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**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF
BOTSWANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS BY FIRST SECRETARY,
KATLEGO BOASE MMALANE, DURING THE CLOSING SESSION
OF THE SECOND PART OF THE RESUMED SEVENTY-FOURTH
SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED
NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

(New York, 4 August 2020)

Mr. Chair,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Botswana to the United Nations at this closing session of the second resumed part of the seventy-fourth session of the Fifth Committee.
2. Let me first note that my delegation aligns itself with the statement of the African Group just delivered by H.E Ambassador Mohamed Fathi Ahmed Edrees of Egypt and the comments and remarks expressed by Megayla Austin Minister Counsellor of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana to the UN on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. With that I would like to make a few additional remarks.
3. In the same spirit, my delegation wishes to also extend our profound gratitude to the Chair of the Fifth Committee Ambassador Andreas Mavroyiannis and his Bureau, we also thank the Fifth Committee Secretariat, Mr. Lionel Berridge and his team, as well as ASG and controller Mr. Chandramouli Ramanathan and his team and the Chair of ACABQ and his hardworking team for the support rendered during this time.
4. As we conclude this second-resumed session that has been conducted in unique and unprecedented circumstances, it is

important to recognize the resilience of the fifth Committee in executing its mandate even in the strangest of circumstances, including ***“negotiating while at home.”*** My delegation also wishes to thank all our partners for their constructive engagement and flexibility in the entire process, and we look forward to building on this positive momentum during the main part of the seventy-fifth session.

Mr. Chair,

5. My delegation would like to take this opportunity to commiserate with those that have lost their loved ones due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and to express our sincerest gratitude to all uniformed and civilian personnel who have dedicated their lives to serving the United Nations, as well as, those at Headquarters supporting the work of peacekeepers in the field. We pay a special tribute to all United Nations and African Union personnel who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the pursuit of global peace and security.

Mr. Chair,

6. My delegation is thankful for the accomplishments achieved this session, among others, approval of the \$6.6 billion Peacekeeping Operations budget as a whole; the resolution on the triennial review of the rates and standards for reimbursement to the Member States for contingent owned equipment; as well as adoption of the resolution on closed peacekeeping Missions.

7. My delegation is also pleased to note the agreement by the General Assembly to see the UN and its regional and sub-regional entities engage in partnerships on the most pressing Peace and security issues especially in the Africa continent. It only makes sense for the UN to work hand in hand with these Organisations to avoid duplication of efforts, but maximize on the gains.

- 8.** We note that the 5th Committee has approved a peacekeeping operations budget that was prepared prior to the outbreak of the COVID-19. My delegation notes with grave concern the threat to life, health, safety and security caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and emphasizes the importance of ensuring the safety, security, and health of peacekeeping personnel, maintaining continuity of critical mandate delivery including protection of civilians, minimizing the risk of mission activities spreading the virus, and where appropriate, within mandates, supporting national authorities.
- 9.** As just noted by the Chair of the African Group H.E Mohamed Edrees of Egypt, we too look forward to receiving in the context of the Secretary General's next performance reports how the Missions responded, what lessons can be learned from past and present epidemics and pandemics, and options for improving future preparedness for epidemics and pandemics including for business continuity.

10. In conclusion, Mr. Chair, Let me take the opportunity to congratulate once again the Bureau of the 74th Session and the Fifth Committee Secretariat for their able stewardship in leading the Group throughout a uniquely challenging session. My delegation further welcomes the incoming Bureau and wishes to reaffirm its commitment to continue to engage constructively, with utmost cooperation and flexibility in the work of the Fifth Committee in the seventy-fifth session.

I thank you

