

Communique by SADC Facilitator Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa: Maseru Facilitation Declaration

02 October 2014

Your Excellency Prime Minister Tom Thabane
Honourable Deputy Prime Minister Mothejoa Metsing
Honourable Chief Thesele Maseribane
Honourable Monyane Moleleki
Honourable Vincent Malebo
SADC Deputy Executive Secretary Dr Thabang Mhlongo
Special Envoy Of The Commonwealth, Dr Prasad
Senior SADC Officials
Members of The Diplomatic Corps present here today
Members of the Media
Ladies and Gentlemen
All Protocol observed

The SADC Double Troika of Heads of States and Government plus DRC and Tanzania meeting in Pretoria on 15 September 2014 mandated us as the SADC Facilitation Mission, to facilitate dialogue among all political and other role players in the Kingdom of Lesotho as part of efforts to assist the country to return to constitutional normalcy, political stability and restoration of peace and security.

In this context, the SADC Troika meeting in Pretoria built upon decisions of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security meeting held in Windhoek under the leadership of President of the Republic of Namibia, Hifikipunye Pohamba.

The decisions of the Organ were subsequently endorsed during the SADC Summit of Heads of States and Government held in Victoria Falls in August 2014.

In pursuance of these objectives, we have over the past few weeks paid several official visits to the Kingdom. In this regard, we have paid courtesy call on His Majesty King Letsie III.

We consulted with Coalition partners in government.

We met all opposition political parties, the College of Chiefs, the IEC, the Council of Churches as well as the Non-Governmental Organisation. We also had an occasion to brief the Special Envoy of the Commonwealth, Dr Prasad.

During our meetings, we had an opportunity to share the SADC Terms of Reference with all political and other role players.

These terms of reference form the SADC Troika mandate which guide our facilitation process in Lesotho with a view to finding a lasting solution to the current security challenges and ensure the restoration of political stability and security.

Having canvassed these issues among all political and other role players within the Kingdom of Lesotho, I was encouraged by their patriotism and determination to act within the mandate of

SADC and to move their country and its people out of the current political and security challenges.

In this regard and following consultations, I am pleased to announce that an agreement has been reached with the majority of political stakeholders as follows:

1. His Majesty, King Letsie III, will reconvene parliament on 17 October 2014.

The sitting of parliament will be limited to the passing of a budget and all other related matters regarding the holding of elections.

2. National General Elections will be held towards the end of February 2015 and on a date to be set by His Majesty.

3. Parliament will be dissolved at the beginning of December 2014 to prepare for the holding of the general elections

4. All political parties represented in parliament are called upon to recognize their responsibility to the people of the Kingdom of Lesotho, to respect the Constitution, uphold democratic principles and secure the restoration of peace and of political stability and security in the Kingdom of Lesotho

5. All the citizens of the Kingdom of Lesotho, including non-governmental organisations, all other role-players, traditional, civic and religious are called upon to support this critical endeavour for the restoration of peace and political stability and security in the Kingdom of Lesotho.

6. The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) will be expected to conduct these elections on a free and fair basis. The SADC will assist the IEC in its efforts to hold credible, free and fair elections

May I take this opportunity to extend my gratitude and indeed that of SADC Heads of States and Government, to His Majesty King Letsie III for his support and guidance.

Our gratitude also goes to the Coalition parties led by Prime Minister Tom Thabane, leaders of all political parties in Lesotho and other role-players for their role in helping to bring this agreement to fruition and putting the interests of the country and people first.

I thank you

Source: The Republic of South Africa Presidency,
<http://www.thepresidency.gov.za/pebble.asp?reid=18118>