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PRESS RELEASE

The Kingdom of Lesotho marks today the Year of Peace and Security in Africa

Friday, 19 November 2010. The Kingdom of Lesotho marked today the Year of Peace and Security in Africa at a celebration during which the Flame of Peace was carried, by the Religious leaders, in a 3 kilometer “March for Peace”, conducted by King Letsie III, from Setsoto Stadium to Moshoeshoe I Statute, in Maseru.

The Flame of Peace is a peace torch that serves as a unifying symbol for all nations committed to bringing about peace on the African Continent, and has become a key component in the commemoration of the Year of Peace and Security in Africa by Member States of the AU.

“How beautiful are the feet of those who bring the message of peace, how beautiful are the feet of those who bring the message of good tidings”, were the words of welcome addressed to Dr. Jean Ping, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, by H.E. the Prime Minister of Lesotho, the Right Honourable Pakalitha Mosisili.

The Basotho people came together on this day, at the main city Stadium and along the streets of Maseru, and across the Mountain Nation, to say the importance of peace and to send the message to all, African and non-African, that Lesotho is determined to succeed at what the entire continent is set out to achieve: **Making Peace Happen in Africa.**

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Dr. Jean Ping, handed over the Flame of Peace to King Letsie III.

In his address, he underscored various positive strides made by Lesotho in enhancing the political and socio-economic development through a sustainable democratic government, the rule of law and the jealous protection of civil liberties strengthened through the ratification of, and adherence to, various African and international conventions, and

encouraged the Basotho nation to continue to live by the values of peace, democracy, respect and fair-mindedness that have won them the esteem and admiration of many.

Having recalled the celebration which marked Peace Day, on 21st September 2010, the Chairperson added that, on that day, Africa showed that peace was possible on the Continent. And it is important for all Africans to continue to work together to ensure that this year is marked by more than a series of symbolic activities, and that it becomes a true catalyst for sustainable peace initiatives on the continent.

The ceremony was graced by an address of His Majesty King Letsie III of Lesotho. Having stressed that Peace is not the monopoly of the few but the responsibility of all mankind, the King expressed the support of the Basotho Nation to the Make Peace Happen campaign, saying that Lesotho remained motivated by the Tripoli solemn call for peace in Africa. Lesotho, he acknowledged, has not remained untouched by issues of peace and stability, but its determination and commitment to make peace happen are inexhaustible. Reflecting on what he called the unfortunate trend of the presence of Lesotho on the Peace and Security agenda of SADC, and warning about the upcoming general elections, due in 2012, he said that: *“Enough, is enough, Peace is possible in Lesotho, Peace is possible in Africa, we can make a difference in the Year of Peace Campaign, in our families, our communities, and in our country”*.

“Lesotho shares with others the duty, as a nation, to be at Peace; let’s make Peace Happen!”
It is with these words that the King concluded his address.