

REPUBLIC OF  
BOTSWANA



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
BOTSWANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT BY

H.E. MR. FESTUS G. MOGAE  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

AT THE

HIGH-LEVEL PLENARY MEETING OF  
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 14, 2005

*Check against delivery*

Co-Presidents

Mr. Secretary General

1. Five years ago we convened here in New York to usher in a new millennium. With great enthusiasm and hope we then resolved to tackle the key challenges facing our world. In particular, we committed ourselves to fight extreme poverty, preventable diseases, human conflict, environmental degradation and global warming.

2. The resulting Millennium Declaration that was adopted has become the framework by which we have set ourselves targets to ensure that we take action to build a better world for all our people. In our collective commitment as the member states of this body – rich and poor, large and small, weak and strong alike – we recognised an obligation to work together in order to create a more just and equitable global order.

3. We also then realized that, due to its universality, the United Nations remains the only vehicle through which we can realize our universal aspirations.

4. Mr. President, the challenges facing the UN today are daunting. If anything they have become more complex and demanding than those of sixty years ago. Botswana believes that to enhance the role and relevance of the United Nations and equip it to respond to the evolving challenges of the 21st Century, this Summit must move forward in key areas, namely the:

- Implementation of previously agreed international development goals,
- Overcoming threats to International peace and security,
- Ensuring the enhanced respect for human rights and the rule of law, and
- Achieving long sought institutional reform.

5. Botswana is convinced that through collective measures we can overcome these challenges. In this regard, the Monterrey Consensus provides a framework for the global community to mobilize financial resources. Progress will also be enhanced if the commitments made at the recent G8 Summit in Scotland are fully and expeditiously implemented. We here welcome the commitment by a number of developed countries to increase their development expenditure to 0.7% of the GM between now and 2015.

6. With respect to trade, Botswana encourages accelerated progress in the current Doha Round negotiations, which could pave the way for the Round itself to be concluded next year.

7. Your Excellencies, the High Level Panel of Eminent Persons has re-confirmed the inter-relationship between development, human rights, peace and security. It is our responsibility to find further consensus on these issues in the context of the new threats and opportunities that face us all in this globalised world.

8. We in Botswana condemn terrorism in all its manifestations. We believe that the international community should be able to agree on a comprehensive convention on terrorism on the basis of a common definition and understanding of what constitutes terrorist acts. This session should endeavour to reach agreement on these two related issues.

9. Conflicts on our own continent are naturally of particular concern to us. Currently a number of African countries are under Security Council consideration and also account for a significant portion of the UN peacekeeping budget.

10. The resolution of these conflicts can go a long way to ensuring the economic and social development of the wider African region, as well as the affected countries themselves.

To this end, there is need for greater cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union to strengthen conflict prevention and peace-keeping mechanisms.

11. Mr. President, the debate on UN reform has been going on for along time. After 12 years of negotiation on Security Council reform the time is now ripe to move forward. In its 60 years of existence, the membership of the United Nations has grown from 51 to 191 countries. This underscores the need to transform this critical organ in order to make it more representative of our world today, through increased membership and improved working methods.

12. Admittedly, this Summit faces difficult decisions on the reform of the Security Council. But, the recommendations made by the High Level Panel provide us with a guide for consensus. In this respect no position should be embraced as if it were dogma, for the status quo is not in our collective interest. For our part Botswana is prepared to be flexible in negotiations conducted in good faith.

13. A consensus has now emerged on the need to revitalize the General Assembly in its role as the deliberative, policy making and representative organ of the United Nations. In this regard, Botswana shares the view that the role and authority of the Assembly must be re-asserted and its President should play a greater leadership role in refocusing its agenda.

14. Botswana has, over the years, demonstrated commitment to the principles of democracy, social justice, human rights and the rule of law. These very principles continue to motivate our commitment in ensuring that human rights issues receive prominence in our global agenda. We therefore support measures that are intended to strengthen the focus on human rights issues, including the creation of a new Human Rights Council.

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Guaranteeing the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms is one aspect of the UN's broader mandate to protect our populations. In this day and age, we can no longer afford to stand back if a country fails to protect its citizens against grave human rights abuses. In this respect, we embrace the concept of "responsibility to protect."

15. Mr. President, another welcome initiative that Botswana supports is the establishment of a Peace-Building Commission. We are convinced that this important post-conflict recovery mechanism can create the opportunity for millions of people to achieve sustainable development where before there was turmoil and despair.

16. Botswana commends the Secretary General for his ongoing efforts to implement management reform of the U.N. To better facilitate the mandates we entrust to him, the Secretary-General will require not only adequate resources, but also greater authority so as to ensure that the Organisation is able to rapidly respond to evolving priorities.

17. In conclusion, Mr. President, this Summit provides all of us with an historic opportunity for us to make far-reaching decisions on the reform of this Organisation. Botswana's view is that reform is imperative if the United Nations is to have the ability to respond to the critical challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

19. I thank you.