



**Remarks by the Minister of Finance and Development Planning,
H.E Dr. Retselisitsoe Matlanyane at a Panel Discussion at the Africa Day in
the Margins of the 2025 HLPF
23 July,2025**

Moderator, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

This years' theme "Advancing the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 through inclusive growth and partnerships, social protection, and decent jobs," is both timely and appropriate as we enter in to the remaining five years of the 2030 Agenda, and into the second 10-year implementation of the agenda 2063.

Although Lesotho made every effort to make progress to achieve the SDGs as outlined in her first VNR Report of 2019, the adverse effects of COVID-19 recorded from the year 2020, and impacts of Climate Change hampered progress on the gains already made. The situation is now being exacerbated by declining ODA and Foreign Direct Investment in the country which have all made the achievement of the 2030 agenda to be at a distant horizon.

Notwithstanding these challenges, Lesotho remained resolute and steadfast on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Agenda 2063. Allow me, therefore,

Moderator, to reflect on Lesotho's journey on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Africa 2063 Agenda:

Firstly: In an effort to advance the implementation of the two Agendas, Lesotho aligned both frameworks into her National Strategic Development Plans and National Policies. The country also embarked on nationwide awareness campaigns to promote the understanding of the SDGs among key stakeholders. These efforts were also aimed at highlighting the importance of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 in achieving national development goals, particularly in addressing persistent structural vulnerabilities, extreme poverty, enhancing resilience, and building capacity.

Secondly: The government also took the ownership of the implementation exercise by allocating resources to ensure the successful implementation of the goals. Additionally, efforts are being made to diversify financing sources including leveraging innovative financing instruments, domestic resources, attracting foreign direct investment, and exploring ways to access international development funds as well as climate finance to support implementation of the two agendas.

Thirdly: Lesotho in collaboration with the UN-Lesotho developed the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2024-2028 dubbed “*Ka lebelo la Nts’oekhe*”- loosely translated as with the speed of Nts’oekhe. It is a framework that calls for accelerated pace in decision making, delivering and coordinating of development priorities, while leveraging all available resources, domestic and international, private and public, by the Government of Lesotho and Development partners, to ensure that No One is left behind.

Fourthly, Lesotho has made strides on the introduction of innovative financial tools such as green bonds and public-private partnerships (PPPs) which present opportunities to accelerate progress toward achieving the SDGs and Agenda 2063. However, financing gaps persist, therefore, leveraging partnerships with the private sector is crucial for addressing these gaps.

Fifth: Lesotho continues to recognize the potential of young population as a driving force for future growth. Efforts to enhance youth participation in governance, entrepreneurship, and decision-making processes are steps in the right direction that the Lesotho government is taking. However, challenges such as high unemployment, limited access to capital, and a skills mismatch must be addressed to fully realize the potential of youth and future generations. Creating an enabling environment for young people to thrive, particularly by improving education, fostering innovation, and expanding employment opportunities, are critical to securing a prosperous future.

Sixth: At the heart of our transformation agenda is digital transformation, a key enabler for resilience and inclusive development. We are investing in affordable and accessible digital infrastructure, advancing digital literacy, and scaling up innovation ecosystems that prioritize youth, women, and rural communities. Through e-governance and digital public service initiatives, we seek to enhance efficiency, transparency, and citizen participation.

Moderator,

I wish to conclude by asserting that the onus is on us as African states to streamline the two agendas in our national development plans, ensure domestic resource mobilisation to fund our own development agenda and to conduct constant regional

reviews. Let us continue to share, replicate and accelerate what works - together as Africa.

I thank you!