



REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

STATEMENT BY
THE HONOURABLE DR. THAPELO MATSHEKA
MINISTER OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

DURING
THE HIGH LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

***"Accelerated action and transformative pathways:
realizing the decade of action and delivery for
sustainable development"***

JULY 2020, NEW YORK

Excellencies, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen;

1. Botswana has solidified her efforts to domesticate the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its underlying SDGs during the last four years. However, we acknowledge that much work still needs to be done to accelerate SDGs implementation so as to realise the set targets.
2. In this regard, Botswana affirms her commitment to the Ministerial Declaration of the 2020 High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, on the theme **“Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development.”**
3. The onset of the UN decade of action also marks the commencement of Botswana’s transformation journey to a higher Income Status as spelt out in the Vision 2036 Document. The 2030 Agenda provides the necessary impetus for this since it is transformative in nature, with ambitious targets.

4. Botswana, like many countries, has been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has shone a harsh spotlight on a range of existing socio-economic challenges that the country faces, such as high unemployment, income inequality and incidences of poverty, among others. This calls for a systematic and sustainable approach to curb the scourge, with particular focus on getting back on a path towards the realisation of the 2030 Agenda.
5. I am pleased to inform you that Botswana designed a short-term COVID-19 economic relief package to support the economy and complement disease containment measures. The package covers interventions such as three months wage subsidies for workers in firms adversely affected by COVID-19, deferment of profits' taxes payable by firms, establishment of a loan guarantee scheme to support access to bank credit by affected firms, additional health expenditure as well as provision of food-relief support to affected and vulnerable households.
6. To undertake the above mentioned interventions, the Government of Botswana has established the COVID-19 Pandemic Relief Fund, which saw the private sector, individuals and families, development partners and civil society organisations make contributions in order to buttress Government seed fund.

7. Moreover, some non-fiscal measures have been adopted. These include easing the monetary policy and introduction of additional liquidity support measures for commercial banks, in order to ensure that they are well placed to support economic activity.
8. Botswana has also developed an Economic Recovery and Transformation Plan (ERTP) to support the restoration of economic activity and incomes, facilitate economic growth, accelerate economic transformation and build the resilience of the economy. This will complement the short-term economic relief package that is already being implemented.
9. It is no doubt that the COVID-19 pandemic has made the SDGs even more relevant. As we commence the “decade of delivery,” we recognise that SDGs are vital tools that can sustain Botswana’s recovery, thanks to their broadness and/or holistic nature.

**Excellencies,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen;**

10. Following the September 2019 UN General Assembly Summit to review the seventeen SDGs since their adoption, Botswana undertook a similar exercise at national level. A multi-sectoral approach was adopted to produce an SDGs Status Report, through which

we (a) assessed the extent to which government and other partners are implementing programmes aimed at addressing SDGs relevant to Botswana; (b) mapped the extent to which specific SDG targets and indicators have been integrated into Government policies and planning frameworks; and (c) assessed progress in the implementation of the Botswana SDGs Roadmap in line with its broad areas of planning and budgeting, advocacy, sensitization and awareness creation, monitoring, data collection, analysis and reporting, stakeholder coordination, research and resource mobilization. The findings of this exercise and the proposed strategic interventions will form part of the inputs into “Botswana’s Decade of Delivery.”

11. As part of SDGs accelerated actions, I am pleased to inform you that the government, in collaboration with UN Botswana, has developed comprehensive SDGs Planning Guidelines. These will facilitate a structured approach in the integration of SDG targets and indicators into sectoral strategies and plans, in order to link their implementation with the budget planning processes. An operationalization of these is already underway.
12. Through support of the UN SDG Fund, Government of Botswana will develop an SDG financing strategy and its core institutional components through the design

and implementation of an Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF).

13. This will strategically position Botswana to identify and leverage domestic and international public and private finance to support the realisation of SDGs and national priorities. Another expected impact will be efficiency in spending, cost containment and waste avoidance within the public sector, to effectively and efficiently deliver public services.
14. The support also covers implementation of zero-based budgeting. These strategic interventions will be implemented under the Joint Programme to measure progress of selected SDGs.

**Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates;**

15. Let me conclude by re-affirming Botswana's commitment to the September 2019 Political Declarations for both the SDG Summit and the 2020 High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). We remain determined to be more resilient towards minimizing the impacts of COVID-19 as we forge ahead with accelerating implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Thank you for your attention.