



PRESS RELEASE

The Eswatini Virtual Trade Fair goes live

Mbabane, 29 October 2020 – The Eswatini Virtual Trade Fair 2020/21 (EVTF) officially opened its first exhibition to the public today. The fair will run different exhibitions at scheduled periods over the next 12 months. Exhibitions were started off today with an Agriculture and Farming expo hosted by EIPA, TAITRA, and The Taiwanese and Eswatini embassies in both countries. This included live session streaming that enables anyone anywhere in the world to attend the events in the comfort of their own home or office. The aim of the live session was also to showcase to global markets some of Eswatini's top producers in the sector.

The Eswatini Virtual Trade Fair has an engaging series of activities lined up for online visitors and will be hosted on the BuyEswatini.com website. Visitors can access the virtual trade fair exhibition halls and webinars for free with the final day of the current exhibition culminating in the Lockdown Gospel Music Awards hosted by ACAESWA.

Head of Trade at EIPA, Bongani Ntshangase encouraged the public to participate in the online showcase as a way of gaining exposure to potential business opportunities and industry knowledge, "EIPA is proud to bring the first Eswatini Virtual Trade Fair to the country. Its launch is in the spirit of creating and facilitating trade opportunities in the Kingdom, and beyond our borders, while also empowering an export



Eswatini Investment Promotion Authority

driven economy. It is important that we create platforms for key business operations, logistics and business-to-business meetings. Such platforms introduce efficiencies in business operations and high reduction of costs and working capital. Other operational costs such as travelling, insurance and large stock volumes are eliminated when operating from such online platforms.

Ntshangase continues: “Eswatini is ranked number 1 in Africa in trading across borders in the 2019 World Bank Ease of Doing Business Index. We are also ranked 1st out of 46 countries in the Sub-Saharan Africa region in the 2017 Index of Economic Freedom, and our overall score is above the world average. These rankings show the great potential that our economy has to overcome the challenges which have impacted world markets in recent times. We want consumers and business people to use this platform as a way of empowering themselves with knowledge and extending their business operations in Africa and the rest of the world. Our ultimate aim is to support the need to turn Eswatini into an export driven and private sector led economy with increased trade participation in global markets.”

Today’s Agriculture and Farming expo will be followed by an ICT Fair on 30 October, a series of webinars, product activations and company expo’s as well as a number of business-to-business meetings. A full programme of the upcoming activities can be accessed on BuyEswatini.com.

When speaking on the launch of the Eswatini Virtual Trade Fair and BuyEswatini.com in September this year, Mr. Ntshangase highlighted the importance of thinking differently in order to deal with the effects of COVID-19 and other factors which have impacted the economy, “2020 has been a challenging year for business around the world and Eswatini has been no exception. It is critical that we adapt to new ways of doing business in order for our economy to thrive. These adaptations bring in innovative and efficient ways of doing business never explored or tried before. Making events such as the Eswatini Virtual Trade



Eswatini Investment Promotion Authority

Fair available online opens up our country's marketplace to the world, creating opportunities for Eswatini's local and external trade activity to see an increase in the future."

ENDS

For more information contact:

Thobeka Shongwe: +268 785 49 671

theexecutiveadvisoryfirm@gmail.com

About BuyEswatini.com

"BuyEswatini.com" operates as a permanent virtual catalogue of goods and services offered by traders from all over Eswatini. The site is intended to make local products accessible to all those within and beyond our borders at the click of a button, exposing local goods and services to multiple markets. The site allows visitors to search for specific products per category, view product specification and pictures, compare prices, while also accessing more details from those selling the goods.