



PEACE

POLICY ENGAGEMENT ACTION FOR CIVIC EDUCATION

PROMOTING DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES

SUNDAY EXPRESS ISSUE 10 VOL 17. PAGE 10 DATE 15-21, 2025.

Youth Jobs Plan Deserves Clear Oversight, Not Just Applause

The Prime Minister's recent announcement of a 70,000 job youth employment program set to begin on 1 July has stirred both hope and important questions.

As an organization committed to civic education and democratic accountability, **PEACE** welcomes a focus on youth. But we believe Parliament has a duty to ensure such national programs are implemented lawfully, transparently, and inclusively.

This is not a call for opposition but a call for proper democratic participation and processes.

Budget Realignment: What Do the Rules Say?

The Prime Minister and his Cabinet have stated that the program will be funded through allocations in the capital budget, along with a directive that all ministries realign 2% of their annual budgets toward a new Youth Employment Fund.

This approach may be innovative, but innovation must still follow the law. Lesotho's Constitution and Public Financial Management Act require that substantial changes to allocated public funds, particularly across ministries, be authorized through formal channels and procedures.

These rules exist not to frustrate progress, but to protect public money and ensure accountability.

Often, what is perceived as "corruption" may actually be the result of unauthorized reallocation or unclear financial oversight; violations that could have been prevented through proper parliamentary scrutiny.

Parliament is therefore within its rights to seek clarity:

- Has the realignment followed legal viament procedures?
- Who will manage the Youth Fund and report on its spending?
- How will its outcomes be measured and made public?

Transparency here is not a barrier to progress; it is its foundation.

Whose Input Shaped the Plan?

The Prime Minister mentioned that most jobs would come from tourism, agriculture, and public works. Yet many of Lesotho's young people hold qualifications in health, education, IT, law, social sciences, and engineering.

If the youth have not yet been consulted, how were these sectors chosen? And if the program officially starts in weeks, but the youth conference is only now being planned, is the consultation not too late?

Parliament should, as part of its oversight role, request:

- A published implementation framework
- Sector-specific breakdowns of the jobs promised
- Transparent criteria for recruitment and placement

Such questions are not hostile; they are constructive.

Parliament: Protector of Process



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Parliament plays a vital role in shaping public policy and ensuring executive accountability. Its strength lies not in confrontation but in procedure, openness, and legitimacy.

We therefore urge Parliament to:

1. Call for a formal ministerial statement in the National Assembly
2. Review whether financial instructions were properly issued
3. Ensure portfolio committees invite public submissions, especially from youth.

This would reaffirm Parliament's leadership in promoting sound governance and its commitment to a future shaped by dialogue, not by orders.

Youth: Be Heard, Not Just Hired

To Lesotho's young people: this is not only a chance to find work; it is your moment to be part of decision-making.

Here's how you can meaningfully engage with Parliament and national processes:

- **Engage Your MP:** Visit or write to your constituency Member of Parliament (MP) and request that they submit a formal question or motion in the National Assembly regarding the youth employment program. MPs are your voice; make sure they carry your concerns forward.
- **Make Submissions to Committees:** Follow the proceedings of parliamentary portfolio committees, especially those on youth, finance, and planning. These committees often invite written submissions from the public. Use this opportunity to raise your perspectives on the program's fairness, inclusivity, and transparency.
- **Use the Youth Conference as a Policy Forum:** Attend the upcoming youth conference not as an audience, but as active participants. Prepare your views in advance, propose recommendations, and ensure that your sector-specific concerns, especially from tertiary graduates, are formally recorded.
- **Use Civic Platforms:** Work with civic groups like PEACE and others to document your concerns and share them through public forums, community dialogues, or policy briefs that can be tabled with Parliament or ministries.

You don't need to protest to be heard. In a democracy, engagement begins with process, voice, and organization. Your participation is not a favor; it is a right, and it is powerful. You are not passive recipients; you are stakeholders in the country's future.

Leadership by Law

A youth employment program of this scale could help transform Lesotho's economic landscape, but only if built on **consultation, legality, and clear policy.**

Let the Executive show urgency. Let Parliament uphold accountability. And let the youth demand fairness and inclusion.



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About PEACE

PEACE – *Policy Engagement Action for Civic Education* is a civic organization working to strengthen democracy through education, dialogue, and action.

We promote public participation in policy and governance, especially among young people, to ensure that democratic principles remain active, visible, and respected.

Motto: *Promoting Democratic Principles*