



## **PRESS STATEMENT ON SWAZILAND RESERVES**

In response to stories that were published by internationally based media such as AFP, SAPA, News 24, Sowetan, ANN7 and Cape Times, to the effect that Swaziland has less than **US\$1 million** in reserves, a statement purported to have been extracted from the Central Bank of Swaziland's Monetary Policy Consultative Committee (MPCC) press statement, as a Bank we would like to distance ourselves from these stories and further state that such stories are factually wrong and misleading.

We sincerely apologize to His Majesty the King whose picture was captured along with the story in one of the media, and the entire nation for the malicious and misleading statement. We further wish to assure everyone domestically and internationally who might have read these stories that our reserves remain healthy and have shown steady upward trend since the 2010/11 crisis in line with government fiscal prudential measures.

According to the press statement as issued by the MPCC on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of May 2014 the country's reserves as at the 16<sup>th</sup> May 2014 stood at **E8, 190.4 million** which is equivalent to **E8.19 billion** which the international media reported as **R8.1 million** (where R is the South African Rand currency and E is the Swaziland Emalangeni currency and both currencies are at par). At this level of **E8.19 billion** the gross official reserves were enough to cover 4.1 months of estimated imports of goods and services, which is above the internationally accepted level of 3 months of import cover.

Whilst this could be taken as an error by the Reporters we fail to understand how such a small amount of **R8.1 million** in reserves could be enough to cover 4.1 months of imports as correctly reported by these media. Notwithstanding the possibility of the Reporters being ignorant of what is meant by months of import cover, we strongly believe that the story was deliberately and intentionally fabricated as a smear campaign to tarnish the image of the country.

As a sovereignty nation and the Central Bank we demand an immediate, unconditional apology and retraction of the story from these media. We are currently consulting with our legal team with an intention to take legal action against these implicated media.