Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Swaziland
to the United Nations

STATEMENT BY

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OF THE KINGDOM OF SWAZILAND

TO THE UNITED NATIONS

BEFORE THE THIRD COMMITTEE

ON AGENDA ITEM 65: PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

NEW YORK

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Chairperson,

We thank the Secretary-General for his reports and we note the recommendations contained therein. My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by Malawi on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

Chairperson,

The Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland prioritizes the protection and promotion of the rights of children and is party to a number of regional, sub-regional and international instruments and conventions, which shows the seriousness of our commitment to safeguarding the nation’s future leaders and citizens.


A National Children’s Policy was formulated in 2009. This policy is aimed at providing policy guidelines to ensure that appropriate interventions are put in place to adequately care for and protect children. It will also strengthen initiatives focused on the girl child.

Chairperson,

An educated and skilled nation is one that can find the fast track to prosperity. In this regard, our Constitution provides for free primary education to be made available for all our children in public schools. However, we are cognizant that the implementation of this provision is a process and not an event.

The Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland continues to meet the education costs of the orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) of our country. His Majesty King Mswati III has announced an increased allocation of money to the OVC Bursary Fund and Government is collaborating with communities to ensure that the Fund benefits those who are in need.

Furthermore, the Kingdom of Swaziland commemorated the International Day of the Girl Child on 11th October, 2013 with the theme – “Innovating for Girls Education”.

Chairperson,

The Kingdom of Swaziland reaffirms that the family is the natural and fundamental core component of society.
Unfortunately, the traditional extended family which has for a long time been a safety-net for orphaned children is under extreme strain down due to the devastating impact of the HIV and AIDS epidemic. In this regard, our Government is working together with traditional chiefs, religious institutions, communities and civil society to collectively place children at the centre of public policy and ensure that their rights are protected.

However, on a more joyful note the Kingdom of Swaziland can rightfully claim success in reducing the number of babies who contracted HIV from their mothers.

The victory is due to Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV (PMTCT). This accomplishment is all the more impressive because not all births occur in a medically controlled environment like a hospital maternity ward. Many babies are born at home.

Swazi women who give birth to their babies at home may do so because it is a familiar and customary way for them and their families to welcome a new life into their homestead.

Chairperson,

The Kingdom of Swaziland unequivocally condemns and rejects all forms of violence against children and abuse of children. We are deeply concerned that children, especially girls are particularly vulnerable to trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation, child slavery, child prostitution as well as child pornography and acts of paedophilia. Pornography is spreading like a plague as the Internet moves it from the margins of our moral standards to the mainstream. It is evil and it is stealing the innocence of our children. Viewing children for the purpose of sexual gratification should be condemned by all.

Chairperson,

In conclusion, allow me to reaffirm that children are our future and we cannot over-emphasize the need for strengthened international cooperation and broader and more focused partnerships in order to realize all internationally agreed goals on children, including the Millennium Development Goals.

I thank you