

Statement by the Kingdom of Lesotho at the 12th Session of the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development

Thematic Discussion: "Public Participation – A Tool for Development"

GENEVA
27-29 October 2025

Mr. Chair,

The Kingdom of Lesotho appreciates this opportunity to contribute to the dialogue on public participation as a vital tool for the realization of the right to development.

As a Least Developed Country, Lesotho recognizes that sustainable development cannot be achieved without the meaningful involvement of our people in decisions that affect their lives. Public participation strengthens accountability, fosters transparency, and ensures that development policies are people-centred and inclusive.

In Lesotho, participatory planning processes are embedded in our National Strategic Development Plan II, where communities, civil society, and the private sector contribute to identifying priorities and monitoring implementation. Our decentralization policy further empowers local councils to engage citizens in shaping local development agendas.

However, as a developing country, we continue to face challenges such as limited financial and technical capacity, geographical barriers, and the need for stronger civic education to enable effective participation.

We therefore call for enhanced international cooperation and capacity-building to support Least Developed Countries in institutionalizing inclusive participation mechanisms as a cornerstone of the right to development.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.