

REPUBLIC OF  
BOTSWANA



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
BOTSWANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**STATEMENT BY**

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AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA TO THE  
UNITED NATIONS**

**ON AGENDA ITEM 4:**

***"NATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN POPULATION MATTERS:  
REALISING THE FUTURE WE WANT — INTEGRATING POPULATION ISSUES  
INTO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING IN THE POST-2015  
DEVELOPMENT AGENDA"***

**DURING THE  
48<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE COMMISSION  
ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT (CPD)**

**15 April, 2015  
NEW YORK**

*Please check against delivery*

**Madam Chair,**

1. My delegation and I wish to join others in congratulating you on your assumption of the Chairmanship of this important Commission. We have full confidence and trust in your abilities to guide the business of this the 48<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on Population and Development to a successful conclusion.
2. We also wish to commend your predecessor for the very able manner in which he steered the Commission through the 47<sup>th</sup> Session.

**Madame Chair,**

3. In September 2014, Botswana participated in the 69<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly that reviewed implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action over the past twenty years. The Botswana delegation took that opportunity to reaffirm commitment to the follow-up of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development Beyond 2014, where the global community recognised the irrefutable linkages between human dignity, human rights and health, population dynamics and sustainable development.
4. The findings and conclusions of the 20-year operational review of the ICPD Programme of Action beyond 2014, contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the framework of actions for the follow-up to the Programme of Action (A/69/62), also affirmed that these elements are indeed interrelated and interdependent.
5. Botswana welcomes this year's theme, ***"Realising the Future We Want: Integrating Population Issues into Sustainable Development, Including the Post-2015 Development Agenda"*** as it underscores the importance of integrating population dynamics into the new global development framework for the next fifteen years. We are cognisant of the need to fully appreciate the composition of our population in terms of size, sex and age structure, as well as distribution in order to deliver inclusive and sustainable economic growth for the benefit of our population.

**Madam Chair,**

6. Botswana's statement during the 47<sup>th</sup> Session of the CPD reflected that over the past twenty years, the Government of Botswana has prioritised key components of the ICPD Programme of Action such as investment in the promotion and protection of fundamental human rights; provision of sexual and reproductive health services and monitoring fertility levels; creation of employment; eradication of extreme poverty as well as protection of the physical environment, including water and energy sources.
7. Indications are that these elements will continue to form the hallmark of our country's development agenda in the period beyond 2015, as they remain relevant to the people's needs. However, the challenge is identifying appropriate implementation strategies in the light of the ever-changing dynamics of these issues.

**Madam Chair,**

8. Government efforts in the fight against poverty in the past decades bore fruit as poverty levels fell from 47% in 1993/94 to 19.3% in 2009/10. It is important therefore that, in the post 2015 development agenda, we elaborate interventions that will assist governments to comprehensively address the problem of poverty.
9. In this regard, the Poverty Unit coordinated from the Office of the President has been established to demonstrate the high level political commitment to poverty eradication. The Office put in place the Poverty Monitoring system to assess impact on the vulnerable sections of the population such as women, youth, orphans, people living with disabilities and other disadvantaged segments of the society.
10. The success of the implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action has manifested in the substantial decrease in the levels of fertility over the past twenty years, from 4.7 children per woman in 1990 to 3.5 in 2001 and reaching 2.9 in 2011 (thereby, surpassing the 2011 target of 3.3 children per woman). On the contrary, the Revised National Population Policy of 2010 recognised the importance of monitoring the pace of fertility

decline in order to keep it above the replacement level, a phenomenon we should cherish even in the next fifteen years.

11. A major breakthrough has been realised in the levels of infant and child mortality after long periods of stagnation. Child mortality declined from 56 to 11 deaths per 1000 children in 2001 and 2011 respectively. Maternal mortality has also declined from 193 in 2007 to 134 per 100 000 in 2013. Notably, life expectancy has increased from 55.5 in 1971 to 68 in 2011.
12. In the next two decades, Botswana will continue to promote universal access to Sexual Reproductive Health and Family Planning, promotion of individual sexual and reproductive health rights, to primarily manage fertility and enable women to choose when to have sex, the number of children to have as well as control child spacing. Consequently, every pregnancy would be planned, every birth wanted, and women's maternal health protected.

**Madam Chair,**

13. Botswana's focus has also been on increasing access to general health services whilst also addressing the inequalities in access to sexual and reproductive health services. Additionally, we continue to provide comprehensive sexuality education in schools and up-scaling the integration of sexual and reproductive health and HIV and AIDS services. The recent development of a single registry system for births and deaths in 2013 will increase national coverage to inform evidence based planning.
14. On the issue of HIV and AIDS, the Botswana Government is steadfast in its commitment to achieving universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. The provision of universal access to treatment takes the rights-based approach for those infected with HIV and AIDS.

**Madam Chair,**

15. Botswana, like most developing countries has a youthful population structure. According to the 2011 Population and Housing Census, the population aged between 10-35 years accounted for 49.3%, whilst those aged 10-19 years constituted

20.7% of the total population. There are notable opportunities and challenges associated with this demographic trend.

16. On the contrary, the challenges associated with this **youth bulge** revolves around ensuring the provision of quality education and skills that match the demands of the job market. Whilst Government produced graduates with various skills mix, the test lies in the creation of employment opportunities and ending the highly prevalent inequalities.
17. Ideally this provides an opportune time for Government to increase investments in sectors that are key to the improvement of the quality of life and standard of living of Batswana such as provision of quality education and health, provision of safe drinking water and energy. The long-term benefits of this investment is a healthy and educated workforce, which would then spur future economic growth and development.
18. Various economic empowerment initiatives introduced by Government in the past few years to target young people to engage in income generating activities in agriculture, manufacturing and the service sectors continue to be reviewed.
19. Botswana is also aware of the challenges that still remain in order to protect the environment for the benefit of future generations. Infrastructural developments as well as sustainable utilisation of the natural capital are amongst the national development priorities.
20. The Government of Botswana has also committed itself to the protection of vulnerable population groups especially women and children against abuse, exploitation and violence. Increasing gender parity and empowering women in order to facilitate their active and effective participation in the formal and informal economy, as well as in the political arena, remains a priority.
21. Botswana's long-term stable macroeconomic conditions associated with dynamic fiscal and trade policies should provide conducive conditions for sustained economic growth in decades to come. Additionally, development of appropriate migration policies and management of increasing urbanisation is required as a matter of

urgency since Botswana is a trade corridor from the South to the North of Africa.

22. The important role of the National Statistics Office in the implementation of the sustainable development goals in the next fifteen years cannot be overemphasised. The generation of data from regular surveys to better track economic and social indicators would afford us the opportunity to produce gender disaggregated data to inform decision making and service provision. We therefore, support the finalisation of the SDGs, their targets and indicators.
23. In conclusion, it is worth noting that the successful domestication and implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action beyond 2014, the sustainable development goals and Africa's Agenda 2063, largely depends on the strong linkages between proper planning at local and national levels.
24. Furthermore, we recognise the utmost necessity for the integration of these global processes into Botswana's own development frameworks, including the next National Vision for 2036 and the National Development Plan 11.

**I thank you for your attention.**