

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**

**TO THE**

**64<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY**

**29<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2009**

**NEW YORK**

1. Mr President, I wish at the outset to join other delegations which have spoken before me in congratulating you on your assumption of the Presidency of this 64<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly.
2. Allow me also to pay tribute to your predecessor, His Excellency Miguel D'Escoto Brockman of Nicaragua, for his leadership and commitment, and for the able manner in which he guided us throughout the last Session. Under his leadership, a lot was achieved and we also weathered a number of turbulent storms.
3. Mr. President, the global environment has experienced many challenges since our last Session. Never before has our common goal of advancing the purposes and principles of the UN Charter for the betterment of all mankind, been so tested. The challenges confronting humanity have since grown tenfold, both in scope and magnitude. The sheer enormity of these fast evolving challenges threatens the very existence of the human race and the security of our planet.
4. These range from outbreaks of deadly infectious diseases that spread easily in our highly mobile world, the global economic downturn that has stagnated economies and threatens prospects for attainment of development goals, devastating natural disasters that have taken valuable life, left many homeless and brought unimaginable destruction to infrastructure and the environment, increasing threats to international peace and security with growing desire to possess nuclear weapons capability, including unilateral testing, to senseless terrorist acts and conflicts that continue to rage in different corners of the world without any signs of abatement.
5. I am convinced that none of these challenges are beyond our collective capability, nor are they insurmountable. To this end, our moral imperative is to ensure that the United Nations has the requisite resources, tools and the capability to respond to the ever changing environment in a timely, effective and decisive manner to help Member States address the many complex and multi-dimensional challenges.
6. It is important to remind ourselves of the resolution we took at the 2005 World Summit, "to..... ***Strengthen the UN with a view to enhancing its authority and efficiency, as well as its capacity to address effectively the full range of challenges of our time.***"
7. In this respect, my delegation welcomes the progress made in implementing on-going reforms of the UN system with a view to streamlining rules, mandates and policies in order to promote transparency, coherence and efficiency in the system.

8. Mr. President, the global economic crisis that has besieged us has accentuated existing challenges and made them more complex. The crisis has been felt more seriously in the developing countries. Human, financial and other resources are severely overstretched as countries seek creative and innovative ways to mitigate what has become the greatest economic threat of our time.
9. Mr. President, the crisis therefore warrants a concerted effort which involves both the developed as well as the developing countries. From the crisis we should emerge stronger and wiser with a new thinking on a new global financial architecture.
10. Mr. President, in the present circumstances, poverty levels in many economies appear to be spiralling out of control. Our poverty reduction strategies therefore need to be revised to face up to the new challenges. This goes for the commitments we signed to at the 1995 Copenhagen Social Development Summit and the 2000 Millennium Summit.
11. The new strategy should focus on the upliftment of the living standards of all people the world over. In dealing with these challenges, we should deploy all the resources of nature and technology to better the lives on our planet. But in doing so, we should avoid any actions that could endanger the very lives we want to uplift.
12. Among the myriad of challenges we committed ourselves to tackling through international cooperation and assistance, is the devastating HIV/AIDS pandemic. HIV/AIDS undoubtedly continues to be one of the most daunting challenges of our time.
13. Mr. President, in June last year, our leaders gathered in New York for a midterm review of the implementation of the goals and targets of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, which was adopted in 2001. This review process revealed that, despite heightened political momentum and national and global response to HIV/AIDS, not much progress had been made towards mitigating its effects.
14. Only a handful of countries were reported to be on track to achieving some of the commitments, whilst the majority of countries were found to be lagging far behind in their implementation. This situation underscores the urgent need for accelerating the movement towards universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support.
15. The on-going global economic crisis has already placed people living with HIV/AIDS at greater risk because many countries have had to cut down on some HIV/AIDS programmes due to budgetary constraints. Budget reductions in HIV/AIDS programmes, particularly in developing countries, will obviously result in increased loss of life, as well as increased cost of healthcare in the future.

16. As we draw closer towards the 2010 goal of achieving universal access to HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support, we need to redouble our implementation efforts. To this end, it is essential that as governments, we should renew our commitment to put people first in the kind of policies and programmes we formulate and implement.
17. Mr. President, another global problem which requires our urgent and sustained attention is the adverse impact of climate change and global warming. Our collective response to the challenge of climate change and global warming necessitates pragmatism and decisive action. History will judge us harshly if we can not muster the political will and commitment to put in place measures required to save our planet, earth. The Copenhagen meeting billed for December this year provides an opportunity for galvanizing the efforts of the international community in addressing the challenges of climate change.
18. Most importantly, the Copenhagen meeting will be a defining moment for the negotiations on the global commitments of the 2012- post Kyoto Protocol. Botswana is strongly committed to these negotiations and will do everything in its power to ensure their successful and timely conclusion. We therefore call upon member States to ensure that no effort is spared in giving the issues under negotiation the priority attention that they deserve.
19. Mr. President, turning to international peace and security, my delegation is deeply concerned about the deterioration of the global security situation. We are convinced that security of our world is dependent on the entire membership of the UN working in unison.
20. The number and intensity of conflicts still raging in some parts of the world, particularly in Africa, are of grave concern. It is sad that Africa appears, at least in my estimation, to have experienced more incidents of civil strife and violent confrontation than any other part of the world.
21. In this regard, it is worth noting that the Security Council remains seized with conflict situations and developments in a number of African countries including Chad, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Great Lakes region, Eritrea/Ethiopia, Somalia and the Sudan, to name but a few.
22. Somalia remains the most dangerous place and a spat on the conscience of the international community. Incidents of violence, kidnappings, banditry and piracy are abound. Peacekeepers have also not been spared from this barbarity. We commend Burundi and Uganda for the courage and heroism of their troops in support of the peace effort. International support and assistance is urgently required to deploy a stabilization force to strengthen AMISOM and to support long term peace and stability in that country.

23. With regard to the situations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Great Lakes region, it is thanks to the collective efforts of the UN Peacekeeping Mission, (MONUC) the Special Representative on the Great Lakes region, His Excellency Former President Obasanjo of Nigeria, and other international initiatives that there are now prospects for positive developments. However, we should not underestimate the gravity of the challenges that continue to hamper the achievement of lasting peace, stability and sustainable development in that region and many more in Africa.
24. Apart from finding lasting solutions to conflicts, we should put in place measures to deal with post conflict situations as there is a danger that countries emerging from conflict situations could easily relapse. Our regional bodies like A.U. as well the U.N. must stay focused in assisting countries to deal with both conflicts and post conflict situations.
25. Mr President, we all know the causes of conflict and instability. It is the result of bad governance, mismanagement of national resources and the absence of democracy. In this respect, we cannot simply demand the full and active support of the international community in the efforts to achieve lasting peace and stability. We must therefore do more to consolidate the democratic process, respect for human rights and the rule of law. In that way, we would be more deserving and worthy of assistance.
26. Botswana is disturbed by the emerging trend in Africa and other parts of the world, of coups and unconstitutional transfer of power. We had thought that the era of coups was now history. We unreservedly condemn the coups that took place in Mauritania, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar and Honduras. We would have been very disappointed if someone like Rajoelina who masterminded the overthrow of a democratically elected Government in Madagascar had been allowed to address this Assembly. We therefore applaud the decision taken by the General Assembly in this regard. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) correctly decided to suspend the regime in Madagascar from participating in the Councils and Structures of the sub-regional Organisation. Our Continental Organization, the African Union, has also maintained a principled position of automatically suspending any regime that comes into power by overthrowing the constitutional order. The international community must be united in their determination to isolate the regime in Antananarivo. We must not give them any comfort by embracing them in the international fora.
27. Mr. President, we are also witnessing a disturbing development which undermines democracy and subverts the will of the people. There is a growing resort to change constitutions in order to prolong the grip on power by leaders and political parties that have lost elections.

28. In this regard, Africa and indeed the world at large must collectively and in one voice reject extra-parliamentary transfer of power and isolate the illegal regimes until constitutional order is restored. Embracing them in any small measure will be immoral and will perpetuate these hideous acts through out the globe.
29. The world can be a better place for us and future generations if we persistently nurture democratic practices, good governance and respect for the rule of law. As leaders, we should commit to building fraternity and greater mutual understanding among people across cultures and faiths. We have the responsibility to lead by example. We must desist from using inflammatory language as this has the effect of promoting tension and conflicts.
30. We cannot and must not condone leaders who, for their own selfish interests, change constitutions of their countries in order to ensure continued stay in power. In the same breath, we should ensure that our elections are credible and reflect the sovereign will of the people. Governments should not be allowed to conduct elections and then temper with the outcomes to suit their interests. People must be allowed to freely choose their leaders.
31. Mr. President, Botswana reiterates its position that it is fully committed to respecting the integrity and impartiality of the International Criminal Court in order that it can freely carry out its judicial mandate. We equally support the principle of universal jurisdiction under international law and practice. We however, object to situations wherein its abuse becomes blatant.
32. Mr President, in conclusion, I wish to reiterate that, the daunting challenges facing our world today as stated previously cannot and should not be tackled by any one country or group of countries alone. It calls for a strong multilateral approach which needs commitment and an unyielding support from the international community as a whole.
33. Let us all join hands together in an effort to address these complex challenges. Our timely, coordinated and effective action will go a long way in securing a better future for generations to come.
34. I thank you for your kind attention.