

KINGDOM OF SWAZILAND



STATEMENT

BY

**HIS MAJESTY KING MSWATI III DURING THE
THIRD UNITED NATIONS WORLD
CONFERENCE ON DISASTER RISK
REDUCTION HELD
IN
SENDAI, JAPAN**

14TH March 2015

KING'S OFFICE

YOUR EXCELLENCY SHINZO ABE, PRIME MINISTER OF JAPAN,
YOUR EXCELLENCIES HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT,
YOUR EXCELLENCY SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UNITED
NATIONS,
DISTINGUISHED GUESTS,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

INTRODUCTION

IT IS AN IMMENSE PLEASURE FOR ME TO JOIN MY FELLOW HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT HERE IN JAPAN IN THIS BEAUTIFUL CITY SENDAI, FOR THE THIRD WORLD CONFERENCE ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION.

WE ALSO WISH TO THANK JAPAN FOR THE WARM HOSPITALITY EXTENDED TO ME, INKHOSIKATI AND MY DELEGATION SINCE OUR ARRIVAL AND ALSO FOR BEING A GOOD HOST AND ORGANISER.

THE THEME "***BUILDING THE RESILIENCE OF NATIONS AND COMMUNITIES TO DISASTERS***" IS APPROPRIATE BECAUSE IT IS KEY TO DEVELOPING ROBUST MITIGATION STRATEGIES FOR DISASTERS AT NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND GLOBAL PLATFORMS.

THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI WISHES TO EXPRESS HER HEARTFELT GRATITUDE TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS, MR BAN KI-MOON AND HIS ENTIRE STAFF, FOR CHAMPIONING ISSUES OF DISASTER RISK REDUCTION GLOBALLY.

THIS CONFERENCE COMES AT A TIME WHEN THE WHOLE WORLD IS EXPERIENCING ALL SORTS OF NATURAL DISASTERS SUCH AS TSUNAMIS, TYPHOONS, EARTHQUAKES, DROUGHT AND STORMS, TO MENTION BUT A FEW.

ALL THESE CALAMITIES HAVE LEFT MANY OF OUR PEOPLE DEVASTATED IN VARIOUS WAYS. SOME OF THEM HAD MADE SIGNIFICANT STRIDES IN THEIR LIVES BUT ARE FORCED STRAIGHT BACK INTO POVERTY.

RISK REDUCTION FUNDING MECHANISMS

THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE HAVE ALSO HAD DIRE FINANCIAL CONSEQUENCES FOR THE PEOPLE OF A DEVELOPING AFRICA, PARTICULARLY THOSE WHO HAD VENTURED INTO AGRICULTURE BY TAKING OUT LOANS FROM FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS TO FINANCE THESE PROJECTS.

IT IS INCUMBENT UPON THIS CONFERENCE TO INCLUDE IN THE POST 2015 FRAMEWORK FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION, WAYS OF SUPPORTING INDIVIDUAL CASES AND HOW EACH COUNTRY CAN BE ASSISTED TO MITIGATE THE HUGE LOSSES SUFFERED BY OUR PEOPLE THROUGH CLIMATE CHANGE.

WE NEED TO DEVELOP VERY EFFECTIVE COPING MECHANISMS, AS NATURAL DISASTERS ARE UNPREDICTABLE. THEY REQUIRE THE ADOPTION OF A MULTI-SECTORAL PROGRAMME OF ACTION.

WE APPLAUD THE UNITED NATIONS FOR CHAMPIONING MITIGATION STRATEGIES IN DEALING WITH NATURAL AND MANMADE DISASTERS, SOME OF WHICH ARE HEALTH RELATED.

EFFECTIVE GLOBAL FUND INITIATIVE

WE ARE GRATEFUL TO THE UNITED NATIONS FOR SETTING UP THE GLOBAL FUND INITIATIVE WHICH HAS BECOME A KEY CATALYST IN ADDRESSING SOME OF THE HEALTH RELATED DISASTERS THAT HAVE BECOME INCURABLE. THE EXPENSES REQUIRED TO PROCURE DRUGS FOR OUR PEOPLE, ARE BEYOND OUR MEANS AS DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

WE ENCOURAGE THE UNITED NATIONS TO ALSO CONSIDER SETTING UP A FUND THAT WILL HELP DURING NATURAL DISASTERS. THE AFRICAN CONTINENT STRONGLY BELIEVES IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF GETTING SUPPORT FROM OUR DEVELOPED PARTNERS.

WE HOPE THE UN WILL TAKE A LEADING ROLE IN MAKING SURE THAT THE PRINCIPLES OF COMMON, BUT DIFFERENTIATED RESPONSIBILITY AND EQUITY, ARE ADHERED TO BECAUSE OF LIMITATIONS OF CAPACITIES, KNOWLEDGE AND RESOURCES BETWEEN DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING NATIONS.

AT A NATIONAL LEVEL, THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI HAS SET UP A DISASTER MANAGEMENT MECHANISM. WE HOWEVER, FIND OURSELVES WITH A CHALLENGE OF ADEQUATELY ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF OUR PEOPLE AFFECTED BY OVERWHELMING DISASTERS, AS FUNDS ARE NOT ALWAYS SUFFICIENT.

THIS YEAR ALONE WE EXPERIENCED GREAT STORMS AND SEVERE DROUGHT IN SOME PARTS OF THE COUNTRY, RESULTING IN PEOPLE LOSING THEIR CROPS. THIS WILL LEAD TO A FOOD SHORTAGE.

IT IS THESE SETBACKS THAT HAMPER OUR NATIONAL EFFORTS TO UPLIFT THE STANDARD OF LIVING OF OUR PEOPLE.

CONCLUSION

OUR WORLD HAS A GREAT NEED TO DEVELOP BETTER INSTRUMENTS THAT WILL ENHANCE EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS TO EFFECTIVELY FOREWARN NATIONS OF IMPENDING DISASTERS FROM LOCAL TO GLOBAL LEVEL. THIS WOULD GO A LONG WAY IN AVOIDING UNDESIRABLE CATASTROPHES.

WE HOPE THE CONCLUSIONS OF THIS CONFERENCE WILL PROVIDE A PROGRAMME OF ACTION THAT WILL BE IMPLEMENTABLE AND EFFECTIVE IN DEALING WITH ALL KINDS OF DISASTERS.

I THANK YOU AND MAY GOD BLESS US ALL.