

ACCEPTANCE SPEECH DELIVERED BY MR. RETSELISITSOE KHETSI, PRINCIPAL SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT DURING THE SADC ELS MEETING OF SENIOR OFFICIALS AND SOCIAL PARTNERS, HELD AT MANTHABISENG CONVENTION CENTER, MASERU 31 MARCH TO 3 APRIL 2008.

DIRECTOR OF CEREMONIES, ALLOW ME IN THE SESOTHO TRADITION TO PAY MY RESPECTS AND HOMAGE TO;

- **HIS MAJESTY KING LETSIE III**
- **THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE PRIME MINISTER**
- **THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER**
- **HONOURABLE MINISTERS OF HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT, ESPECIALLY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT WHO IS WITH US TO GRACE THIS IMPORTANT OCCASION, HONOURABLE NTATE REFILOE MOSES MASEMENE**
- **COLLEAGUES PRINCIPAL/PERMANENT SECRETARIES/DIRECTORS GENERAL**
- **DIRECTOR, ILO SUB-REGIONAL OFFICE, HARARE**
- **AMBASSADORS**
- **DISTINGUISHED REPRESENTATIVES OF ORGANISED BUSINESS AND LABOUR**
- **DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES**
- **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**

It is my distinct honour and special privilege to address and make an acceptance speech to this august body of the SADC ELS meeting of Senior Official and Social Partners. I accept with great enthusiasm and humility, on the honour you have bestowed upon Lesotho to Chair the SADC ELS of Senior Officials and Social Partners.

I accept the challenges of chairing the Officials and Social Partners Sector and I will endeavour to achieve whatever you mandate me to do, of course with your support.

Our Chairmanship comes at the challenging time when the winds of change are blowing within the SADC. It is therefore imperative that we flow with the tide otherwise we will drown. One President of the United States once said **“the only limit to realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today”**.

When our Principals conceived the revival of SADC ELS, they had a mission. It is therefore incumbent upon us to fulfil that vision and mission.

Before I conclude, let me pay tribute to my colleague and friend, outgoing Chairperson of the Official's and Social Partners Sector, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Zambia, Mr. Ngosa Chisupa. Through your visionary leadership and perseverance we have been able to have a vibrant and functioning SADC ELS. I therefore call upon all of you to commend the PS and his team for the job well done. I must also pass my sincere gratitude to the Social Partners, organised labour and organised business, for their cooperation, because without your cooperation the SADC ELS would just be an unfulfilled dream. An unfulfilled dream becomes a nightmare. Who amongst you would like to have a nightmare? None, I guess.

With those few words, Honourable Minister and Distinguished Delegates, I accept the honour you have bestowed upon me to Chair SADC ELS Committee of Officials and Social Partners on behalf of Lesotho for the next twelve months. With your unwavering support we will be able to move the SADC ELS to the new heights.

I thank you for your kind attention.

