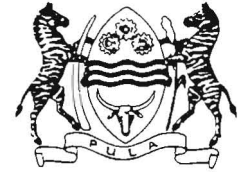


REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
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INTERVENTION BY
HIS HONOUR MOKGWEETSI E.K. MASISI, M.P
VICE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA
AT THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE ON
“PROTECTING OUR PLANET AND COMBATING
CLIMATE CHANGE”

NEW YORK
27 SEPTEMBER, 2015

**Co-Chair,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

- 1.0 Let me begin my brief intervention by expressing my delegation's satisfaction with your skilful stewardship of our debate.
- 2.0 The choice of the theme for this interactive dialogue, namely "**Protecting our planet and combating Climate Change**" could have not been more auspicious particularly at this historic moment when the international community is transitioning from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- 3.0 My delegation is therefore pleased to add its voice to this very important dialogue.
- 4.0 Let me also seize this opportunity to pay tribute to the Secretary General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, for his sterling leadership and commitment.
- 5.0 We particularly commend him for his continued efforts in ensuring that the international community remains actively engaged in addressing the challenges of climate change.

Co-Chair,

- 6.0 Climate Change is indisputably the greatest challenge currently facing mankind. It is not just a threat to our environment, but more seriously, also a threat to human survival.
- 7.0 We continue to witness phenomena such as rise in sea levels, melting glaciers, declining agricultural output, changing weather patterns as well as displacement of our populations as a result of climate change.
- 8.0 Climate change also adversely impacts on biodiversity, health and food security. The reality is that vulnerable countries, particularly those in Sub-Saharan Africa and Small Island Developing States, disproportionately bear the brunt of the impact of climate change even though, sadly, they contribute least to it.

- 9.0 I believe that we all recognise that failure or inaction in addressing climate change could have disastrous consequences.
- 10.0 Unmitigated climate change could potentially reverse development gains so far made and jeopardise development prospects for future generations.
- 11.0 Once the challenges of climate change are left unattended, our efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goals targets and lifting millions of our people from abject poverty and hunger will run asunder.
- 12.0 Developing countries are the hardest hit by the effects of climate change and they also have limited capacities to respond to these effects. This group of countries will continue to require assistance towards climate smart development through reducing vulnerability and financing their transition to low-carbon growth pathways.
- 13.0 Just in the past year in my own country Botswana, a landlocked developing country with a semi-arid climate, we have witnessed our sources of drinking water dry up. As a result, His Excellency the President has officially declared this year as a drought year. Farmers continue to lose their yields.
- 14.0 We are therefore convinced that we need to confront climate change while we still have the opportunity. This needs a collective effort and commitment from all countries.
- 15.0 It is in this regard that we therefore look forward to the upcoming 21st Conference of the Parties (COP 21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to be held in Paris in December 2015 where we expect a universal legally binding climate change agreement to be reached.
- 16.0 In conclusion Co-Chair, allow me to pledge Botswana's full support to the ongoing climate change negotiations under the UNFCCC. We stand ready to contribute in whatever way we can to COP21's successful outcome.

I thank you for your attention