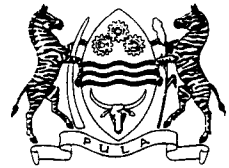


REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT BY

**HIS EXCELLENCY MR. SAMUEL O. OUTLULE
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE**

ON

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

**AT THE THIRTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE
COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

NEW YORK, 4 APRIL 2006

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1. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to join those who have spoken before me in congratulating you on your deserved election to the onerous task of presiding over the deliberations of this important session. We associate ourselves with the statement by the Group of 77 and China.

2. My delegation is also grateful to the Secretary General for his illuminating reports. The reports eloquently highlight the immense challenges as well as the opportunities posed by migration to our collective development efforts.

3. The compendium of recommendations is an important reminder that our ongoing efforts should be mindful of the commitments that already exist. In some cases, therefore, we would not necessarily have to reinvent the wheel, but ensure effective implementation of agreed commitments.

4. We also recognize the good work that has been done by the Global Commission on International Migration. The Commission's report gives us helpful insight into an issue that is increasingly becoming vital to global policy dialogue.

5. Mr. Chairman, the nexus between migration and development is one of the main challenges that we face in this millennium. This Session of the Commission on Population and Development and the forthcoming High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development are a clear testimony of the need for a coherent global approach to an issue whose social and economic implications have left no country unaffected.

6. Perhaps this should not come as a surprise to all of us because from the beginning of time human beings have always had the propensity to move from areas of relative scarcity, in terms of food resources, to areas of plenty, from areas of conflict, to areas of peace and security. We from Africa, the cradle of human civilization, regret that this migration from Africa to other regions of the world is continuing with its adverse impact on economic and social development.

7. Recent experience has demonstrated that no country can deal with the vagaries of international migration alone. As the number of international migrants grows so is the need for a comprehensive global framework to facilitate international collaboration. The experience of Botswana has shown that migration is as much a North-South as it is a South-South phenomenon. In this respect, we appreciate the fact that the international community is increasingly becoming aware of the need for global dialogue on the issue. In Africa, the African Union already has a Strategic Plan on Migration.

8. There are positive and negative dimensions of migration. As a small country of 1.7 million people, we have experienced a mixture of both the good and the bad. Botswana has attracted many migrants from as far as afield as Asia, Europe,

the Americas and Africa. They include man and women of reputable professions such as doctors, teachers, engineers, nurses etc. Botswana also provides refuge to a number of asylum seekers. We are host to both “documented” and “undocumented” migrants.

9. The migrants in Botswana have over the years contributed, and indeed continue to contribute tremendously to our national developments efforts. In the medical field they are with us in the frontline in our battle against the virulent HIV/AIDS. In the area of education Botswana, which at independence in 1966 had only few graduates, relied on migrant teachers to fight ignorance, improve education standards and achieve the high literacy rate we have today. They have provided technical expertise in various areas including planning, policy formulation and implementation. They have come as investors creating much needed employment opportunities that contributed to the social welfare of our people. In a word, the story of Botswana’s success would be incomplete if it did not include a chapter on the contribution of people from other parts of the world. We continue to value this fruitful partnership.

10. Mr. Chairman, for many years we have had and continue to have some of our citizens going abroad to look for greener pastures and education or training opportunities. According to the 2001 population census 1.7 per cent of population was living outside the country. Most of these were in South Africa, mainly working in the mines. We currently have about ten thousand students studying in different institutions of learning in Africa and other parts of the world.

11. Botswana appreciates the necessary support provided by all countries offering both employment, education and training opportunities to its citizens. While we deeply appreciate the assistance being extended to our people, we fully recognize our primary responsibility to create conditions at home that can mitigate the exodus of our citizens to other countries.

12. We are convinced that it is the primary responsibility of every country to address the root causes of the movement of its citizens to other countries. In this respect, I am happy to say that Botswana has been working hard to grow and diversify its economy and thereby deal with poverty and unemployment. This has resulted in the reduction of the percentage of Botswana living abroad from 8% in 1971 to 1.7 % in 2001.

13. Mr. Chairman, on the negative side is the issue of migration of health professionals from developing countries to developed countries. As one of the countries in the world that are most severely affected by the debilitating scourge of HIV/AIDS, the migration of these professionals whom we have trained at great cost, has added severe strain on our national resources. We are now compelled to

recruit and train more personnel if we are to sustain the momentum of the fight against HIV/AIDS.

14. This is an issue which the international community must address with a greater sense of urgency and unity of purpose. If it is allowed to continue, many developing countries, even those that had achieved modest success in various fields of development, will relapse into the economic doldrums. Any framework on migration must address the recruitment of health professionals from developing countries to developed countries.

15. Mr. Chairman, let me conclude by reaffirming Botswana's commitment to the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development. We are currently reviewing our National Population Policy to take into account the emerging issues and challenges in the field of population and development. In recognition of the growing importance of migration, we have undertaken to make this matter an integral part of National Population Policy. The High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development should offer us the opportunity to interrogate many issues that contribute to migration and exchange views on ways of how to collectively address the attendant challenges.

16. The dialogue should continue even beyond September 2006 with a view to fostering the necessary global partnership, and above anything else, an understanding that migration is much more than a movement of people from the South to the North. It is a matter of development, governance and national responsibility. It requires ownership, partnership and co-operation. Developed and developing countries must all be prepared to assume their responsibilities if we are to succeed in addressing the root causes of migration. The welfare of migrants and their families must be an issue of urgent concern to the receiving states, much as it must of necessity, be the top most priority for countries of origin.

Thank you.
