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Swaziland changes its name to eSwatini – 22nd April, 2018

Level 4

Swaziland's King Mswati III has changed his country's name to eSwatini. This means "land of the Swazis". The king is an absolute monarch, so he has the power to change his country. He spoke at the nation's Golden Jubilee celebrations, which was also his 50th birthday. He said: "African countries, on getting independence, reverted to their...names before they were colonized. So from now on, the country will officially be known as...eSwatini."

King Mswati often uses eSwatini in his parliament, and at the UN and the African Union. Swaziland got its independence from Britain in 1968 but kept its colonial name. Other former British colonies changed their names. Nyasaland became Malawi and Rhodesia became Zimbabwe. King Mswati said that people would no longer confuse his country with Switzerland. The UN, Google Maps and Internet companies now have to change their databases.

Level 5

The king of Swaziland, King Mswati III, has changed his country's name to eSwatini. The new name means "land of the Swazis" in the local language. King Mswati is an absolute monarch and has the power to change his country. He spoke at the nation's Golden Jubilee celebrations on Thursday, which was also his 50th birthday. He said: "African countries, on getting independence, reverted to their ancient names before they were colonized. So from now on, the country will officially be known as the Kingdom of eSwatini." Swaziland was a British colony until 50 years ago.

The name change has been talked about for years. The king regularly refers to Swaziland as eSwatini in his parliament, and at the U.N. General Assembly and the African Union. Swaziland became independent from Britain in 1968. Unlike other former British colonies, it kept its colonial-era name. Nyasaland became Malawi, Bechuanaland changed its name to Botswana, and Rhodesia became Zimbabwe. King Mswati said that from now, people would not confuse his country with Switzerland. The UN, Google Maps and Internet companies now have to change their databases.

Level 6

The king of the tiny African nation of Swaziland has changed his country's name to eSwatini. The new name means "land of the Swazis" in the local Swati language. King Mswati III is an absolute monarch, which means he has the power to manage his country as he likes. He renamed his land on Thursday at celebrations marking 50 years of Swazi independence from Britain. The day also coincided with his 50th birthday. Speaking at the nation's Golden Jubilee celebrations, he said: "African countries, on getting independence, reverted to their ancient names before they were colonized. So from now on, the country will officially be known as the Kingdom of eSwatini."

The change of name has been talked about in official circles for years. The king has regularly referred to Swaziland as eSwatini in addresses in his country's parliament, at the United Nations General Assembly and to the African Union. Swaziland gained independence from Britain in 1968, but unlike other former British colonies, it retained its colonial-era name. Nyasaland became Malawi, Northern Rhodesia renamed itself Zambia, Bechuanaland changed its name to Botswana, and Rhodesia became Zimbabwe. King Mswati said that from now on, people would not confuse his country with Switzerland. The UN, Google Maps and Internet companies now have to add eSwatini to their databases.