



19-20 JULY 2023  
Royal Swazi Sun

# AML/CFT INDABA

"Countering illicit financial flows to promote  
sustainable economic growth"

## KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Address by Minister for Finance  
Presented by Honourable Neal Rijkenberg



# Protocol

- **Programme Director**
- **Governor of the Central Bank of Eswatini**
- **Members of the AML/ CFT Council and Technical Committee**
- **Chief Executive Officer, Financial Services Regulatory Authority,**
- **Chief Executive Officers, MDs of Financial Institutions,**
- **Senior Government Officials,**
- **Officials of the Mobile Network Operators,**
- **Representatives of the Financial Institutions,**
- **Representatives of Law Enforcements**
- **Representative of various development partners,**
- **Distinguished Guests, and**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**



# Introduction

- Good Morning to you all. First of all, I would like to acknowledge and appreciate the participation of all of you in this important event. I am sure that all of us here are aware of the challenges within the finance space due to emerging financial crimes.

# Objective



- The objective of the Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) Indaba is to raise awareness amongst stakeholders on issues of money laundering and terrorist financing. This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Indaba that is being held in the country, the first one was held in July 2019 and the main purpose of this forum is to dialogue on Anti Money laundering issues and come up with solutions that will assist the country in the fight against Money Laundering and Counter Financing of Terrorism (ML/TF).
- The Ministry of Finance is responsible for AML/CFT policy formulation and implementation of AML/CFT programmes. Money laundering is one of the greatest modern threats to evolving economies striving to open up to the international world. On the back of this, recent events in the international arena have brought a state of heightened tension, with the potential for the perpetration of acts of terrorism a daily threat affecting the lives of humanity across the globe. No country is immune from this.
- It is in the context of these circumstances that Eswatini, realizing that money laundering has a negative impact on the country's economy and image, and has embarked on the action to protect our fragile and emerging economy by enacting a number of pieces of legislation.

# Objective cont...

- The Ministry's role is also to ensure that the country has national AML/CFT policies informed by the risks identified in the financial sector, which should be regularly reviewed and also have a designated authority responsible for such policies. The ML/FT Act of 2011 was promulgated after the country was evaluated by ESAAMLG, a regional body that ensures regional compliance to the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) global standards. The ML/FT Act of 2011 was amended in 2016 to comply with evolving international standards revised by Financial Action Task Force (FATF) which requires countries to comply with its recommendations in order to combat money laundering.
  - In May 2020 the country underwent the second round of Mutual Evaluation which has led to the country working on mitigating the deficiencies that were identified by the assessors.
  - Currently we are working on the review of the National Risk Assessment, the National AML/ CFT Strategy and the review of the AML Law. The government of Eswatini should be able to comply with Recommendation 2 (two) of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) standards which emphasizes that there should be national cooperation and coordination. The country's response to Recommendation 2 was to gazette a National Task Force on AML/CFT consisting of a Council and Technical Committee. However, the Mutual Evaluation reflects that this is just partial compliant to the Recommendation, herein to be further compliant to this standard we have organised this dialogue to strengthen collaboration. The final outcome should be that Eswatini has a proper mechanism to enhance collaboration and coordination in the fight against Money Laundering.
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# The Role of the National Task Force on AML/CFT:

- To develop an anti-money laundering and counter financing of terrorism national Strategic Plan for Eswatini;
- To facilitate collaboration between the stakeholders in the anti- money laundering and counter financing of terrorism;
- To advise the Ministry of Finance on legislative and practical initiatives necessary to secure compliance with international and regional standards in anti- money laundering and counter financing of terrorism;
- To ensure that Government policies on anti- money laundering and counter financing of terrorism are implemented;

- The Ministry's role is also to ensure that policy-makers, the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU), law enforcement authorities, supervisors and other relevant competent authorities, at the policy- making and operational levels, have effective mechanisms in place which enable them to cooperate, and, where appropriate, coordinate domestically with each other concerning the development and implementation of policies and activities to combat money laundering.
  - Through the Task Force, the aforementioned is catered for, and in addition the Task Force is responsible for reporting to ESAAMLG and to develop a National AML/CFT Strategic Plan to which its mandate is executed.
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# Post MER - Short Term objectives

- Following the recent Mutual Assessment, the government through the National Task Force (Council and Technical Committee) has come up with short and long term objectives necessary to combat this pandemic, such as;
  - Conducting and adoption of a National Risk Assessment (ongoing).
  - Review of the Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (Prevention) Act and relevant laws and develop frameworks, such as virtual assets, non profit organizations, ultimate beneficial ownership frameworks which were areas proposed by the assessors (ongoing)
  - Establish an effective AML/CFT regulatory and supervisory regime for all accountable institutions;
  - Enhance communication and sharing of information with all stakeholders;
  - Maintain a well-trained cadre of Mutual Evaluators;





# Short Term objectives cont...

- Develop institutional capacity and intellectual capital.
  - Strengthen cooperation between financial sector regulatory bodies and other government agencies.
  - Adopt international best practices in AML/CFT supervision.
  - Provide supervisory bodies with the necessary resources for carrying out their responsibilities.
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# Post MER – Long Term objectives

- Comply fully with evolving international and regional standards on AML/CFT.
- Collaborate with Regional and International states in combating ML/TF.
- Promote consultative processes between the Government and other stake holders;
- To make Eswatini an attractive investment destination due to low levels of such crimes;
- Mobilize regional and international resources necessary to fight money laundering and the financing of terrorism.



# Conclusion

- With these words allow me to conclude by encouraging everyone to participate fully in this two-day event and to engage diligently, bearing in mind that you will be all shaping the future of the financial sector, to stimulate the growth and integrity of our financial system. I am confident that all of your efforts will prove very valuable for our country. I wish you all a fruitful deliberation.

**Thank you very much!**





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