

GOVERNMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI



PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

**STATEMENT BY H.E. THE RIGHT HON. PRIME MINISTER
MR. AMBROSE MANDVULO DLAMINI**

**AT THE LAUNCH OF THE UNAIDS 2020 GLOBAL AIDS
REPORT”**

**VIRTUAL ADDRESS
MBABANE
MONDAY 06 JULY 2020**

I am pleased to join you all today for the launch of the 2020 UNAIDS Global Report. This report comes at a time when we are confronting two pandemics which have shaped modern life. The AIDS pandemic changed the world in many ways 40 years ago. Today the COVID-19 pandemic is changing society and the way we relate to each other.

However, much as the world's attention is rightly focused on COVID-19, we must not forget the AIDS response. There is much to do, and it must be done. We can and will end the AIDS epidemic.

I am particularly pleased to be with you today, because Eswatini is a shining example of what can be achieved when we put our minds together. The Kingdom once lived through a wave of increasing new HIV infections and many people dying from AIDS.

Today, the Kingdom is proud that the UNAIDS report shows that we are on course to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030. Our success comes because of the extraordinary and innovative efforts taken by the country over the years.

Eswatini has well surpassed the Global target of 90-90-90. In fact, we have achieved 95-95-95. This means 95% of people living with HIV in the Kingdom know their status, 95% of all people who know their status are accessing HIV treatment and of the people on treatment 95% have achieved viral suppression. We have drastically reduced AIDS-related deaths by 50% from 6600 in

2010 to 2300 in 2019 and reduced new HIV infections by 50% from 13000 in 2010 to 6500 in 2019.

As a country, we have been able to mobilize and reach young men who have played a significant role in breaking the cycle of new HIV infections. We have introduced innovations, reprogrammed our approaches to ensure that we tailor our responses in the right places. Our communities have taken the lead and they have helped to shape our response.

But we cannot rest on our successes. We must ensure that no one is left behind. We must close the gaps. We are aiming for 100-100-100. In the coming years, we will expand our programmes on voluntary medical male circumcision, programmes to reach young women and girls, bring more innovations to our HIV prevention efforts and transform gender relations.

We have not done this alone. The Kingdom has received support from our partners such as PEPFAR, Global Fund, UNAIDS and other development and bilateral partners. It is important that the AIDS response drive continues with the principle of Global Solidarity, Shared Responsibility.

The COVID-19 pandemic response can learn from the AIDS movement. We must apply the lessons learnt. And we must eradicate inequality. Everyone has a right to health, with dignity and respect and we have a collective responsibility to make it happen.

Thank you