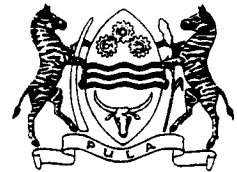


REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
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BOTSWANA COUNTRY STATEMENT

AT THE

**52ND SESSION OF THE
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN**

PRESENTED BY

**HONOURABLE G.U.S. MATLHABAPHIRI
ASSISTANT MINISTER
MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND HOME AFFAIRS**

NEW YORK, 27 FEBRAURY 2008

Please check against Delivery

1. The delegation of Botswana welcomes the deliberations of the Commission on the Status of Women on "Financing for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women".
2. My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by Honourable Dr. Jacqui Quinn-Leandro, Minister of Labour, Public Administration and Empowerment of Antigua and Barbuda, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and Honourable Patricia Mulasikwanda, Minister of Gender and Women and Development of Zambia, on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC).
3. We commend the Secretary-General for the initiative he launched on Monday, February 25, 2008, to spearhead a multiannual system-wide campaign to eliminate violence against women and girls through 2015. The elimination of violence against women and girls is a very important step in achieving all the agreed Millennium Development Goals, in particular Goal 3 on achieving gender equality. We hope that all stakeholders will take advantage of this opportunity and accelerate implementation of efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls at the national level.
4. Chairperson, Botswana upholds the importance of financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women as an integral part of development.
5. Botswana is a signatory to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. We strongly believe in the principles espoused in the Declaration, particularly as they relate to the promotion of national ownership of development processes and outcomes.
6. We recognise that to fully appreciate these principles as a country, we also have to develop tools and capacities for their effective engagement and implementation. In this regard, Botswana has started the process of gender responsive budget initiatives as an important strategic tool for gender mainstreaming within the Public Sector. The gender mainstreaming strategy has been carried out in six Ministries and five additional Ministries will be covered during the 2008/2009 Financial Year. Through the gender mainstreaming strategy, Government Ministries are assisted to develop sectoral gender policies and implementation plans that form an integral part of the Ministries' Strategic Plans.
7. Chairperson, in an endeavor to promote effective gender responsive reporting on the implementation of the pillars of the National Vision (Vision 2016), the Government commissioned a gender audit exercise of the National Monitoring and Evaluation System.
8. It is our expectation that this gender audit will be critical in focusing national efforts regarding the implementation and monitoring of the gender mainstreaming strategy in the context of the National Vision.

9. The Ministry responsible for gender has been restructured with the reduction in the number of Departments from 13 to 7. Gender is now prominent and forms an integral part of the Ministry's Vision. In addition, the Government's commitment to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women is demonstrated through the six fold increment of the Women's Affairs Department budget. The budget increase has moved from US\$200,000 to US\$1.2 million for the Financial Year 2008/09.
10. The budget allocation is intended to cover women's specific projects that address the Six Critical Areas of Concern on women in Botswana. These are:
- i) Women and Poverty, including Economic Empowerment;
 - ii) Women in Power and Decision-Making;
 - iii) Education and Training of Women;
 - iv) Women and Health;
 - v) The Girl Child; and,
 - vi) Violence Against Women, including Human Rights.
11. The Government in collaboration with other development partners continues to mobilize funds to supplement its budget.
12. Chairperson, there are many challenges that need to be addressed for the effective and efficient implementation of the various processes to make ***financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women*** a reality. More funding and human resources are required in order to change the negative perceptions of the public on issues of gender equality and the empowerment of women at all levels.
13. I am pleased to indicate that the Botswana Parliament has recently passed the Domestic Violence Bill which is a positive step towards the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The Government of Botswana will continue to review legislation, policies and procedures for the betterment of our society.
14. In conclusion, the Government recognizes that there is need for deliberate efforts to be made to bring the national gender machinery to a recognizable level in the public sector, so as to enable it to influence financial allocations for the promotion of gender equality.

I thank you.