

**A KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF GENDER, YOUTH,  
SPORTS AND RECREATION, MORENA THESELE MASERIBANA ON THE  
OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF GENDER LINKS LESOTHO SUMMIT  
ON 18 – 19 MARCH 2013.**

**HIS MAJESTY THE KING;**

**THE RT. HON. THE PRIME MINISTER DR. THOMAS MOTSOAHAE THABANE;**

**THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY HON.  
TS'ELISO MOKHOTSO;**

**THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION, HON. 'M'AKABELO MOSOTHOANE;**

**THE MINISTER OF HEALTH, HON. DR. PINKIE MANAMOLELA;**

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND CHIEFTAINSHIP AND  
PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS, HON. SELIBE MOCHOBOROANE;**

**PRINCIPAL SECRETARIES;**

**DIRECTOR GENERAL, MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND CHIEFTAINSHIP  
AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS;**

**THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF GENDER LINKS, MRS. COLLEEN LOWE-MORNA;**

**OFFICIALS FROM GENDER LINKS HEAD-OFFICE;**

**THE GENDER LINKS COUNTRY MANAGER, MRS. 'MALEPOTA MAFEKA;**

**STAFF OF GENDER LINKS, LESOTHO OFFICE;**

**JUDGES, PRESENTERS AND PANELISTS;**

**DISTINGUISHED GUESTS;**

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN;**

**GOOD MORNING.**

**THIS DAY MARKS THE FIRST SADC GENDER PROTOCOL SUMMIT EVER TO BE HELD IN LESOTHO, WITH THE THEME “2015, YES WE MUST! THE SADC GENDER PROTOCOL AT WORK.” WE WELCOME THIS NOBLE GESTURE AND HOPE IT WILL LEAVE AN INDELIBLE MARK IN THE HEARTS OF ALL GENDER LINKS ALLIANCE PARTNERS AND ALL PLAYERS WITHIN THE GENDER SPHERE.**

**NEARLY FIVE YEARS HAVE PASSED SINCE THE HISTORIC ADOPTION OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY (SADC) PROTOCOL ON GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT. BARELY TWO YEARS FROM NOW, GOVERNMENTS WILL HAVE TO ACCOUNT FOR ACTIONS TAKEN TO MEET THE 28 TARGETS OF THIS UNIQUE SUB-REGIONAL INSTRUMENT THAT BRINGS TOGETHER EXISTING GLOBAL AND CONTINENTAL COMMITMENTS TO GENDER EQUALITY. THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDG) TARGETS ALSO HAVE A 2015 DEADLINE. MDG THREE CONCERNS GENDER EQUALITY.**

**THERE IS ALREADY A LIVELY DEBATE ON THE POST 2015 AGENDA. WHAT ABOUT THE AGENDA UNTIL 2015?**

**GENDER LINKS, THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN GENDER PROTOCOL ALLIANCE, LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATIONS, GENDER AND MEDIA NETWORKS AND MEDIA DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTIONS ARE THIS WEEK HOSTING THE SOUTHERN AFRICA GENDER PROTOCOL SUMMITS TO GATHER EVIDENCE OF THE SADC GENDER PROTOCOL AT WORK, WHICH WILL CULMINATE IN A REGIONAL SUMMIT IN JOHANNESBURG FROM 22 TO 24 APRIL 2013. WITH THE STRAPLINE "*YES WE MUST*", THE INITIATIVE THAT HAS THE SUPPORT FOR THE SADC GENDER UNIT, WILL ALSO MAKE A CONCERTED CALL FOR INCREASING THE MOMENTUM ON IMPLEMENTATION IN THE RUN UP TO 2015.**

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,**

**THE SADC GENDER PROTOCOL SUMMITS AND AWARDS AIM TO ACHIEVE THE**

**FOLLOWING AT COUNTRY AND REGIONAL LEVEL:-**

- **TAKE STOCK AND TURN UP THE PRESSURE FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE TWO YEARS TO THE 2015 DEADLINE;**
- **BRING TOGETHER ALL KEY STAKEHOLDERS TO SHARE STRATEGIES AND GOOD PRACTICES FOR ACHIEVING THE 28 TARGETS OF THE SADC GENDER PROTOCOL IN THE COUNTDOWN TO 2015;**
- **BUILD LINKAGES BETWEEN THE MEDIA AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT WORK ON THE GROUND AS PART OF THE BROADER OBJECTIVE OF GENDER RESPONSIVE GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY, AND DEVELOPING A CRITICAL CITIZENRY AROUND THE SADC GENDER PROTOCOL AND THE MDG's.**

**THESE ARE JUST, BUT A FEW OF THE OBJECTIVES AROUND THESE COUNTRY SUMMITS.**

**TO ACHIEVE THESE OBJECTIVES, AND THOSE THAT I HAVE NOT MENTIONED,**

**THIS SUMMIT HAS INVITED GENDER LINKS PARTNERS AND ALLIANCES TO**

**COME UP WITH PRESENTATIONS ALONG FIVE THEMATIC TOPICS:-**

- **GENDER, GENDER BASED VIOLENCE AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION;**
- **CONSTITUTIONAL, LEGAL RIGHTS AND GOVERNANCE;**
- **EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT;**
- **CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT; AND**
- **SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH, HIV AND AIDS.**

**WE WILL BE LISTENING TO THESE PRESENTATIONS FROM DIFFERENT**

**INSTITUTIONS AND PEOPLE; AND FROM THEM MAP THE WAY FORWARD**

**TOWARDS REACHING THE SADC GENDER PROTOCOL IN 2015. IT IS NOT ONLY**

**FOR REACHING THIS NOBLE GOAL; BUT ALSO TO SEE THAT WE PUT THEM**

**INTO PRACTICE AND MAKE SURE THAT COME 2015, WE ARE ALL CONSCIOUS**

**OF GENDER ISSUES MAKE AN EFFORT TO COMPREHEND THEM.**

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,**

**I AM TOLD THAT IN APRIL LAST YEAR, IN HER OPENING REMARKS OF THE REGIONAL SUMMIT IN JOHANNESBURG, THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF GENDER LINKS, MRS. COLLEEN LOWE-MORNA WAS VERY EMPHATIC ABOUT THE FIGHT AGAINST VIOLENCE TO WHICH WOMEN AND CHILDREN ARE SUBJECTED. WHEN THEY OPENED THE SUMMIT, THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA WAS COVERED BY A DARK CLOUD OF SHAME WHEN A MENTALLY RETARDED YOUNG GIRL OF FIFTEEN YEARS WAS GANG-RAPED; AND AT THE TIME OF THE OPENING OF THE SUMMIT, NOTHING HAD BEEN DONE TO ADDRESS THAT UNFORTUNATE AND DIABOLIC ACT. 'M'E COLLEEN, AT THAT POINT, HAD CHALLENGED THE POWERS-THAT-BE AND INSTITUTIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA, TO COME UP GUNS BLAZING AND REJECT THIS ACT AND ALL OTHERS LIKE IT AND TAKE ACTION AGAINST THE PERPETRATORS OF THESE**

**UNFORTUNATE AND EVIL DEEDS. IN HER OWN WORDS SHE SAID “WE HAVE HEARD ABOUT THEM; WE HAVE SEEN THEM; WE ARE VERY ANGRY AND WE ARE SICK OF IT”.**

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,**

**LESOTHO IS EXPERIENCING THE SAME ACTS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

**AND CHILDREN. RECENTLY 5 WOMEN INCLUDING A COMMUNITY**

**COUNCILLOR WERE RAPED AND KILLED. A YOUNG EXPECTANT**

**WOMAN WAS BRUTALLY RAPED AND MURDERED. WHAT KIND OF**

**BRUTALITY IS THIS? IN ANOTHER INCIDENT A SMALL BABY SUFFERED 1<sup>ST</sup>**

**DEGREE BURNS AFTER HE WAS DIPPED IN BOILING WATER BY HIS**

**STEPFATHER, ACCUSING “A BABY” OF EATING TOO MUCH. ARE WE REALLY**

**EXPECTED TO BELIEVE THIS NONSENSE?**

**WE ARE LIVING IN A SOCIETY OF SICK PEOPLE AND IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY**



**TO TURN THINGS AROUND. OUR ECONOMY IS SUFFERING MAJOR SETBACKS AS A RESULT OF THESE UNFORTUNATE ACTS. WHO WANTS TO INVEST IN A COUNTRY THAT IS RENOWNED FOR RAPE AND CHILD MOLESTATION? WE CANNOT WAGE THIS WAR ALONE AS GOVERNMENT. WE NEED INSTITUTIONS SUCH AS YOURS, 'M'E COLLEEN, WHICH HAS DECLARED WAR AGAINST GENDER ABUSE. OUR MEN AND WOMEN, BOYS AND GIRLS, YOUNG AND OLD, BLACK AND WHITE, MUST ALL SHOUT IN UNISON AND AT THE TOP OF THEIR VOICES SAY "ENOUGH IS ENOUGH; WE HAVE HEARD OF THEM; WE HAVE SEEN THEM; WE ARE ANGRY AND WE ARE SICK OF THEM!"**

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**

**IN CLOSING, THE GENDER LINKS OFFICE IN LESOTHO IS PRESENTLY ENGAGED IN THE GENDER BASED VIOLENCE RESEARCH THAT IS CARRIED OUT IN THE TEN DISTRICTS OF LESOTHO. THIS IS A RESEARCH STUDY THAT IS AIMED AT**

**TESTING TOOLS TO MEASURE AND MONITOR THE EXTENT, EFFECT, COST OF  
AND EFFORTS TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN LIGHT OF THE  
SADC PROTOCOL ON GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT'S TARGET TO HALVE  
LEVELS OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE BY 2015. I BELIEVE THIS STUDY,  
THOUGH DONE ON A RANDOM SAMPLE, WILL GIVE A FAIR REPRESENTATION  
OF THE STATE OF AFFAIRS IN LESOTHO ON GENDER BASED VIOLENCE; AND  
THIS WILL SURELY ASSIST IN EFFORTS TO BRING ABOUT PREVENTIVE  
MEASURES. THIS RESEARCH IS GOING TO ASSIST IN DETERMINING AS TO  
WHETHER OR NOT IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO CURB GBV AND BRING IT TO A  
GENTLE STOP. WE KNOW THAT MOST WOMEN FAIL TO REPORT CASES AS A  
RESULT OF WHAT THEY GO THROUGH IN POLICE STATIONS. IF THEY MANAGE  
TO OPEN A CASE SUCCESSFULLY, THEN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM FAILS THEM SO  
THEY SEE NO USE. THE QUESTION IS: ARE WE DOING ENOUGH AS A SOCIETY,**

**THE COMMUNITY, THE GOVERNMENT, FAMILIES, SCHOOLS, CHURCHES AND  
AS INDIVIDUALS TO SUPPORT SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE? WE MUST  
EMPOWER WOMEN TO BE INDEPENDENT, HAVE CONFIDENCE IN  
THEMSELVES, TO STAND TOGETHER, TO RESPECT EACH OTHER, TO LEARN  
AND UNDERSTAND THEIR RIGHTS AND MOST OF ALL TO FIGHT FOR WHAT IS  
RIGHTFULLY THEIRS. WE MUST NOT BE SCARED. WE MUST NOT BEG OR  
LOOK DOWN. FOR WE HAVE THE STRENGTH AND THE POWER TO MAP OUR  
OWN DESTINY. WHY ARE THERE WOMEN IN PARLIAMENT; WHY ARE THERE  
WOMEN LEADERS; WHY ARE THERE WOMEN DIRECTORS OF COMPANIES IF  
WOMEN ARE STUPID AND WEAK?**

**OUR MESSAGE IS CLEAR. DON'T LOOK AWAY. SPEAK OUT.**

**FINALLY, THE MINISTRY OF GENDER, YOUTH, SPORTS AND RECREATION LAST  
MONTH SIGNED A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH GENDER**

**LINKS, THAT IS GOING TO SEE US WORKING EVEN CLOSER TOGETHER WITH  
SET OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES. I AM CERTAIN THAT THE ROAD AHEAD AND  
THE FUTURE OF THESE TWO INSTITUTIONS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST  
INEQUALITIES WILL BE A FRUITFUL ONE.**

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,**

**ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT OF LESOTHO, AND INDEED ON MY OWN  
BEHALF, WE WISH YOU A FRUITFUL SUMMIT. WE WISH THOSE WHO WILL BE  
PRESENTING ON DIFFERENT TOPICS TONNES OF LUCK. WE PRAY FOR THE  
JUDGES TO BE SOBER IN THEIR DIFFICULT TASK OF SCORING THE  
PRESENTATIONS. IT IS NOT AN EASY JOB; BUT JUDGING BY THEIR CALIBRE  
I'M SURE THEY WILL DO A STERLING JOB. I KNOW THAT IN GENDER LINKS WE  
ARE ALL WINNERS, AND YOUR PRESENTATIONS ARE GOING TO ASSIST  
GREATLY IN PAVING THE WAY TOWARDS 2015.**

**2015! YES WE MUST. SADC GENDER PROTOCOL AT WORK.**

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH.**

**KHOTSO           !           PULA           !!           NALA           !!!**