PRIME MINISTER’S STATEMENT

COVID-19 RESPONSE ADDITIONAL MEASURES

His Majesty King Mswati III and Ingwenyama has commanded Government to introduce a partial lockdown on selected sectors of the economy to curtail the spread of coronavirus with effect from 27 March 2020. His Majesty emphasises that the economy must continue to be strong and robust to ensure that the partial lockdown does not ground the Kingdom.

The increasing number of confirmed cases in the country calls for all of us to be vigilant and responsible in all our actions in order to quickly turn the tide against this rampaging virus. His Majesty has therefore commanded that the King’s birthday Resource Mobilisation Committee should now fundraise for COVID-19.

Through the counsel of His Majesty, Government has established Emergency coordination structures that will implement the COVID-19 Emergency Plan. These committees include a Cabinet sub-committee, Emergency Task Force, Regional and Sector Committees. They have now hit the ground running, working on effective response measures to contain the spread of the virus across our communities. May I pass my gratitude to the Deputy Prime Minister and all members of these committees for their devotion and dedication to this cause. I applaud all EmaSwati who continue to heed to health precautions to combat coronavirus and adhere to measures introduced by Government to curb the spread of this pandemic. My gratitude all goes to all the companies that have poured in resources to support the fight against COVID-19.

The partial lockdown that is being introduced today entails the following:

1. From Friday 27 March 2020, for 20 days, all unnecessary movements and visits outside the perimeters of your home or residence are restricted except to provide or acquire essential services such as healthcare, food, or banking services, and for the personnel performing such services.
2. We encourage all employers to allow as many employees as possible to work from home.
3. Essential Industries are expected to continue operating while observing the proper hygiene standards that will protect employees from the pandemic. Government will engage further to ensure that proper hygiene measures are complied with. The Ministry of Commerce will provide guidance on which industries fall under essential services.
4. Following the announcement by the South African Government of a lockdown, Government advises that only goods and cargo as well as returning citizens and legal residents will be allowed through our borders. Returning citizens and residents will be subjected to a mandatory 14 days quarantine at designated locations except for those who are able to self-isolate.
5. Non essential travel between towns, cities and regions of the country is not permitted, except for medical reasons or to provide or acquire essential services. Transport of food and goods will be allowed.

6. Employers need to ensure that worker density in the workplace is not more than one person per square metre. Employers are expected to provide facilities for employees to wash their hands before entering the workplace, every two hours and upon leaving the workplace.

7. Electronic payments and online banking services should be used, where possible, rather than physically visiting banks or ATMs. Elderly grants shall be disbursed through electronic payment system henceforth.

8. Public transport will only operate for essential movement and with one (1) meter distance between passengers.

9. All bars are closed. Bottle stores will be allowed to operate from 11am – 6pm on Mondays to Saturdays. Police will be vigilant in closing illegal drinking spots and shebeens.

10. In all food outlets and banks, the public is restricted to 20 individuals and a distance of 1-2 meters between each other.

11. All public gatherings of more than 20 people are prohibited. For purpose of this paragraph, public gatherings include but not limited to: religious activities, sports events, conferences, wedding celebrations, music concerts, parties, gymnasiums, or other activities or place where the public gathers.

12. Food and goods will be allowed across borders

13. The army and the police will be deployed to ensure compliance with all these measures. Chiefs and traditional authorities will take a leading role in enforcing these measures in their communities.

14. Government is fast tracking regulations that will enforce stiff penalties on would be defaulters.

Government fully understands that the global spread of COVID-19 has caused anxiety and, in some instances, panic. May I appeal that we all take this threat seriously and follow international best practice and advice from the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organisation (WHO) to slow the spread of the virus. We must avoid unnecessary panic as the situation will be normalised if each citizen continues to play their role and abide by these measures and health precautions.

Government understands that the introduction of these measures may cause some inconvenience, and hurt the economy but the safety and health of all EmaSwati is the ultimate priority. Government is working closely with the private sector to find solutions to mitigate the negative impact of this pandemic on business. May I strongly warn against overpricing of goods and services by retailers at this time. His Majesty views these tough times as an opportunity for EmaSwati to work towards self sufficiency and sustainability in food production, energy and other products.

Once again, I would like to emphasize that all of us should follow the precautionary guidelines as provided by the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organisation. These include:

- Keeping the home environment clean and safe and disinfecting all high touch surfaces regularly.
- Stop shaking hands and use other non touch methods of greeting.
- Maintain a distance of at least 1 metre from each other.
- Wash hands regularly with running water and soap or use alcohol based sanitisers.
- Create habits and reminders to avoid touching your face (mouth, nose, eyes) and cover coughs and sneezes.
- Take care of the vulnerable, especially senior citizens and those with underlying respiratory conditions who are more susceptible to the coronavirus infection.
- If you experience flu like symptoms (fever, difficulty breathing, cough, high temperature) visit your nearest health centre facility or call the Emergency Medical Services Toll free line 977.
This is a time to unite to fight this common enemy. EmaSwati should admonish each other to ensure compliance with all the measures announced by Government.

May I assure the nation that Government is committed to emerge victorious against this health threat and all necessary resources are directed to the efforts of accelerating our response. I further appeal to the public to rely on credible information that will be disseminated by Government through established communication channels and through the media and reject misinformation from any other source, especially social media.

Government appreciate the guidance and counsel we continue to receive from His Majesty the King as we continue to tackle this pandemic.

Thank you.

Ambrose Mandvulo Dlamini
PRIME MINISTER
24 March 2020

The importance of the Kingdom of Eswatini attain self sufficiency in the following areas;

- Home grown products and buy local
- In electricity supply
- Promote home made sanitizer

Learn from the success of other countries in combating the virus including Taiwan and Cuba.

Lockdown should be considerate. Lets have programmes in place structured in such a way that economy.

Measures for transport and monitoring at the bus ranks

Leverage on the global lockdown to produce our own and even sell to the world.