



MAIN STORIES

A New Government Takes Office

Old Politics Already at Play

HIGHLIGHTS

- Sam Matekane was sworn in as Lesotho's new prime minister on 28 October 2022. He said that his inaugural address represented a social contract in which he promises to make Lesotho "great again." The address was centred on revitalising the economy with a 20-point programme in the first 100 days to mostly address governance weaknesses.
- Matekane paid for his own inauguration and said he would not draw a salary from government.
- The Revolution for Prosperity (RFP), Alliance of Democrats (AD) and Movement for Economic Change (MEC) formally signed an agreement to form a governing coalition. The agreement states that there will be 15 ministers, down from 26 and only 15 principal secretaries. The deputy prime minister comes from the RFP.
- The 15 new ministers are mostly businesspeople and professionals. Matekane will serve as the Minister of Defence, National Security and Environment. The former Chief Justice, Nthomeng Majara was sworn in as the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Law and Justice.
- A plot by the Democratic Congress (DC) to block Matekane's appointment as prime minister collapsed. The first part of the plan was to persuade the RFP's Mahali Phamotse to defect to the DC together with some disgruntled Members of Parliament (MPs). The second phase of the plot was to then test the RFP's support in parliament during the election of a speaker.
- The Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) is in talks to join the new government. The RFP deputy spokesman, Thabo Maretlane, confirmed that they were in talks with the LCD with the aim to reach a two-thirds majority in parliament.
- Former Government Secretary and founding member of the RFP, Tlohang Sekhamane, was elected Speaker of the National Assembly. Mamoheng Mokitimi was re-elected as the President of the Senate.

LESOTHO



- The sitting of parliament on 25 October proceeded as planned, following a High Court ruling, after the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) had earlier filed an urgent application seeking an order interdicting the special parliament session. The IEC said it had incorrectly allocated proportional parliamentary seats, asking the court to amend the allocations and halt the legislature's first sitting.
- A public uproar erupted over Matekane's promise to grant amnesty to people who had stolen government funds. Mokhethi Shelile, the RFP's spokesperson, however, said that the statement has been wrongly interpreted. The idea, Shelile said, is to ensure that the government recovers as much money as possible before it starts prosecuting culprits.
- The World Bank October 2022 Macro Poverty Outlook states that GDP is projected to grow by 2.6% in 2022 and by 2.3% in 2023, with an acceleration to 2.9% by 2024.
- Vodacom Lesotho and the Lesotho Communications Authority (LCA) resolved to negotiate an out of court settlement to their long-running legal battle wherein the authority sought to revoke the mobile communications giant's operating licence.
- Presidents Cyril Ramaphosa, Hage Geingob, Mokgweetsi Masisi and Hakainde Hichilema, as well as Themba Masuku, the deputy prime minister of eSwatini, were in attendance at the inauguration. Rwanda's Prime Minister, Edouarrd Ngirente, also attended.
- United States (US) President Joe Biden sent a high-level delegation to attend the inauguration.

