

## Monarch's vanity project flagged

An extravagant prestige project allegedly commissioned by eSwatini's monarch Mswati III for the proposed hosting of the 2020 AU summit has more than quadrupled in price to R4.8bn. [amaBhungane](#) has learnt that eSwatini (formerly Swaziland) has not formally applied to stage the summit and is considered unlikely to secure the rights. The project in question is the International Convention Centre (ICC) and Five-Star Hotel under construction between Mbabane and Manzini. Bertram Stewart, principal secretary in the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development, which is overseeing the project, would neither confirm nor deny the new cost projection. **'We are not going to entertain figures from ghosts who cannot be named.'** Kindly attribute your figures to your sources,' he said. The Ministry awarded the contract for the ICC to a joint venture involving Stefanutti Stocks eSwatini (50%), Inyatsi Construction (30%) and Kukhanya Civil Engineering Contractors (20%).