

**REMARKS BY
HIS MAJESTY AND CHANCELLOR, KING LETSIE III**

**ON THE OCCASION OF
THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF
NUL COUNCIL**

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF LESOTHO

26TH JANUARY, 2012

**HONOURABLE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING,
CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL,
DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF COUNCIL,
VICE CHANCELLOR,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,**

AS USUAL, I FEEL HONOURED AND PRIVILEGED TO PERFORM THIS IMPORTANT DUTY OF OPENING THIS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL. BEFORE GOING FURTHER, ALLOW ME TO WISH YOU ALL – ALBEIT RATHER BELATEDLY – A VERY HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR. MAY I ALSO BE PERMITTED TO EXTEND A WARM WELCOME TO ALL THE MEMBERS OF THIS AUGUST BODY, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO HAVE TRAVELLED LONG DISTANCES TO BE HERE. I WISH TO THANK YOU ALL FOR HAVING SACRIFICED YOUR PRECIOUS TIME AND OTHER COMMITMENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS MEETING. I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THIS COMING YEAR WILL CONTINUE TO BE A VERY CHALLENGING ONE FOR YOU AS THE ADMINISTRATORS AND MANAGERS OF THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF LESOTHO. THEREFORE, I WISH AND PRAY FOR THE ALMIGHTY TO GIVE EACH AND

EVERYONE OF YOU THE NECESSARY COURAGE, STRENGTH AND WISDOM AS YOU CARRY OUT YOUR ONEROUS DUTIES.

CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL, ONE DOES NOT NEED TO REMIND THIS AUGUST GATHERING OF ITS RESPONSIBILITY AS THE SUPREME GOVERNING BODY OF THIS UNIVERSITY. SUFFICE IT TO MENTION THAT, IN TERMS OF THE NUL ACT AS AMENDED, IT IS THE DUTY OF THE COUNCIL TO **“GOVERN, MANAGE AND REGULATE THE FINANCES, ACCOUNTS, INVESTMENTS, PROPERTY, BUSINESS AND ALL AFFAIRS WHATSOEVER OF THE UNIVERSITY...”**. WE ARE GATHERED HERE THIS MORNING TO EXECUTE THIS MANDATE. CONSEQUENTLY, I WISH TO IMPLORE YOU, DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF COUNCIL, TO GO THROUGH THE AGENDA OF THE MEETING WITH THE SERIOUSNESS AND DILIGENCE IT DESERVES, AND WITHOUT FEAR OR RESTRAINT. THE REPORTS YOU ARE JUST ABOUT TO SCRUTINISE WILL REQUIRE YOU TO BE GUIDED BY THE VALUED PRINCIPLES OF TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY. WITHOUT THESE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES IN THE EXECUTION OF YOUR MANDATE, GOOD GOVERNANCE WILL REMAIN A DISTANT DREAM, AND, CONSEQUENTLY, WE WILL FAIL TO ACHIEVE OUR MUCH DESIRED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.

CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL,
DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF COUNCIL,
VICE CHANCELLOR,

THIS MEETING REPRESENTS AN IMPORTANT MILESTONE FOR THIS COUNCIL IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE. I AM INFORMED THAT THIS IS THE FIRST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SINCE THIS COUNCIL WAS INSTITUTED ABOUT ONE AND HALF YEARS AGO. THIS MEANS THAT A CALENDAR YEAR WENT PAST WITHOUT THIS COUNCIL HOLDING AN ANNUAL MEETING CONTRARY TO A STATUTORY REQUIREMENT THAT COUNCIL SHOULD HOLD AN ANNUAL MEETING IN EACH CALENDAR YEAR OR WITHIN FIFTEEN (15) MONTHS OF THE PRECEDING ANNUAL MEETING. THE LAST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING WAS HELD IN APRIL 2008. CLEARLY THIS RECORD DOES NOT AUGER WELL FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE AND FIDUCIARY ROLE OF THIS BODY.

THIS MEETING ALSO REPRESENTS A HISTORIC MILESTONE IN THE SENSE THAT IT IS NOT USUAL TO PRESENT THREE CONSECUTIVE AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF AN ORGANIZATION AT ONE SITTING. BECAUSE THE CURRENT MANAGEMENT IS DETERMINED TO

RESTORE ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE NATION'S ONLY PUBLIC UNIVERSITY, YOU WILL HAVE THESE REPORTS TABLED BEFORE YOU FOR CONSIDERATION AND NECESSARY DIRECTION. AT THIS JUNCTURE, I WOULD LIKE TO APPLAUD PROFESSOR SHARON SIVERTS AND HER TEAM FOR THEIR EFFORTS IN TRYING TO IMPROVE THE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF OUR INSTITUTION. THESE POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS SIGNAL A RAY OF HOPE FOR BOTH THE WORK OF COUNCIL AND THE UNIVERSITY. IT IS AN UNDENIABLE FACT THAT UNLESS THE BACKLOG OF AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS IS CLEARED, IT WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR THE UNIVERSITY'S MANAGEMENT TO DEMONSTRATE FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY TO ITS STAKEHOLDERS AND AS A RESULT THIS WILL LIMIT THE UNIVERSITY'S POTENTIAL TO ATTRACT EXTERNAL SOURCES OF FUNDING. IT IS, THEREFORE, CRUCIAL TO BEAR THIS RELATIONSHIP IN MIND AS YOU DELIBERATE ON THE AGENDA OF THIS ANNUAL MEETING.

DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF COUNCIL,

THIS COUNCIL MEETING BEARS YET ANOTHER SIGNIFICANT IMPORTANCE IN THAT IT IS TAKING PLACE ON THE THRESHOLD OF A

FULL SCALE RESTRUCTURING. IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THE MOMENTUM AND INTERGRITY OF THE RESTRUCTURING PROCESS, IT IS IMPERATIVE FOR THIS DISTINGUISHED BODY TO MAKE DECISIONS THAT WILL ENABLE AND EMPOWER THE MANAGEMENT TO MOVE FORWARD WITH THE AGENDA OF RESTORING THE IMAGE OF THE UNIVERSITY AND MAKE IT A RESPECTABLE, RELEVANT, AND VIABLE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER LEARNING AT THE NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND GLOBAL LEVEL.

**VICE-CHANCELLOR, AND
DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF COUNCIL,**

IT WOULD BE REMISS OF ME TO CONCLUDE MY REMARKS WITHOUT TOUCHING, EVEN IF ONLY IN PASSING, ON THE ISSUE OF LABOUR DISPUTES THAT DID NOT ONLY PUT THE UNIVERSITY IN THE MEDIA LIMELIGHT IN RECENT MONTHS, BUT ALSO THREATENED THE VERY CORE OF ITS BUSINESS. AS THE SUPREME BODY WHICH GIVES GUIDANCE TO THE RUNNING OF THE UNIVERSITY, COUNCIL SHOULD NOT ALLOW DISPUTES OR WHATEVER MISUNDERSTANDINGS TO DETERIORATE TO A LEVEL WHERE THE UNIVERSITY IS BROUGHT TO A STANDSTILL. IT IS, HOWEVER, GRATIFYING TO LEARN THAT TEACHING

AND LEARNING HAVE RESUMED AND THAT THE UNIVERSITY HAS BEEN RUNNING SMOOTHLY SINCE THE 3RD OF JANUARY WHEN CLASSES RESUMED. LET ME IMPLORER ALL CONCERNED TO ENSURE THAT THESE EFFORTS ARE SUSTAINED IN THE INTEREST OF STUDENTS, THE UNIVERSITY AND THE NATION AT LARGE. IT IS EQUALLY GRATIFYING TO LEARN THAT MANAGEMENT HAS PUT IN PLACE A COMPREHENSIVE RECOVERY PLAN TO ENSURE THAT TIME LOST IS REGAINED TO THE FULLEST EXTENT POSSIBLE. IN ANY ORGANISATION, CALM AND STABILITY ARE ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS OF ITS SUCCESS. THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF LESOTHO IS NOT AN EXCEPTION, AND WE ALL KNOW THAT IT DESPARATELY NEEDS THESE INGREDIENTS IF WE ARE TO REACH OUR GOALS.

MADAM VICE CHANCELLOR,

IT IS WORTH STATING THE OBVIOUS AND THAT IS, STUDENTS ARE THE VERY REASON WHY THE UNIVERSITY HAS VARIOUS CATEGORIES OF STAFF AND EMPLOYEES. IT, THEREFORE, STANDS TO REASON THAT THEIR INTERESTS MUST BE SAFEGUARDED AND MUST LIE AT THE

HEART OF THE UNIVERSITY'S OPERATIONS. ANY ACT OR BEHAVIOUR
LIKELY TO DEVIATE FROM THIS FACT MUST NOT BE ACCEPTED.

**CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL,
DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,**

LET ME CONCLUDE MY REMARKS BY WISHING YOU FRUITFUL AND
CONSTRUCTIVE DELIBERATIONS IN THIS COUNCIL MEETING. IT IS NOW
MY SINGULAR HONOUR AND PLEASURE TO DECLARE THIS ANNUAL
GENERAL MEETING OF COUNCIL OPEN.

KHOTSO ! PULA ! NALA!!