also based in France. There was also a special presentation from Hemp Fortex giving an enlightening report on the hemp industry in Asia. Other experts from diverse backgrounds also alluded to the opportunities hemp has in various fields and openly discussed tactics to grow business. These included Americhanvre, Montana State University (Departments of Architecture and Chemical and Bioengineering), IND HEMP, BioComposites Group and others.

Indefinite suspension of the nomination of the Chief of Mission at the Embassy of the United States of America in the Kingdom of Eswatini

The 118th United States Congress concluded on January 3, 2025 and as a consequence, all nominations that were neither confirmed nor rejected by the Senate at the time of the adjournment, are returned to the President pursuant to Senate Rule XXXI, clause 6. This implies that the nomination of John W.

McIntyre as the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom has been indefinitely suspended. The Mission will continue to monitor new ambassadorial nominations under the Trump administration.

Business engagement –Rwanda

During His Majesty's visit in Rwanda, His Excellency Mlonzi Dlamini had an opportunity to engage with counterparts, diplomatic missions' resident in Kigali who briefed him about political, social and economic opportunities that Rwanda has which can enhance trade and social stability in the continent. The Ambassadors and High Commissioners urged Eswatini to tap into the space of international meetings that are being held in Rwanda by formulating tourism packages in partnership with Rwanda since Eswatini has got lots of cultural activities and Game Parks with all the Big Five.

On the business fields, the High Commissioner together with the country Consul resident in Rwanda- Dr Subiri met several businesspeople who showed interest in investing or partnering with Eswatini in several business spheres. Of paramount importance one showed a keen interest in establishing a market base for PalFridge since Rwanda has acute shortage of fridges and coolant apparatus.

World Food Forum 2024, Rome, Italy, 14th to 18th October 2024, under the theme *“Good food for all, for Today and Tomorrow”*

The Kingdom of Eswatini participated in the **World Food Forum 2024**, which is a significant global event focused on addressing the challenges and opportunities related to food security and sustainable agrifood systems. The aim of the forum is to bring together diverse stakeholders from governments, businesses, civil society, and academia to address the pressing challenges of food security and sustainable food systems

The Kingdom of Eswatini was represented at the Highest Level with His Majesty King Mswati III, together with other High-Level Dignitaries that included the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Minister of Agriculture, and the Minister of Commerce, Industry and Trade, and our Permanent Mission in Geneva.

On **14th October 2024**, His Majesty participated in the high-level luncheon hosted by the Director General of the FAO. Also, in attendance were Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Agriculture, and Commerce as well as the Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Eswatini to the FAO. Thereafter, His Majesty King Mswati III made a keynote address at the opening of the World Food Forum, alongside several other Heads of State and Governments.

15TH October 2024– Bilateral Meeting between His Majesty King Mswati III and the Director General FAO.

A bilateral meeting was held on the margins of the World Food Forum, where His Majesty and the Director General of FAO engaged in conversations focused on the collaboration projects that the Government of Eswatini and the Food and Agriculture Organisation are involved in, the implementation of the country programme framework between Eswatini and FAO, opportunities and challenges, and lastly possible areas for further collaboration.

9. POLITICAL DEPARTMENT

The *Political Department* has the principal mandate to identify, forge, develop, monitor and promote sound relationships between the Kingdom of Eswatini and the rest of the global world. The Department also focuses on establishing and cementing diplomatic and other relations between Eswatini and other States.

The Department actively coordinates and maintains the Kingdom's relations on bilateral and multilateral levels. This is done through constant communication with other States on a bilateral level and also through representation in all the multilateral institutions that the Kingdom is a member of in the furtherance of international cooperation. The department is also responsible for the assimilation and dissemination of information from other countries, International and Regional Organisations to relevant Ministries in the public service of the Kingdom of Eswatini.

The Department further prepares action plans to follow up on the outcomes of international meetings attended. The Political Department is divided into two sections; Political and International Cooperation Sections. The Political Section is sub-divided into six desks (SADC, Africa, Europe, Asia Pacific & Middle East, Americas, Oversight and Candidatures), while the International Cooperation Section is subdivided into three sections (Treaties and MOUs, Scholarships and Vacancies, and Oversight).

The mandate of the International Cooperation Section is to strengthen the Kingdom's international platform, reinforce its visibility abroad and promote the country's economic interests by encouraging and facilitating economic and technical co-operation with other countries, Regional and International Organizations. It is the responsibility of the department to plan, co-ordinate and oversee all Regional and International co-operation programs and initiatives.

Meetings Attended by the Kingdom of Eswatini at the 79th United Nations General Assembly and Related Events

This report presents a comprehensive overview of the Kingdom of Eswatini's active participation in key discussions and bilateral engagements during the 79th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and associated events. Eswatini's participation at the Summit of the Future, the Women Foreign Ministers Meeting, the Commonwealth Foreign Affairs Ministers Meeting, the Ministerial Meetings of the Like-Minded Group of Middle-Income Countries (LMG-MICs) and Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), as well as bilateral meetings with the UN Secretary-General and the Crown Prince of Kuwait, underscored the nation's commitment to sustainable development, multilateralism, gender equality, and economic advancement.

Summit of the Future

Date: 22-23 September 2024

Theme: “Multilateral Solutions for a Better Tomorrow”

Eswatini Delegation: Led by Rt Hon. Prime Minister Russell M. Dlamini, accompanied by senior officials.

Key Highlights:

- **UN Secretary-General António Guterres' Call for Global Reform:** The Secretary-General made an urgent appeal for the reform of global problem-solving mechanisms to address critical challenges like climate change, conflict, and inequality. He highlighted the role of Africa as a "champion of implementation" in global governance.
- **Eswatini's Advocacy for Inclusivity and Reform:** Prime Minister Dlamini reinforced Eswatini's support for the Ezulwini Consensus, advocating for reforms that allow greater representation for Africa, including Taiwan's inclusion in international forums. The Prime Minister emphasized the need for a more inclusive and responsive global system.
- **Adoption of the Pact for the Future:** The summit concluded with the adoption of the Pact for the Future, a blueprint designed to confront global crises and foster stronger multilateralism.

Significance:

Eswatini's participation in the Summit of the Future underscored its commitment to multilateral cooperation, climate action, and equitable reforms in global governance structures to ensure Africa's more robust role in international decision-making.

79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

Theme: "Leaving No One Behind: Acting Together for the Advancement of Peace, Sustainable Development, and Human Dignity for Present and Future Generations"
Eswatini Delegation led by Rt Hon. Prime Minister Russell M. Dlamini, accompanied by Hon. Pholile Shakantu, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and senior government officials attended the Summit.

Key Highlights:

- **Global Peace and Security:** The General Assembly focused on global peace efforts, with particular attention on resolving the Israel-Gaza conflict. Leaders, including Prime Minister Dlamini, emphasized that peace is essential for sustainable development.
- **Climate Action and Renewable Energy:** The Prime Minister reiterated Eswatini's commitment to climate resilience through its investments in renewable energy and sustainable development strategies.
- **Reform of Global Governance Structures:** Eswatini joined other African nations in calling for greater representation on the UN Security Council and more inclusive global governance frameworks, reflecting Africa's growing role in global affairs.

Significance:

Eswatini's interventions at the General Assembly highlighted the country's ongoing dedication to peace, climate action, and the reform of international institutions, reinforcing its leadership role within Africa and the global community.

Meeting Between the UN Secretary-General and the Prime Minister of Eswatini

Overview: The meeting covered a broad range of global issues, including structural reforms in the international system, Eswatini's pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the unique challenges facing the country regarding external perceptions of its political system and human rights record.

Key Highlights:

- **Support for Sustainable Development:** Prime Minister Dlamini emphasized Eswatini's commitment to the SDGs and requested continued support from the UN in accelerating progress. The Prime Minister highlighted Eswatini's advantage as a small nation, which allows for easier implementation of global and regional agreements.
- **Challenges of Perception:** Prime Minister Dlamini expressed concerns about external misperceptions of Eswatini's governance, noting that the country's democratic system is a product of national consensus. He also raised the issue of selective human rights concerns, particularly in light of recent civil unrest, and asked for the Secretary-General's support in ensuring fair recognition of Eswatini's efforts.
- **Mutual Cooperation:** The Secretary-General expressed understanding of Eswatini's unique context and reaffirmed the UN's commitment to continued cooperation on development goals and addressing challenges.

Significance:

This bilateral meeting reinforced Eswatini's strong partnership with the United Nations, with both sides committing to working together on global challenges and sustainable development while addressing issues related to governance and human rights perceptions.

Women Foreign Ministers Meeting

Themes:

- **Session 1:** "Women in Public Spaces: Politics, Leadership, and Governance"
- **Session 2:** "Women Leaders in the Age of Disinformation"
Eswatini Delegation: Led by Hon. Pholile Shakantu, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Key Highlights:

- **Women in Leadership:** Discussions focused on strategies for increasing women's representation in diplomacy and governance. Hon. Shakantu emphasized mentorship and leadership development for women and urged a deliberate effort to close gender gaps in the political and economic sectors.
- **Combating Disinformation:** The meeting addressed the challenges posed by disinformation targeting women leaders, calling for collective efforts to regulate digital platforms and promote digital literacy for women and girls.

Significance:

Eswatini's active participation reinforced its commitment to promoting gender equality, tackling the challenges faced by women leaders, and creating inclusive and safe spaces for women in leadership roles.

Bilateral Meeting Between the Prime Minister of Eswatini and the Crown Prince of Kuwait

Hon. Pholile Shakantu and Hon. Tambo Gina attended the meeting where the following issues were discussed:

- **Strengthening Diplomatic Ties:** Both leaders acknowledged the strong 28-year diplomatic relationship between Eswatini and Kuwait. They discussed the need to activate the eight (8) Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) signed between the two countries, with four still pending implementation. The Prime Minister expressed eagerness to see the establishment of a Kuwaiti embassy in Eswatini.
- **Economic Cooperation:** His Highness emphasized Kuwait's readiness to fund viable projects through the Kuwait Fund and encouraged Eswatini to present investment opportunities aligned

with Kuwait's priorities. Prime Minister Dlamini invited Kuwait to participate in Eswatini's Global Investment Conference, focusing on sectors such as energy, agriculture, ICT, and tourism.

- **Regional Stability:** Prime Minister Dlamini highlighted Eswatini's stable regional relations, positioning the country as an attractive destination for foreign investment.

Significance:

This meeting strengthened the bilateral relationship between Eswatini and Kuwait, with both sides committing to accelerating diplomatic and economic cooperation and exploring new investment opportunities.

34th Commonwealth Foreign Affairs Ministers Meeting (CFAMM)

Focus: Strengthening collaboration among Commonwealth nations and addressing key global issues, including climate change and sustainable development.

Key Highlights:

- **Support for Small States:** Commonwealth leaders reaffirmed their commitment to supporting small states like Eswatini in addressing challenges related to climate change, economic growth, and resilience building.

Significance:

Eswatini continues to benefit from the Commonwealth's support in addressing the challenges faced by small states, particularly in areas related to climate change and economic development.

9th Annual Ministerial Meeting of the Like-Minded Group of Middle-Income Countries (LMG-MICs)

The meeting focused on addressing common challenges faced by middle-income countries, such as debt sustainability, economic growth, and access to climate financing.

The meeting highlighted Debt and Economic Cooperation, where Eswatini joined other middle-income nations in calling for reforms to international financial systems to ensure fair treatment, particularly in terms of debt relief and access to resources for climate adaptation and sustainable development.

Significance:

Eswatini's participation reinforced its advocacy for international financial reforms and collaboration among middle-income countries to address shared economic and environmental challenges.

23rd Annual Ministerial Meeting of Foreign Ministers of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs)

The meeting addressed the unique challenges faced by landlocked countries, including trade, infrastructure, and regional cooperation.

Delegates highlighted Improving Connectivity amongst landlocked countries. Eswatini joined other LLDCs in calling for enhanced regional cooperation to boost infrastructure and trade connectivity, essential for overcoming the limitations faced by landlocked countries.

Significance:

Eswatini reaffirmed its commitment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in addressing the challenges posed by its landlocked status.

The Kingdom of Eswatini's active participation in the 79th UNGA and related events underscored its commitment to global cooperation, multilateralism, gender equality, sustainable development, and economic growth. Eswatini's leadership advocated for reforms in global governance, promoted investment opportunities, and strengthened diplomatic relationships, notably with Kuwait and the UN. Through these engagements, Eswatini continues to assert its role as a key player in global discussions on peace, development, and reform.

The World Food Forum (WFF) was hosted in Rome Italy. His Majesty King Mswati III had a key note address at the Grand Opening on October 14, 2024. The Theme of the WFF was “**Good food for all, for today and tomorrow**”.

His Majesty first gave a brief background of the state of food insecurity – “bad outcomes of agri-food systems” in the world. He highlighted that it was estimated that between 713 and 757 million people, corresponding to 8.9 and 9.4 percent of the global population, respectively, faced hunger in 2023. Considering the mid-range (733 million), this is about 152 million more people than in 2019. Trends at

the regional level differ considerably. While hunger is still on the rise in Africa, it has remained relatively unchanged in Asia, and there is notable progress in Latin America. From 2022 to 2023, hunger increased in Western Asia, the Caribbean and in most sub-regions of Africa.

The King later highlighted the factors that were leading to bad food systems outcomes that are currently witnessed. Factors discussed included; population changes, changes in diets and eating habits, rapid urbanization and premature rural to urban migration, and the human impact on the earth's ecology and ecosystems. He further highlighted the global progress that has been made in an attempt to address the SDGs especially SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and how COVID-19 outbreak and the Russia-Ukraine conflict has affected achievement of this SDG. He further highlighted that our planet faces multiple crises that are directly linked to our agrifood systems, including climate change, biodiversity loss, deforestation, soil degradation and others. He said we were failing to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement and the rest of the SDGs, and our agrifood systems continue to be responsible for 30 percent of global, human-caused greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, 90 percent of global deforestation, 70 percent of water use and are the single greatest cause of terrestrial biodiversity loss.

His Majesty the King further mentioned that the implication was that **'We need to take action today for the agrifood systems of today but also of tomorrow'**. Urgent and transformative going beyond mere plans and promises are crucial. This meant an integrated policy approach is needed to achieve the SDGs – one that navigates the synergies and trade-offs in taking a certain line of action. Too much is at stake and transformation is a matter of utmost urgency.

His Majesty applauded the UN and member states for identifying and elevating the discourse around the six transformative entry points or - key transitions that can have catalytic and multiplier effects across the SDGs namely (1) food systems; (2) energy access and affordability; (3) digital connectivity; (4) education; (5) jobs and social protection; and (6) climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. He however stressed that believed that more still needs to be done, particularly in making things happen on the ground.

His Majesty then called for global action saying "Nkwe" meaning fast action now to ensure we are back on track in achieving the commitments of the SDGs. In his concluding remarks, His Majesty concluded by saying **"Good food for all, for today and tomorrow"** means better production, better nutrition, a

better environment and a better life for all, leaving no one behind. He then called all present stakeholders to join him and take action for agrifood systems transformation and for our shared future. **He then left the Forum with a new word calling for ACTION NOW---NKWE!**

The delegation also met with investors from Zambia and Austria. The investors from Zambia expressed interest in working in all of the SADC region. The investors have already piloted a hub and spoke of a model where both registered and unregistered farmers have access to funding support for production inputs and services. The interest of the Ministry of Agriculture was explained in the areas of the major priorities which is food sovereignty through the production of maize, beans and milk together with having a grain reserve facility that can hold a stock of up to three years of grain.

The investor for Austria is an international organization that uses AI technology to ensure precision farming. They are transforming the agricultural ecosystems by making finance, insurance and farming operations traceable, connected and fair. They use cutting-edge technologies to bring transparency, efficiency and sustainability to farmers, bankers, insurers, governments and development partners. With their technology, they can help government create reports on how much land is arable, how much is under production and which crops are grown at a given time, which areas have a potential for irrigation with an indication of water requirements, and also recommend which crops can be grown. Their objective is to assist underfunded farmers to have access to agricultural finance.

The Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) indicated a willingness to work with this institution and indicated that there was need to further engage. A proposal for further engagements was to be shared between the Ministry of Agriculture and the company.

COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING (CHOGM)

The CHOGM 2024 was held in Apia, Samoa under the theme, "**One Resilient Common Future: Transforming our Common Wealth**," which focused on the core pillars of the Commonwealth through a resilience lens. CHOGM 2024 aims to strengthen:

- Resilient democratic institutions upholding human rights, democracy, and the rule of law.
- A resilient environment to combat climate change.
- Resilient economies that support recovery and prosperity.
- Resilient societies to empower individuals for a peaceful and productive life.

The Commonwealth Ministerial Meeting on Small States (CMMSS) was convened in Apia, Samoa, on 23 October 2024 at the Taumeasina Island Resort. The meeting, co-chaired by Honourable Fiamē Naomi Mata'afa, Prime Minister of Samoa, Government of Samoa and Honourable Dr. Tambo Gina, Minister of Economic Planning and Development, Kingdom of Eswatini. The meeting brought together Ministers from over forty-five (45) Commonwealth member countries to address key challenges and opportunities related to economic resilience, development finance, climate action, and building global partnerships.

Review of 2022 Outcomes

The outgoing co-chairs, the Republic of Rwanda and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, presented a brief report on key accomplishments since 2022. They highlighted the compounded effects of climate change, global economic uncertainties, and geopolitical tensions. They also emphasized that small states continue to reel from the impact of the disruptions from COVID-19 and increasing frequency of natural disasters across all Commonwealth small states. The outgoing co-chairs highlighted some of the innovative solutions which include debt relief efforts aimed at providing fiscal space and redirecting resources towards climate-resilient investments as well as de-risking investments. They provided an overview of the initiatives developed by the Secretariat to support small states and highlighted the establishment of institutional structures aimed at accelerating the implementation of the Commonwealth-UN advocacy strategy.

The 2024 CMMSS co-chairpersons thanked the Secretary General of the Commonwealth for her dedicated efforts to support the small states during her tenure. They reiterated the ramifications of the

interlocked crises which affect small states disproportionately. They urged countries to commit to the implementation of the advocacy strategy and support the development of the Programme of Action.

Ministers also called on the international community to take urgent action on climate change mitigation and adaptation, with a renewed focus on the adherence to the global quantified climate goals integrated with their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) targets, and provision of additional concessional resources to small states that are at the forefront of climate change and disaster risk impacts. The Ministers highlighted the need to account and tackle the domino effects of climate change and natural disasters on food security, health of oceans and marine resources, and impact on peoples' health, culture, and heritage.

23rd COMESA Summit

The 23rd COMESA Summit of Heads of State and Government was held from 28-31 October 2024, in Bujumbura, Burundi. This summit provided a platform for discussing economic integration and trade facilitation among Member States while also addressing issues related to infrastructure development and investment opportunities that could bolster regional economies.

Extraordinary Summit of SADC Heads of State

The Extraordinary Summit of SADC Heads of State took place from 17-20 November 2024, in Harare, Republic of Zimbabwe. This extraordinary summit focused on urgent matters affecting regional peace and security as well as socio-economic development initiatives. Leaders discussed enhancing collaboration on with the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and extended the deployment of the SADC Mission to the DRC (SAMIDRC) for an additional 12 months to fight the insurgents that were compromising peace and stability in the eastern DRC.

Delegation of the Kingdom of Eswatini to the Republic of Botswana

On 9 January 2025, His Excellency Russell Dlamini the Right Honourable Prime Minister led a delegation to the Republic of Botswana, to deliver a Special Message to from His Majesty King Mswati III to His Excellency President Duma Boko of the Republic of Botswana.

Congratulatory and Condolences Notes

CONGRATULATORY NOTES		CONDOLENCES NOTES
		Government of Canada- demise of Former Prime Minister, His Excellency Brian Mulroney
DRC- Independence anniversary		Kingdom of Saudi Arabia- different nationalities died during Hajj Pilgrimage
Republic of Seychelles – Independence anniversary		Republic of Korea- Lives lost resultant from the explosion at lithium batteries factory in Hwaseong City
Republic of Madagascar- Independence anniversary		Federative Republic of Brazil- Condolence message tragic plane crash 57 passengers died
Republic of South Africa- President Cyril Ramaphosa re-election		Republic of South Africa – Collision on R42 near Delmas, Mpumalanga
United States of America- Congratulatory message to President Donald Trump		
Republic of Namibia- Congratulatory message to Her Excellency Netumbo Nandi Ndaitwah		United States of America- Condolence Note on the demise of Former President, Jimmy Carter

10.0 PROTOCOL DEPARTMENT

Introduction

The Protocol Department provides essential support to the Ministry in the establishment, promotion, and maintenance of good relations between the Kingdom and the international community for the advancement and enhancement of the Kingdom's prosperity, independence, and territorial integrity.

Protocol involves etiquette on a local and international scale and the practice of good manners in engagements with state and non-state actors on a daily basis. Protocol is an important part of diplomatic practice linked with history, royalty, religion, culture and language. Diplomatic protocol provides a set of established rules of courteousness that are to be respected in society. Furthermore, the protocol department provides support to the operation of the diplomatic and consular corps, that is diplomatic missions, international organizations and their missions and consular counter parts in Eswatini.

The Protocol Department plays a central role in organizing official events, meetings and summits hosted by Eswatini, e.g. Southern African Developing Community (SADC), Southern African Customs Union (SACU), as well as working on official visits by Their Majesties, H.E. Prime Minister, Hon. Deputy Prime Minister and the Hon. Foreign Minister. These visits facilitated by the Protocol Department may include visits of a bilateral or multilateral nature.

The Protocol Department also performs tasks related to ascertaining the scope of diplomatic privileges and immunities, and carries out procedures for their exercise.

In line with the vision and mission of the Ministry, the department's planned activities were in the following areas:

- **Facilitating All Formal Visits:** The department, in collaboration with the King's Office and the various arms of the security forces, coordinates and facilitates State, Official, Working and Private Visits of foreign Heads of State and Government to the Kingdom of Eswatini, Special Envoys and representatives thereof, along with foreign Heads of the Judiciary and Legislature.

- **Facilitating Overflight/ Landing Procedures For Foreign State Aircrafts:** State or Military aircraft wishing to overfly through the Eswatini airspace or land in the Kingdom are required to apply for Diplomatic clearance via the State's accredited representative to the Ministry at least 2 weeks in advance of the flight and the department is instrumental in facilitating this through its collaboration with the Kingdom's aviation authorities. The reverse is true in the event of external travel by our VVIPs.
- **Facilitating usage of the VIP Lounge at KMIII International Airport:** Request for the use of the Lounges at KMIII International airport must be submitted in writing to the Ministry at least 48 hours in advance of the date of arrival or departure of the VIP concerned. For arrivals or departures during weekends and on Mondays, the request should reach the Ministry by noon on Thursday in order ensure timely processing.
- **Facilitating diplomatic flight clearances registrations:** The State Protocol seeks to render assistance in obtaining flight diplomatic clearances for foreign state and military aircrafts, radio, as well as firearms licences.
- **National Events:** The department provides professional protocol services to the Nation's dignitaries including the Diplomatic Community during National Events. This exercise also includes the Kingdom's visitors from abroad regarding provision of entry visas on arrival as when requested.
- **Diplomatic Accreditation:** As a key function of the Ministry, the department has a mandate to strengthen bilateral relations between Eswatini and its diplomatic partners through the accreditation of diplomatic representatives of other States in Eswatini and also securing diplomatic representation of the Kingdom in regions where the country is inadequately represented. This involves facilitating the approval by Cabinet of proposed Heads of Mission and Honorary Consuls and further paving the way for these Heads of Mission to present their Credentials to the Head of State.

- **Bilateral Relations:** In line with a key element of the mandate of the Ministry, the department assists in strengthening of Eswatini’s position on the regional and global stage by organising and coordinating various activities aimed towards improving relations with Eswatini’s partners. This includes facilitating various bilateral exchanges between foreign dignitaries and Eswatini’s Head of State, Head of Government and various Ministers of the Crown and thereafter seeking opportunities for further cooperation with those States.
- **International Cooperation:** As a Ministry that recognises the importance of regional and global collaboration to improve the lives of Emaswati at home and around the world, the Department facilitates cooperation with Eswatini’s diplomatic partners offered in the form of technical support, commercial activity and aid. This is not limited to the Ministry itself but cascades to other Ministries whose mandate would be better achieved through various forms of international collaboration.
- **Diplomatic Service:** One of the overarching goals of the department is to provide effective and efficient professional diplomatic services to the diplomatic community in Eswatini. Thus, the department continues to address the needs of resident and non-resident diplomats and engage with the relevant government stakeholders in ensuring that all their privileges and immunities are upheld in accordance with the Vienna Conventions of 1961 and 1963 and standard diplomatic practices in the Kingdom of Eswatini.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Diplomatic Accreditation:

The Presentation of Credentials of the above mentioned Heads of Missions bodes well for the Kingdom of Eswatini as this provides the unique opportunity for cooperation with these nations in various fields as well as in multilateral meetings that the Kingdom of Eswatini participates in.

The Ministry further facilitated the approval of Agrément requests that were submitted by the under listed foreign countries;

Table : Countries who were granted Agréments in the year 2024/25

Country	Head of Mission	Agrément Received
1. Republic of Belarus	Mr. Igor G. Bely	06 th November 2024

National Events:

The Protocol Department works hard in providing logistical and planning services for the Visits of His Majesty’s guests during National Events. This includes ensuring the provision of appropriate accommodation, transport and security for the esteemed guests. The Kingdom often hosts various National events that witness the participation of Their Majesties or their Representatives, and senior dignitaries in the country and as well as the Diplomatic Community. During the reporting period, the department contributed significantly by collaborating with other key stakeholders in the planning and execution of the under listed National events:

Table: National Events held in the year 2024/25

EVENT	DATE	VENUE
International Diplomatic Visit (Georgetown University)	30 th September- 3 rd October 2024	Hilton Hotel
Taiwan National Day Celebration	9 th October 2024	Happy Valley Hotel
Fire Day	11 th October 2024	Matsapha
End of Year Church	28 th October 2024	Lozitha
Incwala Ceremony	01 st December 2024	Ludzidzini Royal Residence

His Excellency the Right Honourable Prime Minister's Schedule

The Protocol Department provides services for the Right Honourable Prime Minister, which include facilitating Courtesy Calls with all members of the Diplomatic Corp, being present in an official capacity on some of His Excellency's meetings and at all National tours he conducts working closely with his security detail.

Some of the above mentioned include the following:

1. Mbulungwane in Hlatikhulu, Shiselweni – to open a rebuilt Inkhundla Centre with a new basketball facility.
2. Tour of Etjendlovu Primary School construction site.
3. Tour at the Police College to inspect the construction of their vehicle workshop
4. Tour at the International Convention Centre (ICC) to check on progress of construction every two weeks.
5. Inauguration of Malanzela Veterinary Offices and Staff housing at Maphalaleni
6. Launch of the National Safety and Security Operations at Matsanjeni Lavumisa
7. Institute of Development Management (IDM) 18th Joint Graduation Ceremony in Matsapha
8. Commemoration of World AIDS Day at Mahlangatja

External Travel

The Protocol Department continues to successfully work closely with the Office of His Majesty King Mswati III in facilitating State, Official, Working and Private Visits for their Majesties External Travel to various countries, in order to explore and strengthen diplomatic relations.

Table: His Majesty King Mswati III's External Travels in the year 2024/25

EVENT	PRINCIPAL	DATE
Official visit to the Republic of Italy	His Majesty King Mswati III	12 th – 18 th October 2024
State visit to the Republic of Serbia	His Majesty King Mswati III	18 th – 22 nd October 2024
Common Wealth Heads of Government Meeting- Independent State of Samoa	His Majesty King Mswati III	23 rd – 27 th October 2024

Official Visit by His Majesty King Mswati III to the Republic of Italy

His Majesty King Mswati III left the country in October 2024 for the Republic of Italy to attend the World Food Forum in Rome. His Majesty proposed Seven (7) solutions which include transforming agri-food systems to become resilient and inclusive, promoting healthy eating, promoting regenerative agriculture, switching to resilient, sustainable and inclusive food systems, exploring the opportunities presented by climate finance, supporting the deployment of green technologies and harnessing the accelerators of Agri-food systems transformation to address the food crisis, noting that events such as COVID-19 and armed conflicts have slowed down progress towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG2 of zero hunger).

State Visit to the Republic of Serbia

In October 2024, His Majesty King Mswati III travelled to the Republic of Serbia on a four-day State Visit. During the visit, the two countries were able to renew bilateral relations and sign instruments of cooperation in various sectors and as well as share experience in development. Among other activities during the visit was the business round table and presentation on the Expo 2027.

Official Visit to the Independent State of Samoa

In October 2024, His Majesty also visited the Independent State of Samoa to attend the 27th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM 2024) under the theme “ONE RESILIENT COMMON FUTURE: TRANSFORMING OUR COMMONWEALTH”.

In addition to facilitating the travel of His Majesty King Mswati III, the department further facilitated High Level Trips involving the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister. The table below provides a brief summary of progress in this regard;

Table: External Travel by H.E. the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister

EVENT	PRINCIPAL	DATE
Lesotho 200 Year Anniversary	H.E. Prime Minister	4 th October 2024
2 nd AfCFTA Business Forum-Rwanda	H.E. Prime Minister	11 th October 2024
Disaster Management-Namibia	Hon. Deputy Prime Minister	25 th October 2024
COMESA Summit Burundi	H.E. Prime Minister	31 st October 2024
23 rd COMESA Summit of Heads of State and Government- Burundi	H.E. Prime Minister	31 st October 2024
First Global Ministerial Conference on Ending Violence Against Children-Colombia	Hon. Deputy Prime Minister	04 th November 2024
Botswana Presidential Inauguration	H.E. Prime Minister	7 th November 2024
29 th UN Climate Change Conference (COP29)- Azerbaijan	H.E. Prime Minister	12 th November 2024
Extraordinary Summit of SADC Heads of State and Government	H.E. Prime Minister	19 th November 2024

Zimbabwe SADC Troika Summit	Hon. Deputy Prime Minister	20 th November 2024
Asante Empire Historic Celebration (100 th anniversary of King Prempeh I's return from exile) - Republic of Ghana	H.E. Prime Minister	23 rd November 2024

Facilitating Overflight/ landing Procedures for Foreign State Aircrafts:

The Protocol Department facilitated overflight and landing clearances for aircraft from the following countries:

1. Botswana
2. Russia
3. Mozambique
4. South Africa
5. Kuwait
6. France
7. Morocco
8. Taiwan
9. Saudi Arabia

Furthermore, the department has been instrumental in providing assistance to the Royal Eswatini National Airways Corporation (RENAC) in securing diplomatic clearance for both Eswatini's State Aircrafts for all of their voyages outside of the Kingdom of Eswatini over the reporting period.

Facilitating usage of the VIP Lounge at KMIII International Airport:

Over the reporting period, the Department facilitated the use of the VIP lounge at KMIII International Airport for dignitaries entering and departing the Kingdom. These include but are not limited to, Members of the Royal Family, Heads of Government, Cabinet Ministers, Members of the Diplomatic

Corp, Heads of International/Regional Organizations and Special Envoys of Heads of State/Government as well as key dignitaries visiting the Kingdom of Eswatini, including those hosted by sister Ministries.

It is worth noting that the department also facilitates the reservation of State Lounges at airports around the globe for senior dignitaries travelling on Official Duty. This includes airports that they may transit through, as well as the airport of their final destination. Success in this area is largely dependent on timely submission of requests by those affected so that these are on forwarded to their destination expeditiously. Additionally, consideration has to be placed on the regulations that each Country and Airport has due to the fact that some airports require payment for the use of their VIP Lounge and other countries place limitations on Dignitaries that can use their State VIP Lounges.

11.0 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Financials

Table: Summary budget for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

CONTROL ITEM	DESCRIPTION	ANNUAL BUDGET	RELEASED	ACTUAL EXPENDITURE	VARIANCE	VARIANCE %
00	CTA CHARGES	1,864,579.80	1,173,432.00	656,284.77	517,147.23	44.07
01	PERSONNEL COSTS	140,186,414.92	115,501,611.00	80,478,363.86	35,023,247.14	30.32
02	TRAVEL & COMMUNICATION	217,540,398.00	118,326,457.00	29,634,346.51	88,692,110.49	74.96
04	PROFESSIONAL & SPECIAL SERVICE	52,405,199.00	124,471,240.00	40,356,656.64	84,114,583.36	67.58
05	RENTAL OF BUILDINGS	92,817,750.00	79,609,092.00	33,525,038.70	46,084,053.30	57.89
06	CONSUMABLES	8,154,205.00	7,198,719.00	2,338,656.68	4,860,062.32	67.51
07	DURABLES	11,823,505.00	5,765,559.00	1,760,584.17	4,004,974.83	69.46
10	SUBSCRIPTIONS	6,280,656.00	6,280,656.00	6,280,650.67	5.33	0.00
11	INT ORGANISATIONS SUBSCRIPTION	27,896,526.00	22,325,961.00	20,703,685.80	1,622,275.20	7.27
TOTAL		558,969,233.72		215,734,267.80	264,918,459.20	122.80

ITEM 00- CTA CHARGES

CTA charges expenditure are within budget. Funds will be fully utilized by the end of the Financial Year.

ITEM 01-PERSONNEL COSTS

There is an under expenditure of 30.32 % for personnel costs as at the end of the third quarter. It is anticipated that funds will be effectively utilized by the end of the 2024/2025 financial year as per budget as no change are expected in personnel salary structure.

ITEM 02-TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION

There is an under expenditure of 68.74 % for this item as at the end of the third quarter. Funds will be effectively utilized, and expenditure is expected to be within budget at the end of the financial year.

ITEM 04-PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

There is an under expenditure of 62.81% for professional and special services for this reporting period. It is anticipated that there will be no significant cost increases and expenditure will be within budget at the end of the financial year.

ITEM 05-RENTALS

There is an under expenditure of 45.53% for this item as most cashbooks within our Missions have not been captured into the system.

ITEM 06-CONSUMABLES

There is an under expenditure of 67.51% for consumables which is within acceptable spending pattern, however, once the cashbooks are captured by the Missions there will be a significant change in the actual expenditure incurred. Hence, the budget will be exhausted or fully utilized.

ITEM 07- DURABLES

There is an under expenditure of 69.46% for durables as at the end of the third quarter. Funds will be utilized to procure essential durables as per procurement regulations by the end of the financial year.

ITEM 10: INTERNAL TRANSFERS: All payments to internal organizations have been made including UNDP local Office.

ITEM 11: EXTERNAL TRANSFERS

Funds will be transferred to international organizations for subscriptions as per budget.

12.0 CHALLENGES

The challenges and problems encountered by the Ministry that affect service delivery and the implementation of the Ministry's activities are listed below:

1. Finalization and Release of Chapter E

The delayed finalization and release of the revised Chapter E by the Ministry of Public Service to address issues affecting our diplomats and their dependents including but not limited to, allowances, their leave entitlements days, medical cover, shipment of personal effects, and furniture options amongst others.

2. Exorbitant Rentals for Diplomats' residences and Mission Chanceries

Permanent Housing for Diplomats and Chanceries – Securing finances for rentals is becoming a challenge. In some places the country has been paying rentals since independence, and due to the current fiscal challenges this is becoming expensive and unsustainable.

3. Insurance for our Diplomats

Health Insurance for Diplomats – Health insurance is a legal requirement in most countries. The current practice is that individual Missions cater for the Health Insurance needs of its diplomats. However, when there is inadequate funding in the country's missions some of staff members are not medically covered, which puts them and their families at risk.

4. Inadequate budget allocation

Inadequate budget allocation for the Ministry including Missions abroad especially the following items.

1. Contributions to Regional and International organizations
2. Inadequate budget allocation for Missions abroad especially on Transport /communication, professional services, consumables and durables. This is also further negatively affected by the fluctuating exchange rate of the local currency against major foreign currencies

13.0 CONCLUSION

The Ministry will continue to fulfil its mandate and responsibilities diligently, amid financial constraints and lack of human capital and thus ensure that planned activities for the year are implemented on time. The Ministry appreciates the unfreezing of posts which has positively made it possible to capacitate foreign missions including the head office. Notwithstanding that the budget allocated to the Ministry is not sufficient for the planned activities, we will continue to engage the Ministry of Finance and other key stakeholders with a view to apply cost effective strategies and achieve more with less. We will continuously source opportunities for Eswatini in the form of education, employment and others.

The Ministry will work towards improving the image of the country and ensuring its participation in strategic regional and international gatherings. We will run at the highest speed as we push our agenda and foreign policy forward whilst simultaneously strengthening and forging new relations. As we take on our own “nkwee”, we place it upon ourselves to ensure that commercial diplomacy is embraced and practised by all Missions at all times.



KINGDOM OF ESWATINI



**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS &
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

