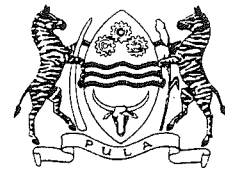


REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
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Statement by

Mr. Nkoloji Nkoloji
Deputy Permanent Representative

during the First Session of the
Open Working Group on Sustainable
Development Goals

15 March 2013, New York

Please check against delivery.

Distinguished Co Chairs,

1. Let me start by associating my delegation with the statements delivered by the Permanent Representative of Zimbabwe on behalf of the countries of Southern African Development Community (SADC); the statement delivered by the Republic of Chad on behalf of the Africa Group, as well as the Statement delivered by the Republic of Fiji on behalf of the G77.

2. Botswana congratulates both Hungary and Kenya for having accepted nomination to spearhead the process of bringing together inputs from Member States and relevant stakeholders and the further consolidation of the different ideas into Sustainable Development Goals.

3. In keeping with the decisions of Rio+20, we trust that the inclusiveness and openness of the Working Group on the SDGs will allow the process to benefit from contributions and experiences of the broad Membership.

4. We thank the Secretary-General for his Report of "**Initial Input to the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals**". The Report provides useful insight into priority areas identified through Member States' responses to the Questionnaire soliciting their inputs.

5. My delegation wishes to underscore the importance of treating every potential SDG with equal status. The current listing of priority areas in the Report of the Secretary General, which was guided by the frequency of responses in one particular issue area, has the danger of giving a false hierarchical status to some issues ahead of others. We believe that all possible SDGs deserve the same value emphasis and should reinforce each other rather than compete with one another. Above all the SDGs should also complement rather than overshadow the MDGs and should be accompanied by robust means of implementation and time-bound targets and deliverables.

Co Chairs,

6. We emerged from Rio some 10 months ago armed with brilliant ideas on how best we can support the development of our economies, sustain growth and promote the welfare of our citizens without exerting undue pressure on the environment.

7. The Rio+20 Outcome Document provided for an integrated approach in confronting challenges faced by the international community. The Rio+20 Outcome Document laid down a strategic vision to formulate a post 2015 development agenda anchored by among other components, Sustainable Development Goals.

8. My delegation is therefore convinced that as we launch the process of crafting the SDGs, we must also in the fullness of time, factor in other variables that are key to the support structure we are building for the post-2015 development framework.

9. At this stage we do not have a full appreciation of how the post-2015 Development Framework will look like. However, we are certain of one thing: We are still struggling to attain the MDGs in full. Many countries are still far from achieving the MDGs especially, with respect to halving poverty by 2015.

10. The critical question then becomes - what should we take into consideration in moving forward to where we all want.

11. The answer is very simple. In September, we will take stock of progress made since 2000. We will undertake a critical examination of the obstacles that impeded the journey we have travelled so far. We will take proper account of implementation gaps matched against the commitments we made. We will also make projections and assess the toolkits necessary for the final fast sprint towards 2015. In the event the outcome of the Review in September maintains that the MDGs remain "unfinished business", then the most logical solution would be as a first priority, to complete the social issues that remain pending and close the gaps that remain.

Co Chairs,

12. We welcome the fact that the work of the Open Ended Working Group for the SDGs has now begun and should be on course to terminate with submission of recommendations to the GA in September. We believe that the final decision of the GA on possible SDGs that could be incorporated into the post 2015 development Framework should be underpinned by poverty eradication and integration of the three pillars of sustainable development.

13. Even though the implementation of SDGs will generally be universal in nature, there is still need to consider the special situation of groups of countries that are facing peculiar challenges. Food insecurity, access to water and sanitation, energy, health, as well as transport and infrastructure continue to be critical for countries such as my own to attain respectable levels of development.

14. My delegation therefore would like to reiterate that in elaborating the SDGs, due prominence should be given to the concerns of the LDCs, LLDCs and MICs.
