

**REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA**

**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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STATEMENT BY

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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

AT THE

**HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE THIRTEENTH SESSION
OF THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

ON

"TURNING POLITICAL COMMITMENTS INTO ACTION"

NEW YORK, 21 APRIL, 2005

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Thank you Mr. Chairman,

At the onset let me convey my delegation's congratulations to you for the able manner in which you have been facilitating these important discussions. There is no doubt that under your able stewardship this meeting is poised for success.

Botswana associates itself with statements made by Ghana and Jamaica on behalf of the Africa Group and the G77 and China respectively.

Mr. Chairman,

At the World Summit on Sustainable Development held two years ago in Johannesburg, we produced a clear implementation Plan underpinned by a firm undertaking that "each country has the primary responsibility for its own sustainable development". That demonstration of political commitment created high expectations and hopes among our people, particularly as it came exactly two years after our leaders collectively made that momentous declaration here at the United Nations to free the world from the shackles of poverty and deprivation.

The confluence of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Millennium Declaration symbolize the height of political commitment. The challenge and opportunity we have here today at CSD13 is to translate that political commitment into concrete decisions and policy measures to address a variety of constraints that undermine our sustainable development efforts. My delegation is thus encouraged by the constructive spirit that has so far characterized the negotiations and remains confident that CSD13 will be able to contribute meaningfully to the September High-level Summit.

Mr. Chairman,

It is by no accident that the CSD Multi-year Work Programme started with a cluster of water, sanitation and human settlements. The three are critical to the eradication of poverty, the realization of sustainable development, and thus to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. It is therefore imperative that the momentum of implementation is not lost as we shift to another cluster of issues.

Deliberations during CSD12 and 13 have revealed that in spite of a host of constraints - technological, financial, and institutional or otherwise - developing countries continue to contend with, these countries have demonstrated considerable commitment to achieving sustainable development targets. This commitment and political leadership ought to be encouraged by addressing the special needs of the developing countries through providing necessary resources and assistance. As developing countries, we will continue to play our part to ensure that whatever assistance or aid we receive is used effectively to implement sustainable development targets.

Mr. Chairman,

Botswana strongly subscribes to the commitments made at the Johannesburg meeting. The provision of clean water, sanitation and basic shelter' is central to our developments efforts. For instance, the development of a national Water Master Plan will commence this year.

We completed a long-term Wastewater and Sanitation Masterplan in December 2003. And a community-based housing project aimed at the provision of quality shelter for the rural poor has been ongoing for a number of years.

But Botswana continues to face mammoth challenges ranging from limited resources and technology to the scourge of HIV/AIDS. The latter threatens all the development gains we made over the years and has inevitably distorted our development priorities. We continue to contend with this scourge with full understanding that its existence is a menace to the very foundation of sustainable development - human resources.

Mr. Chairman,

The review session on the cluster of issues under discussion has shown that most of the developing countries, Africa in particular, lag behind in meeting the Agenda 21 and the JPOI targets and even face the bleak prospects of not achieving the MDGs. It therefore behooves us to provide more support to regional initiatives such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Ministers Conference on Water (AMCOW) to enable them to provide necessary leadership at regional level thus adding more impetus to the process of implementation.

At the last session of CSD, we identified constraints that undermine our developments efforts. And today we gathered here to come up with policy measures to address those constraints and obstacles. This session could not have come at a more propitious time. The timing of CSD13 should therefore inspire us to ensure that our contribution to the forthcoming summit in September not only reflects our upright priorities, but also our unflinching commitment to the cause of sustainable development. We remain confident therefore that at the end of this session, we would have agreed on a text that will address most of our concerns chief of which is the need to work towards measures that will reduce poverty among our people. Political commitment has been sufficiently demonstrated, the challenge, as it were, is to translate that commitment into tangible results. Botswana stands ready to work in that positive direction.

Thank you.