



# STATEMENT

by

**Honourable Minister of Home Affairs of  
the Kingdom of Lesotho**

at the

**101st Session of the Council of the  
International Organization for Migration**

**27<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> November, 2012  
Palais des Nations  
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND**

**Mr. Chairman,  
Your Excellencies, Ministers present here today,  
Distinguished participants,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

At the very outset, my delegation extends greetings from the Kingdom of Lesotho to this august Session of the Council of the International Organisation for Migration. We also fully align ourselves with the statement delivered on behalf of the African Group by the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria.

This Session comes amidst the global financial crisis, global warming and other socio-political challenges of our time. Challenges that undoubtedly have a direct and indirect impact on migration patterns within our societies. Notwithstanding, my delegation is confident that with the expertise and knowledge that our International Organization for Migration (IOM) possesses, it would only be prudent for all of us to face migration situations in the humanitarian spirit of collaborative efforts, burden sharing and positivity to turn migration challenges into opportunities.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Migration flows experienced by Lesotho are, to a large extent, brought about by the country classified as 'least developed', land-locked and with minimal natural resources. Other contributors to migration flows include a multiplicity of socio-economic challenges such as reduced employment opportunities (of particular concern being youth unemployment); increasing poverty levels: food insecurity; and unfavourable climatic conditions, to mention but a few.

Likewise with migratory flows experienced throughout the world, migration trends in Lesotho are also complex in nature, ranging from movements of Lesotho nationals, for varying reasons, either to our one and only neighbor, Republic of South Africa, countries in the region and other parts of the world, as well as within the country from rural to urban areas. Lesotho is also host to migrants, mainly from various parts of the world. In recent times this migration pattern carries with it the trafficking of persons, invariably with Lesotho as not the country of destination.

It is against the above backdrop that Lesotho is desirous to see concerted efforts towards maximizing the development benefits of migration and minimizing the negative impact of migration by all Member States of IOM. These, we believe, will go a long way in enabling development in countries of origin and destination of migrants. More significantly, the instrumentality of IOM in the management of migration will not only enhance national capacities, but regional and

international efforts as well. We look forward to IOM's renewed engagement with small, developing and land-locked countries in the future.

**Mr Chairman,**

Lesotho is one of the 12 ACP Pilot countries which is already benefiting from the creation of a network of institutions and experts on migration research. The ACP Observatory on Migration has launched research and capacity building activities on south-south migration and development issues. The report on remittances framework in Lesotho by the Observatory, which assessed policies and programmes promoting the multiplier effect in Lesotho, has been published. In addition, the research, which will also inform policies on our diaspora, is on-going by the same Observatory.

In the same breath, the Ministry of Health in collaboration with World Health Organization, IOM and Intra-ACP Facility has come up with a plan of action on how Basotho Health Professionals in the Diaspora could, amongst others, come home for short, medium and possible long term to provide medical services in specialized areas, perform complex operations and training at local medical institutions.

Furthermore, and in an effort to address issues of irregular migration and national security, the Government of Lesotho is currently implementing an integrated system of eBorder Management, introducing ePassport and establishing properly functioning National

Identity Register. The system is intended to enable migrants to participate in the economic activities of the country and access services like any other citizen. The system will also cater for refugees which is another group of vulnerable migrants.

**Mr. Chairman,**

It will be remiss of my delegation not to extend our appreciation to the achievements of the Organisation during the stewardship of His Excellency Ambassador Swing. These were realized in the face of immense financial and economic sluggishness, as well as varying man-made challenges and natural disasters testing on IOM during Ambassador Swing's tenure of office to date. Lesotho, therefore, encourages IOM to maintain course on this path and is confident of the ability of the Director General to steer the ship on course. I wish to assure you of the support of my delegation in this regard.

Last, but not least, Lesotho regards the Second High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development as timely convened in the face of modern day migration flows. There is no doubt that periodic reflections are essential in meeting the realities of the day. It is, therefore, our wish to see IOM play a significant role at this United Nations initiative given the Organisation's expertise and knowledge in migration matters.

In conclusion, allow me to take this opportunity to congratulate you **Mr. Chairman**, and members of your Bureau, for the commendable manner in which you steered the work of this Session since your election on Tuesday. The delegation of Lesotho has no doubt that the 101<sup>st</sup> Session will come to a closure in the same *tempo*.

**I thank you for your attention**