

PRESS STATEMENT

**RE : (i) DEPARTURE OF HON. MOTHEJOA METSING FROM LESOTHO
(ii) ALLEGATIONS OF THE TORTURE OF HON. TS'ELISO MOKHOSI**

It has come to the attention of the Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho that the Honourable Mothejoa Metsing MP, the Member of Parliament for Mahobong constituency and the Leader of the Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) has left Lesotho alleging that :

1. His life is in danger from possible agents of the Lesotho Government.
2. His deputy Hon. Ts'eliso Mokhosi who is currently in police custody has been subjected to torture and ill treatment.

The Lesotho Government wishes to make the following clear. We are saddened and deeply disappointed that a person of the standing of the Honourable Metsing, a former Deputy Prime Minister and a respected member of our society, would make such outlandish and patently false allegations.

The Government of Lesotho understands and accepts its fundamental responsibility to endeavor to protect the life of every citizen of Lesotho. This is a responsibility which we take very seriously. There can therefore never be associated with any plans hatched to harm Mr. Metsing or any other citizen of our country.

At this stage it is unclear what the proposed final destination of Mr. Metsing may be. Nonetheless once we have ascertained his location we will through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Relations contact him and the host government in order to organize a meeting at which we will try to fully understand the circumstances that may have prompted his departure from Lesotho.

In the same breath we wish to confirm that Mr. Ts'eliso Mokhosi remains in police custody. He is a significant person of interest in the ongoing investigations into the death of Police Constable Mokalekale Khetheng. Mr. Mokhosi continues to be well treated by the Lesotho Mounted Police Service and the Lesotho Correctional Services. We invite Amnesty International, the International Society of the Red Cross and all Non Governmental Organizations both in Lesotho and outside to visit Mr. Mokhosi and satisfy themselves that Mr. Mokhosi remains in good health and that all his civil liberties and human rights continue to be respected. It is the view of this Government that the matter of Mr. Mokhosi is a purely criminal matter that has no political element to it.

This Government upon assuming office made an undertaking that no Lesotho would ever need to flee Lesotho, fearing for their life or because of politically motivated persecutions. We therefore ask Mr. Metsing to engage with the Lesotho Government to establish the true reasons for his leaving Lesotho and to cooperate with us in facilitating his safe return.

Joang Felix Molapo
Minister of Communications, Science and Technology
Government Spokesperson