

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF
BOTSWANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS BY FIRST SECRETARY AND
VICE-CHAIR OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE: KATLEGO BOASE
MMALANE ON AGENDA ITEM 143 “IMPROVING THE FINANCIAL
SITUATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS” DURING THE SECOND
RESUMED PART OF THE SEVENTY FIFTH SESSION OF THE UNITED
NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (UNGA)**

(New York, 14 May 2021)

Mr. Chair,

- 1.** As a fellow Bureau Member, let me take the opportunity in joining other delegations in thanking you for organizing this important meeting, as the financial situation of this Organisation either positively or negatively affects our decisions in the Fifth Committee and the effectiveness of the implementation of mandates.
- 2.** Let me also thank the Under-Secretary-General for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance Ms. Catherine Pollard for her comprehensive briefing on the regular budget, and financial situation of peacekeeping operations and international tribunals.
- 3.** At the outset, let me note that our delegation fully aligns itself with the statements just delivered by Guinea on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and Mali on behalf of the African Group.

Mr. Chair,

- 4.** My delegation is pleased to hear that in the first three months of the year, most Member States responded positively to the Secretary General’s appeal in paying their financial obligations to the Organisation, in particular, the Regular Budget. The same goes to the Peacekeeping and tribunals’ budgets.
- 5.** However, as indicated in Under Secretary General Pollard’s presentation, the liquidity situation of the United Nations has been worsening in recent years with cash deficits occurring earlier in the

year, deficits running deeper, liquidity reserves being exhausted and year-end arrears setting new records.

- 6.** The delegation of Botswana remains profoundly concerned by this trend and the resulting liquidity crisis. The annual downward spiral is worrying and as highlighted by Member States today has affected mandate implementation in a negative way.
- 7.** As a solution to the deteriorating cash-flow, the Secretary General was forced to take extreme measures. These included;
 - The freezing of Regular Budget employment of critical posts for a full year depriving the Organisation of much needed human resource;
 - The suspension of trainings and capacity building projects;
 - The postponement of payments to troop and police contributing countries.
 - And most importantly for my delegation, the scaling down of non-post resources which inevitably means the non- implementation of key developmental mandates, which in turn also affect the execution and implementation of Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals.
- 8.** These measures inevitably undermine the purpose and effectiveness of this August body, in terms of maintaining international peace and security and the development needs of Member States.
- 9.** Furthermore, the 2019/2020 liquidity crunch threatened the organization's flexibility and ability to respond to emerging crisis in a timely manner, especially the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The UN does more if it is financially sound, especially for vulnerable Member States, these being, Least Developing Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States. A United Nations with inadequate funds is a United Nations tied to its knees, and this, esteemed Colleagues, we must never allow to happen again.

Mr. Chairman,

10. The achievement of the Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals including the UN Management reform; peace and Security Pillar Reform and reform of the UN Development system will not materialize as long as we as an Organisation are not financially sound.

11. As we move on into the year, we are happy to see that Member States have started to make their contributions to the Organisation. This will ensure that the UN fulfils its ultimate purpose of maintaining international peace and security, protecting human rights, delivering humanitarian aid, promoting sustainable development and upholding international law. As the 2030 Agenda is our blueprint and master plan in transforming the world, we must also safeguard it and ensure it is executed without interference.

12. In closing Mr. Chair, allow me to commend Member States that have managed to pay their dues on time and without fail, and to encourage those who have not to do so. Botswana is honored to have met, to date, all of its financial obligations to this esteemed Organisation. At the same time, we must consider the special situations faced by some developing countries, which are unable to honor their financial commitments, especially in light of the unprecedented circumstances imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

13. The world has been ravaged by a pandemic that has put our collective abilities to the test, including those of our economies. However, together as a one UN we can pass this test, and emerge victorious. We can **“build back better”** so long as we all ensure that we meet our obligations to the United Nations as enshrined in the Charter.

I thank you for your kind attention.

