

REPUBLIC OF  
BOTSWANA

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
BOTSWANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**STATEMENT**  
**BY**  
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**THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA**

**DURING THE**  
**GENERAL DEBATE**  
**OF THE 69<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE**  
**UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**NEW YORK,**  
**29<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2014**

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**Mr. President,**

1. It is a singular honour and privilege for me to address this august gathering of the international community.
2. Allow me, on behalf of His Excellency the President of the Republic of Botswana, Lt. General Seretse Khama Ian Khama, to join other delegations in extending our warmest congratulations to you on your election to the Presidency of this pre-eminent Assembly.
3. We are confident that your vast experience and dedicated service to the Government and people of Uganda will contribute significantly to the successful conclusion of this Session.
4. My delegation and I wish you every success as you embark on this new responsibility of steering the work of the 69<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly.
5. We also extend fitting tribute to your predecessor, His Excellency Ambassador John Ashe, for his sterling leadership of the 68<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly. We commend him for his tireless efforts to overcome many of the challenges confronting the international community today.

**Mr. President,**

6. My delegation welcomes the theme that you have chosen for the current General Debate; namely, **“Delivering on, and implementing a Transformative Post-2015 Development Agenda”**.
7. We consider it both a pertinent and timely theme, especially as it coincides with ongoing efforts by Member States to formulate a new global Development Agenda to succeed the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
8. We shall tirelessly work with you and the international community, as we define the Post 2015 Development Agenda.
9. The priorities you have set for this Assembly, that is, issues of Climate Change, Poverty Eradication, Empowerment of Women and Gender Equality, Rule of Law and International Peace and Security, are amongst those most critical and central to the success and sustainability of a global development agenda.

**Mr. President,**

10. As we draw the curtain on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), it is important that we reflect on our successes and failures in their implementation in order to draw vital lessons from them.

11. The global community, most notably in the developing world, has faced significant challenges in fully realising the MDGs. This has resulted in many of our countries failing to deliver tangible development to their citizens as cogently set out in the MDGs, despite their best efforts and intentions.

12. We continue to witness intolerable levels of poverty, disease, economic stagnation, environmental degradation as well as other drawbacks precipitated in large part, by natural disasters and severe resource and capacity constraints.

13. Whilst Botswana has made impressive gains in the implementation of the MDGs, it was not without enormous challenges, chief amongst which were resource and capacity constraints.

14. The Botswana Government strived to achieve the MDGs and improve the quality of life of its citizens by allocating a substantial percentage of the national budget to those sectors with significant bearing on the country's development, including education, health, infrastructure, development of human capital, women and youth empowerment.

15. Botswana continues to make every effort in the remaining time before the target 2015 completion date, to finish the unfinished business from the MDGs, especially MDGs 4 and 5 relating to infant and maternal mortality.

**Mr. President,**

16. The outbreak of the deadly Ebola evolving into a public health catastrophe is a serious setback to the achievement of MDGs.

17. We therefore implore this Assembly to call on all partners and organisations of goodwill to spare no effort in rescuing the West African region from this scourge.

**Mr. President,**

18. The Rio + 20 Conference of 2012 mapped a clear and strategic path for the achievement of global sustainable development, calling for an inclusive and transformative agenda which integrates the three pillars of sustainable development, that is; economic, social and environmental protection.

19. Botswana has keenly followed the work of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, which had as its primary objective, the formulation of a single, transformative and global development agenda, as mandated by the Rio+20 Outcome Document.

20. We are highly encouraged by the spirit of consultations and the collective will and commitment of the international community to craft an ambitious, yet inclusive, measurable and sustainable set of goals which should inspire and challenge us all to excel in our quest for the attainment of "**The Future We Want**".

21. I commend the Co-Chairs of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals for their exceptional performance in driving the negotiation process to its logical conclusion.

22. We look forward to the inter-governmental negotiations on the broader Post 2015 Development Framework that will begin during this Session of the General Assembly, and I assure you of our fullest cooperation and constructive engagement in these deliberations.

**Mr. President,**

23. My delegation will actively participate in all deliberations on the key development priorities outlined by the Secretary General, in particular, the elaboration of the Post 2015 Development Agenda.

24. However, there are issues of major strategic importance to Botswana. These include Climate Change, Landlocked Developing Countries, Middle Income Countries/Countries in Special Situations as well as issues of peace and security and the advancement of human rights.

25. On Climate Change, Botswana knows only too well the devastating effects of this phenomenon, which continue to cause extreme temperatures, changes to patterns of rainfall, land degradation, desertification and persistent droughts.

26. In this regard, we believe addressing them should be a primary consideration in the current deliberations on the post-2015 sustainable development agenda.

27. We therefore look forward to the 20<sup>th</sup> Conference of States Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Peru, Lima this year which should lay the foundation for a legally binding agreement, expected to be adopted during COP 21 in Paris. We commend the Secretary General for his initiative of convening the just ended Climate Change Summit which successfully injected the much needed political momentum to the process, as we move towards 2015.

28. As a Middle Income, Landlocked Developing Country with peculiar vulnerabilities, we also strongly hope for a comprehensive account of these issues in the Post 2015 Development Agenda. We welcome the 10Year Review of the Almaty Programme of Action to be held in November in Vienna, Austria which will broadly consider effective mechanisms for addressing the vulnerabilities of Landlocked Developing Countries.

29. We hope that during this review, special attention will be given to countries with ever increasing elephant populations whose numbers do not only pose a serious animal-human conflict but also devastates the very environment the elephants depend on for survival. Botswana has the largest elephant population in Africa.

**Mr. President,**

30. On issues of social development, I am delighted to inform that Botswana is making steady progress in eradicating abject poverty as a result of the implementation of the national poverty eradication strategy which was launched in 2010. Furthermore, we have been able to achieve universal primary education, as well as access to HIV/AIDS treatment, care and support services. However challenges remain on issues of quality in education and general services.

**Mr. President,**

31. Financial support, technology transfer and capacity building must invariably be factored into the Post 2015 Development Agenda discussions, without which, our efforts towards poverty eradication and sustainable development will be rendered futile. We keenly await the adoption of the new development agenda, which we trust will support our individual and collective efforts to deliver our shared aspirations of a safe, secure and prosperous world for both present and future generations.



**Mr. President,**

32. Threats to International Peace and Security continue to be amongst the greatest challenges to human development. Botswana is gravely concerned about the increasing trend of instability, insecurity and violent conflict in various parts of the world.

33. We are currently witnessing unimaginable levels of human suffering, with thousands of innocent lives being lost and the world precipitating towards calamitous levels of humanitarian crises.

34. The Palestine/Israel conflict as well as the protracted brutal war in Syria defy human imagination. In Africa, the frequent eruption of violent conflict in certain parts of our continent, particularly in South Sudan and the Central African Republic are distressing.

35. Regrettably, Iraq is also under siege of the Levant (ISIL), and the Al-Nursah Front (ANF), terrorist groups which threaten not only the stability and security of the Middle East, but the maintenance of international peace and security at large.

36. Not only are we failing, as nation states to exercise our duty and responsibility to protect populations from impunity, war crimes and crimes against humanity, we, in effect, inadvertently acquiesce in the annihilation of future generations.

37. In June this year, Botswana, together with the Netherlands, co-hosted the Fourth Meeting of the Global Network of R2P Focal Points, in an effort to further consolidate this fundamental principle which promotes our individual and collective sense of responsibility towards our citizens.

38. Whilst such efforts may be effective in the awareness creation space, swift and decisive action remains in the domain of the United Nations Security Council.

39. It is therefore incumbent upon Members of the Security Council to demonstrate exemplary leadership and a genuine regard for their UN Charter responsibility of maintaining international peace and security as mandated by Article 24.

40. Botswana is deeply disappointed and concerned that some Permanent Members of the Security Council consistently thwart efforts by others to find lasting solutions to conflict situations. Surely, Mr President, responsible members of the international community would not, and should not, abdicate their solemn responsibility, seemingly impelled into a state of grim paralysis as the world burns itself into extinction?

41. Just this past May, the Council failed to adopt a resolution seeking to refer the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court. Needless to say, this was nothing short of a travesty of international criminal justice.

**Mr. President,**

42. Botswana's commitment to an effective international criminal justice system remains steadfast. To this end, we continue to support the independence and credibility of the ICC, as the only existing international mechanism available for the investigation and prosecution of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and the crime of aggression. However, the role of the Security Council in facilitating the work of the ICC cannot be over-emphasised.

43. It is our sincere hope that going forward, reason and basic human compassion will prevail in Council decisions intended to eliminate threats to international peace and security, as well as foster a global culture of judicial accountability, inclusive governance, the rule of law and respect for human rights.

44. In this regard, Botswana welcomes the French initiative regarding voluntary restraint on the use of the veto by the Permanent Members of the Security Council in situations of mass atrocities.

45. Botswana also commends those countries, human rights defenders and humanitarian organisations who have valiantly contributed to efforts to relieve human suffering wherever it occurred around the world.

46. We especially applaud the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr Ban Ki-moon, for his unwavering commitment to the pursuit of international peace and security, including addressing the plight of the vulnerable groups in society; including women and children.

**Mr. President,**

47. Let me conclude by reiterating and reaffirming Botswana's commitment to the principles and ideals of the United Nations as enshrined in the Charter. We remain steadfast and resolute in our obligation, as a member of international community, to contribute, in our own small way, towards the creation of a peaceful, secure and prosperous world for all.

**I thank you for your attention.**