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**PRESS STATEMENT BY THE LESOTHO COUNCIL OF NGOS ON THE
PARTICIPATION OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE MEDIATION PROCESSES IN
LESOTHO
20TH AUGUST 2014
MASERU – LESOTHO**

Basotho will recall that following the civil society feedback meeting organised by members of Lesotho Council of NGOs, namely: Development for Peace Education and Action Aid Lesotho on the New Zealand Report at Lesotho Sun on Monday 11th August 2014, which, established the synergies of New Zealand Report, SADC TROIKA processes and South Africa's interest in the Lesotho situation, a delegation of five (5) people; Sofonea Shale, Seabata Motsamai, Sekonyela Mapetja, Thusoana Ntlama and Olivia Gumbo went to Victoria Falls to lobby the SADC TROIKA Summit on the views and position of Civil Society Organisations in regard to addressing Lesotho's political challenges. The involvement of CSOs in this matter is premised on the understanding that the country should work towards being removed from SADC Flash Points.

It should be noted that before the Lesotho CSO delegation could even report on the outcome of its trip, it was pre-empted by the misrepresentation, which we hope you all aware of, and which was later dismissed by the Lesotho Council of NGOs Press Release dated 18th August 2014 as fabricated and unfounded allegations.

Within a framework of the Lesotho Sun Resolution characterised by an identified need for a combination of external and internal mediation processes and necessity to guarantee public participation in all the processes, the delegation presented a letter highlighting the following;

- i. SADC Mediation /Facilitation should ensure that conflicts among the political party leaders are both distinctively and holistically addressed
- ii. Constitutional reforms and transformation of political system
- iii. Importance of public participation in the whole process

- iv. Expansion of South Africa's mandate in case it is given mandate to facilitate Lesotho's political situation to SADC Secretariat.

It is on the basis of a desire to have stable, peaceful and democratic Lesotho, Civil Society Organisations are looking forward for the following cause of actions as a form of further commitment and as such, CSO will engage;

- i. SADC to understand its decision on Lesotho,
- ii. Government of Lesotho to understand its intentions to move forward within the three months period;
- iii. Broader civil society and Basotho nation on these issues.