

JONATHAN FIRM ON LESOTHO'S STAND
OVER REFUGEES

My Government is aware of the activities of certain elements to attempt to stir up some international criticism of the stand it has recently taken in respect of certain refugees who had been granted asylum in Lesotho.

The Government of Lesotho is prepared to stand or fall purely on judgements based on facts, and will not heed any comments, however vitriolic, if they are based on prejudice or sheer self-interest, moreso, because it is well-known that certain foreign countries have actively supported the refugees in the abuse of the asylum granted to them in Lesotho.

It must be emphasised at this stage that the Lesotho Government will brook no outside interference in this matter and it must warn any who may be misguided into interference that their action could only lead to tougher action on the part of the Lesotho Government.

The world must not forget that some of the states who have in the past been most vocal in protesting against any action to control the abuse of asylum have themselves been most reluctant to grant asylum to those very same refugees whose rights they have claimed to protect. It is known that applications for asylum by some of these refugees have been refused. The conditions of asylum in Lesotho have indeed been generous in comparison to those imposed by other host countries even at a time when the other countries were frequently decrying the unmanagibility and irresponsibility of a large number of the refugees.

The Government of Lesotho has time and again stated its preparedness to grant asylum to refugees, but the world must...../2.