



Remarks by the Acting Commissioner General Mrs. Idia Penane at the sporting event to commemorate the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace (IDSDP) held at the Maseru Club on Friday, 7th April 2017.

Good morning colleagues;

Today we are making history for being the 1st organization in Lesotho to join the International Community in commemorating the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace (IDSDP) under the theme **"We Play Together"**. April 6 was declared the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace by the United Nations General Assembly in 2013, and has been celebrated each year ever since 2014. The adoption of this Day signifies the increasing recognition by the United Nations of the positive influence that sport can have on the advancement of human rights, and social and economic development.

In post-conflict situations, sport programmes are systematically used by UN peacekeeping operations and UN country teams as a "door opener" to rebuild trust by bringing together former opponents, and to re-integrate ex-combatants into the civil communities. This clearly shows the power of sport. As an organisation we do have problems of our own and we shall continue to experience such but that does not make us enemies or opponents. We shall remain united because it is only through such unity that we can overcome whatever difficulties that may come our way.

Let's stick by one another; let's play together and remember, those are characteristics of what we call a TEAM that we are. So we chose to

commemorate this Day because we have a strong believe in the power of sport in strengthening unity within a team. Sport has a unique power to attract, mobilize and inspire. We have just missed our revenue targets and I know and understand how disappointed many of you are hence we needed this more than any other time. We needed something that would help us re-focus. Its intrinsic values such as teamwork, fairness, discipline, respect for the opponent and the rules of the game are globally understood and can be harnessed in the advancement of solidarity, social cohesion and peaceful coexistence.

The Special Advisor to the former UN Secretary General on Sport for Development and Peace, Wilfried Lemke, once said; *“Sport has the capacity to empower individuals and bring one’s moral values to the forefront; it can play a strategic role in transferring life skills and communicating useful, encouraging messages on important issues, thus driving social change. This new commemoration on the international calendar will further promote the value of sport as a catalyst for development and peace.”*

According to the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group, sport is seen to have the most benefits in:

- Individual development;
- Health promotion and disease prevention;
- Promotion of gender equality;
- Social integration and the development of social capital;
- Peace building and conflict prevention/resolution;
- Post-disaster/trauma relief and normalisation of life;
- Economic development; and
- Communication and social mobilisation.

Colleagues, ladies and gentlemen today is not the day for speeches but for action, so mine is just to ensure that ***We Play Together*** therefore let the games begin!!

I Thank You