

**Statement by the Hon. Minister Prince
Hlangusemphi to the Seventh
Conference of African Ministers in
Charge of Integration Expert Meeting**

14th July 2014

**Your Excellency, Dr. Anthony Maruping,
Commissioner for Economic Affairs,
African Union Commission**

**Ambassadors and Commissioners present
Heads of Delegations;**

Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Distinguished invited guests;

Delegates and

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I greet you all and further warmly welcome all of you to The Kingdom of Eswatini, on the 7th Conference of African Ministers in Charge of Integration.

Africa's leaders have long recognized the importance of economic integration as a remedy for the continent's fragmentation.

Sixteen of the fifty four memberstates are landlocked, therefore struggling to achieve economies of scale required to become competitive internationally and challenges associated with small size markets.

That is why, through successive agreements, African government have committed themselves to pursue greater integration. Our quest has been more on trade and trade without infrastructure is a none starter.

Swaziland has joined the bandwagon in that a King Mswati III International Airport has been completed, and an International Convention Center with a five star hotel is under construction. The airport is able to accommodate a landing giant aircrafts and the convention centre to accommodate over a thousand delegates. These developments complement the very same idea of infrastructure for integration of Africa.

Swaziland did not plan and spend so much money for only internal use, but for ease of mixing not only with the rest of Africa but to expand Africa's international market.

Africa, like all other continents is going through phases of development; the strategies to accelerate the development include the Post 2015 Development Agenda, the Common African Position on 2015, the African Agenda 2063, and many more.

These are as a results of challenges that constrains the effective acceleration of development and the integration agenda of the African continent

Infrastructure development is therefore key, and has no effect if implemented in isolation. There is therefore need for integration of African states.

This conference could not have come at a better time, where more decisive action is needed to turn around the likes of broad based development, sharing of opportunities, managing of risks, reducing poverty as well as production and wealth creation into tangible gains for Africa.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Swaziland is not only proud to be the host of a meeting of this magnitude, but also committed to adhere to the resolutions taken herewith. Resolutions taken at this meeting will go a long way in developing our countries through job creation and poverty reduction. For any country to achieve peace and stability, economic growth is a requirement and growth is linked to infrastructure development, therefore

integration with member states is key in achieving that.

May I wish you successful deliberations on this important conference and I have confidence that the outcome of this meeting will meet the favourable consideration of the Hon. Ministers in pursuit of African unity through integration.

I thank You

God Bless You