

REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT BY

**H.E. MR. CHARLES T. NTWAAGAE
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**ON AGENDA ITEM 4:
NATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN POPULATION MATTERS: NEW
TRENDS IN MIGRATION — DEMOGRAPHIC ASPECTS**

**DURING THE 46th SESSION OF THE COMMISSION
ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

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Mr. Chairman,

1. At the outset, allow me to join other delegations in congratulating you on your well deserved election. My delegation also wishes to commend the Bureau for the manner in which it is conducting the work of the Commission.
2. Please be assured of my delegations' full support and cooperation during these deliberations.
3. We would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his informative reports submitted under this agenda item. The Reports will serve as useful guidance for Member States in their deliberations during this session of Commission. We also take note of the conclusions and recommendations contained in the reports and believe that they deserve our consideration.
4. My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by Fiji on behalf of the G77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

5. Recognizing that the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference and Population and Development (ICPD) is integrally linked to global efforts towards the eradication of poverty and the promotion of sustainable development, as a small developing nation faced with many competing needs, priorities and development challenges, Botswana attaches great importance to issues of migration and their linkage to development.
6. In this regard, we welcome the theme for this Session, as it provides a further opportunity for focused discussions on the trends in migration and their nexus to development.

Mr. Chairman,

7. Migration of people, both within and between countries, for whatever reason, is a global phenomenon with major economic, cultural and social implications. We note also that over the years, this phenomenon has transformed substantially in size, direction and complexity.
8. Since the adoption of the Programme of Action of the ICPD in 1994, the issue of migration still remains one of the key challenges facing the world today. Continued discussions and engagement on this issue are therefore absolutely necessary.

Mr. Chairman,

9. Botswana has important lessons to share with regard to migration. Before Independence in 1966, our people crossed international borders, especially to neighboring countries mainly in search of employment opportunities. This helped to generate the much needed foreign exchange earnings through remittances. This was also at the time when the country was classified among poorest in the world.

10. However, Post independence rapid economic growth and urbanization, Botswana also witnessed continuing trends in migratory movements with a significant rise in the number of migrants coming into the country.

11. Over the years, we have witnessed changing demographic trends and dynamics. Today Botswana has become a net receiver of migrants. It is worth noting that rapid economic growth, coupled with a peaceful and stable political environment where major factors in attracting thousands of migrants into the country.

12. With regard to internal migration, Botswana, like many countries continues to witness movement of people from rural to urban areas, mainly motivated by the search for employment and education opportunities. This pattern of movement strains the capacity of Government to provide infrastructure, services and resources such as land, housing, water and electricity.

13. It is for this reason that Botswana periodically undertakes national population census in order to inform the development of policy interventions to address unique challenges brought about by changes in demography.

14. In this connection, rural development continues to be a top priority for the Government of Botswana. To this end, Botswana has put in place a number of policies and programmes such as the Affirmative Action Plan for Remote Area Communities aimed at enhancing living standards in these communities. This is further aimed at facilitating access to education, land, employment and other social services, thereby stemming the tide of migration from rural to urban areas.

Mr. Chairman,

15. Although Botswana has undoubtedly benefited from migration in the past, the country continues to derive immeasurable value from a diverse migrant labour force, many of whom are highly skilled in the much needed areas such as education, engineering, health and information technology.

16. In this regard, Government in 2012, introduced a Points Based System, which is a flexible, comprehensive and objective way of attracting people with critical scarce skills and assessing the suitability of those who wish to access gainful employment or invest in the country.

17. On the other hand, the country continues to face challenges from both international and internal migration. While we recognize the importance of having a balanced approach to this issue, Botswana also remains open and committed to learning from best practices and experiences of other countries in this regard.

18. We value and recognise the importance of international cooperation in addressing issues of migration and in this regard Botswana continues to work closely with partners such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in various areas that include training of Immigration and Law enforcement officers on boarder management and procedures.

Mr. Chairman,

19. As part of the international community's continued discussions on this issue, we welcome the General Assembly's decision to hold the second High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development later this year. In view of the ongoing discussions on the post-2015 development framework, we believe that the Dialogue, which is aimed at assessing the effects of migration on sustainable development, is both appropriate and timely.

20. Therefore, we look forward to the identification of concrete measures to harness the benefits of migration and to minimise its negative impacts.

21. Regarding the ongoing global thematic consultations on population dynamics in the post 2015 development agenda, we welcome the emphasis placed on the importance of integrating population dynamics in the future development framework. We therefore look forward to the report on the consultations as well as its recommendations on the way forward.

22. I wish to conclude, Mr. Chairman, by reaffirming Botswana's commitment to the ICPD and its Programme of Action as well as the key actions for its further implementation.

I thank you for your attention.