**Transcript: Appendix K\_** **Minister of ICT, HRH Princess Sikhanyiso**

[**https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p09n808g**](https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p09n808g)

**Minister** of ICT: Yes, ma’am we are in the Kingdom...

**Interviewer**: And is the King, your father also in the kingdom?

**Minister of ICT**: Yes Ma’am...

**Interviewer**: Uhm, because there were allegations, rumors that he might have left. Did he leave and come back by any chance?

**Minister of ICT**: Not at all. Uhm His Majesty is shattered. He always has been the King. He is a King by his people and he will not be fit to be King if he would leave his country behind for any reason whatsoever.

**Interviewer**: Tell us what is going on today in Swaziland. We’ve been reporting quite extensively about the unrest that has been going on for the last few days. Is it still the case today? What is happening?

**Minister of ICT**: At this stage I am not probably a person who would speak and the world would listen because of my connection to this realm. I state that unabashedly, you might not take my perspective for it, but I will portray the truth and the factual version of what is happening on the ground. This is the sensational view I would call it. What I would like to put out to the world is that we are a Kingdom of peace and we believe in peaceful dialogue. There is under no circumstances that our people would their rights to be infringed upon to present peaceful pleas. Let me the King loves his people and what is happening on the ground is that there is the youth that is growing up they have genuine needs of unemployment of service delivery and overall improved quality of life for the people of Swaziland which we believe in, and this was going all good and well and the petitions were being delivered at the various petition centres. And what ended up happening is that there was a certain group that was appearing at every petition delivery that was creating anarchy and that was threatening the MPs that if these demands do not come to pass that they would return and be violent and aggressive towards them. Secondly there is also the issue of the 3rd wave of COVID coming in and This is why government took the stance to say for the safety of these individuals may we have a virtual submission of the petitions. Never at any point has anyone been forbidden to dialogue. So much so that the acting Prime Minister invited the MPs for a peaceful dialogue at which point they decided to withdraw from the situation and they said they are not willing to negotiate with due to issues of distrust.

**Interviewer**: They say the same we spoke to a parliamentarian yesterday, we spoke to people from various other parties. They say that there is a coalition organizations willing to talk. Of course their position is that they would like to negotiate for a democracy rather than an absolute monarchy. Is that something that your father the King is prepared to negotiate upon?

**Minister of ICT:** I believe the King is open to the views of the people. He’s always said it in his speeches. But what is happening on the ground here is there is no peaceful, there are no marches and factors only arson, looting and abuse of people coercing and EmaSwati to join them in destroying buildings and strategic businesses that sustain the economy of the people.

**Interviewer**: Are you sane that the people who have died, have not been killed by the security forces of Eswatini, they’ve been killed by other people outside? Are you at least acknowledging that there are people who have been killed?

**Minister of ICT:** I am saying to you, that foreign mercenaries have invaded the Kingdom, hired by these people with this agenda, they are carrying out the most heinous of attacks and they set up roadblocks in Police Uniform and Army, Uniform infiltrating the citizens and sending videos of themselves attacking innocent citizens. The order of “*Shoot to kill*” does not come from the King if there is any such order.

**Interviewer**: Is the King going to speak to EmaSwati at all? Going to address them about this?

**Minister of ICT:** At this point, I am not sure if the people who are creating this anarchy here are prepared to speak with us. So I say to you that at that this point, once they show themselves as prepared to have peaceful dialogue, then we can have that conversation.