STRENGTHENING THE PRIVATE SECTOR ROLE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE APoA – ESWATINI’S EXPERIENCE

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Presentation Layout

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- Regional Integration and Cooperation (Priority 4)
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Introduction

- This presentation is going to focus on the private sector experience of Eswatini in the implementation of three (3) priority areas of the Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA)

- These are International Trade and Trade Facilitation (Priority 3); Regional Integration and Cooperation (Priority 4); and Means of Implementation (Priority 6)
Eswatini has established by a legal notice a National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC).

This Committee which is drawn from various stakeholders from public, private, academia representatives is co-chaired by the Principal Secretary in my Ministry, Commissioner General from the Revenue Authority and a CEO from the Private Sector.
The National Trade Facilitation Committee is serviced by a Secretariat which comprises technical officers from my Ministry, the Revenue Authority and the Private Sector as well as two Consultants which are funded by the World Bank.

This Committee which meets on a quarterly basis has created a forum for the private sector to engage Government in different areas that impede trade across borders and trade facilitation in general.
Regional Integration and Cooperation (Priority 4)

- The Kingdom of Eswatini belongs to different regional economic blocs, such as SACU, SADC, COMESA and the AfCFTA
- Government encourages the participation of the private sector in business forums of these economic blocs
- Similarly in trade negotiations in which the Government is involved in, private sector representatives attend as observers to input in the engagements
In addition, on a cost-sharing arrangement with Government, our SMMEs, particularly women and the youth participate in regional trade fairs and expos resulting in positive outcomes of new orders, for their products
Means of Implementation

- The mobilization of financial resources is a priority for Government to fund bankable infrastructure projects that have potential to transform our economy.
- Government is engaging different financial institutions both at the global stage and in the African continent for the funding of such projects with the participation of private sector.
- Eswatini has signed an Agreement to host an electronic commerce with African Electronic Group platform for Southern Africa under a collaborative arrangement with the African Union.
The African Electronic Group comprises private sector representatives, the diaspora and philanthropists, who see a great potential for the integration of SMMEs in regional and global trade using the e-commerce platform.

Other ambitious projects in the energy sector are being pursued with the private sector that may turn Eswatini from being a net importer of electricity to an exporter.

External Investment Banks are assisting our domestic financial institutions in recapitalizing their portfolios to extend loans to Small and Medium Enterprises.
The Kingdom of Eswatini plans to host a donors conference before the end of 2020, which will not only cater for our category C commitments under the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, but other projects of national importance.
Conclusion

- In terms of large investments and the formal export sector, the private sector in Eswatini is predominantly dominated by large firms from neighbouring South Africa, with a few players from Asia, United States and Europe.

- Our SMMEs which are mainly the indigenous Emaswati, still lack the necessary expertise and capital to sustain their businesses.

- It is for this reason that we are in process of developing a Citizens Economic Empowerment Bill that will level the playing field, by creating synergies between large and small firms.
Thank you