



*PERMANENT MISSION OF THE KINGDOM
OF LESOTHO TO THE UNITED NATIONS*

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STATEMENT

BY

**THE HONOURABLE MR. TSELE CHAKELA
MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSPORT
OF THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO**

AT THE

**HIGH-LEVEL MEETING FOR THE MIDTERM REVIEW OF THE
ALMATY PROGRAMME OF ACTION**

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NEW YORK

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**President of the General Assembly;
Secretary General of the United Nations;
The High Representative for the Least Developed
Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, and Small
Island States;
Distinguished Delegates;
Ladies and Gentlemen:**

It is a great honour and pleasure to have been afforded this opportunity to say a few words on the Almaty Programme of Action.

As we look back to the five years since the Programme of Action was adopted in Kazakhstan in 2003, I invite all of us here present to applaud ourselves for a visionary programme of action which has set the tone for the development of our geographically disadvantaged countries. I am very proud to have been part of the process that led to its adoption, including the last preparatory meeting that was held here, at these very chambers.

**Mr President
Distinguished Delegates**

The programme of action carries seven objectives and five policy priority areas (transit policy and regulatory framework, infrastructure development, trade and transport facilitation, development assistance and implementation review) against which our progress can be measured. This is indeed a daunting challenge which can only be achieved through the solidarity and cooperation with regional and international communities. In this connection, I wish to refer to some of the initiatives Lesotho has undertaken.

May I reiterate some of the points I raised in 2007 at Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso, where I gave an account of the strides we have made and our plans in the transport sector in Lesotho.

Under the Joint Bilateral Commission of Cooperation (JBCC) between the Kingdom of Lesotho and The Republic of South Africa, the two governments have agreed to establish a one stop border post aimed at facilitating rapid movement of goods,

services and people between the two countries and thereby improving trade and accelerating economic growth.

The government of Lesotho plans to invite the private sector to express its interest in the development of the Maseru Container Terminal (MASCON) into a dry port. This is in keeping with the regional standards (SADC) as well as the need to expand and improve the transportation of goods through rail.

The government of Lesotho is in the process of replacing the obsolete navigational aids at the Moshoeshe¹ International Airport. These include the procurement of fire trucks to further improve the safety standards of the airport. These activities are carried out through the assistance of the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA).

The European Union has assisted the Government of Lesotho to rehabilitate about 110 km of paved roads covering southern and northern parts of Lesotho.

We are at the final stages of creating a Roads Directorate that will have functional autonomy to fine-tune our implementation strategies. We encourage our women to become technicians and engineers and at some point the ratio of females to male engineers at our Department of Rural Roads, was in favour of females. Our Road Fund is a second generation Fund whose governance structures are in keeping with the modern governance regimes.

However, amid these promising strides, we note with concern that some development partners are now focusing their financial assistance towards the social sector. The interconnection of all sectors of economy is a step in the right direction towards the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

We welcome the idea of Aid for Trade which is supposed to assist us in addressing the infrastructural challenges and we are hopeful that it will be operationalized soon as it has been on the drawing board for too long.

Mr President
Distinguished Delegates

In conclusion, I wish to call on the development partners to honour their commitment and redouble their efforts towards providing financial assistance to Land Locked and developing countries in order to enable them to compete globally. I thank you for your attention.

I thank you.