



**SPEECH BY MANZINI MAYOR, HIS LORDSHIP COUNCILLOR KHETHOKUHLE DLAMINI DURING
THE LAUNCH OF THE WOMEN IN CROSS-BORDER TRADE ASSOCIATION – TUESDAY, 9TH AUGUST 2016 –
THE GEORGE HOTEL – 11am**

- HONOURABLE MINISTER OF COMMERCE, INDUSTRY AND TRADE
 - PRINCIPAL SECRETARY IN THE SAME MINISTRY
 - REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNDP
 - MANZINI REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR
 - SWAZILAND REVENUE AUTHORITY COMMISSISONER GENERAL
 - DEPUTY MAYOR
 - PRESIDENT OF THE WOMEN IN CROSS BORDER TRADE ASSOCIATION
 - MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION
 - LADIES AND GENTLEMEN
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- IT GIVES ME GREAT PLEASURE TO BE AFFORDED AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A FEW REMARKS DURING THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF SUCH AN IMPORTANT ASSOCIATION; THE WOMEN IN CROSS BORDER TRADE ASSOCIATION. THIS IS THE FIRST OF ITS KIND NOT ONLY IN MANZINI BUT THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI.
 - TO US, THIS LAUNCH IS VERY IMPORTANT BECAUSE IT SPEAKS TO THE ISSUE OF WOMEN; A GENDER THAT HAS ALWAYS BEEN MARGINALISED IN ALMOST ALL SPHERES OF LIFE YET THEY PLAY A VERY IMPORTANT ROLE IN SOCIETY.
 - THE IMPORTANT ROLE THAT WOMEN PLAY IN DRIVING CROSS BORDER TRADE AND FUELING THE ECONOMY OF SWAZILAND IS THERE FOR ALL OF US TO SEE. THE CITY OF MANZINI IS A PERFECT EXAMPLE OF THE POWER OF WOMEN IN DRIVING AN ECONOMY. THE OVER 3000 INFORMAL TRADERS THAT EXIST IN MANZINI ARE DOMINATED BY THE FEMALE GENDER. AT BEND N’ PICK ALONE, ONE OF MANZINI’S MOST THRIVING INFORMAL CROSS BORDER TRADE SECTOR, WE ARE TALKING OF OVER 400 WOMEN.
 - AS THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF MANZINI WE HAVE SEEN AND CAN ATTEST TO THE IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN TRADE. EMPOWERING WOMEN IN INFORMAL TRADE HAS A POSITIVE MULTIPLIER EFFECT ON POVERTY REDUCTION, ECONOMIC GROWTH, IMPROVEMENT IN GOVERNMENT AND MUNICIPAL REVENUE AS WELL AS EMPLOYMENT CREATION. THAT IS WHY WE HAVE OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS INVESTED A LOT OF RESOURCES TOWARDS EMPOWERING INFORMAL TRADERS THROUGH ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING AS PART OF OUR LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME.

- WHAT MAKES US EVEN MORE EXCITED BY THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THIS ASSOCIATION IS THAT IT WILL MAKE COMMUNICATION AND STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING EVEN EASIER. AS THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF MANZINI WE ARE NOT IN THE HABIT OF TAKING DECISIONS THAT AFFECT STAKEHOLDERS WITHOUT FIRST ENGAGING THEM. EXPERIENCE HAS TAUGHT US THAT IT IS MUCH EASIER TO MANAGE RELATIONS WHEN YOU DEAL WITH GROUPED STAKEHOLDERS THAN HAVING TO COMMUNICATE WITH THEM INDIVIDUALLY. THEREFORE, THE LAUNCH OF WOMEN IN CROSS BORDER TRADE ASSOCIATION MARKS THE BIRTH OF YET ANOTHER IMPORTANT STAKEHOLDER GROUPING IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR VIBRANT CITY.
- WE HOPE THAT THE EXISTENCE OF THIS ASSOCIATION WILL MAKE WOMEN WHO ARE INVOLVED IN CROSS BORDER TRADE SPEAK WITH ONE VOICE SO THAT ALL THE CHALLENGES THAT THEY FACE AS THEY PLY THEIR TRADE IN OUR CITY CAN BE ADDRESSED AMICABLY. OUR GOAL IS TO MAKE THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT IN MANZINI FOR BOTH FORMAL AND INFORMAL TRADE AS CONDUCIVE AS POSSIBLE.
- AS A RESULT, WE DO PLEDGE OUR FULL SUPPORT TO THE ASSOCIATION AND WISH IT ALL THE DESIRED SUCCESS GOING FORWARD.

I THANK YOU