



Republic of Botswana

## **CLOSING REMARKS**

**BY**

**H.E. MR. COLLEN V. KELAPILE  
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**DURING**

**TRAINING WORKSHOP ON STRENGTHENING CAPACITY TO  
DESIGN & IMPLEMENT POLICIES & IDENTIFY SOLUTIONS  
THAT PROMOTE TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY FOR THE  
ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SDGS**

**27-28 SEPTEMBER 2021**



**Under-Secretary-General,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

- 1.** I am delighted to receive encouraging feedback that, after two days of active engagement by all the participants at this important Workshop, comprehensive thought has been shared and elaborated for the benefit of policy makers on the kind of transport connectivity that can help us advance implementation of the SDGs.
- 2.** At this juncture, on behalf of the Government of Botswana, mine is to express deep gratitude for such a well-attended Workshop. The good turnout reflects our respective Governments' high level of commitment to issues of transport connectivity in LLDCS, as an enabler for efficient trade and the achievement of SDGs.
- 3.** Our profound appreciation also goes to USG Courtenay Rattary and his team, for your effective organization of the event; the speakers and other presenters at this Workshop, including representatives from my former workplace UNECA as well the ECLAC and the African Development Bank; and our funding partner, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund of the United Nations Peace and Development Trust Fund, without whom this important event would not have materialized.

**Ladies and Gentleman,**

- 4.** Clearly, if we are to achieve the 2030 Agenda and also succeed in the full implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA), we must --- as has been stated during the workshop -- be well equipped with the requisite know-how, expertise and skills to design and implement policies that promote modern-day transport connectivity.
- 5.** Adequate capacity-building will immensely enable our policy-makers and subject-matter experts to contribute effectively in designing sound and evidence-based policies, that we urgently need to deal with our existing challenges as LLDCS and also build the resilience for responding to any future pandemics, shocks and natural disasters.

6. Without a doubt, for the LLDCs the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic particularly on the disruption of transport systems and trade supply chains due to our landlocked status was overwhelming and unprecedented -- and moving forward it requires that we be more proactive in mitigating such incidents in the future.
7. Such mitigation should include scaling up investment in climate- and disaster-resilient transport infrastructure and establishing proper legal and regulatory frameworks that promote efficient transit transport, as well as ensure adequate financing of transport connectivity.
8. The discussions during this Workshop clearly indicated that some progress has been made under the Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA), as many LLDCS have made incremental investments in quality infrastructure, and in raising awareness of trade-facilitation issues, which resulted in significant reduction in lead time to import and export on most corridors -- with connectivity issues, such as the development of internet and Communications Technology (ICT), also proving useful.
9. However -- as has also been indicated during the Workshop -- progress has been slow in relation to the implementation of regional cooperation schemes to facilitate transit of goods, and the closing of gaps and shortfalls in bilateral, regional, and multilateral agreements.
10. This therefore necessitates the need to further build, extend, maintain and rehabilitate transport infrastructure, and put in place commensurate legal frameworks. This will certainly also require additional sizable investments, and fine-tuning cross-border agreements that best serve the LLDCs and improve customs facilitation as well as ease out lingering bottlenecks in administrative and work processes involving transit countries.
11. **Let me in closing**, take the opportunity to once again encourage you all, to deploy the knowledge and skills gained during this Workshop to inform policy-making and drive implementation in your respective countries, while we also continue working closely together -- as a homogenous Group -- with the UN, to effectively address LLDCS concerns.

**I thank You.**

**\*\* \* \* \***