



REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

STATEMENT

BY

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**MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND RURAL
DEVELOPMENT**

AT THE

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DOHA, QATAR

1. **Thank you,** Madam Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,
2. Botswana aligns itself with the statements delivered by Iraq on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and by Kenya on behalf of the African Union. Since the landmark 1995 Copenhagen Declaration, Botswana has aligned our development framework with its ten commitments. Our Vision 2036, "Achieving Prosperity for All," represents our ongoing dedication to the three pillars established at the original World Summit: poverty eradication, productive employment, and social inclusion—operationalized through our National Social Protection Framework.
3. Like many countries Botswana prioritizes poverty eradication, we have made modest but encouraging progress as evidenced by the poverty rate decline from 30.6% to 16.3% over the past two decades. A number of our policy initiatives such as Our Economic Inclusion Act of 2022 institutionalizes this commitment, this is complemented by our social protection programs such as the Universal Old Age Pension, Orphan Care Program, the destitute program and the School Feeding Programmes that collectively protect over 470,000 vulnerable citizens. In alignment with UN Sustainable Development Goal 1, our Youth and Women Empowerment Programmes have supported 25,000 entrepreneurs, in an attempt to provide sustainable livelihoods rather than dependency. We are at a stage where government has taken a decision to review all social protection policies with a view of modernizing them, by ensuring better targeting, comprehensive

coverage and by prioritising empowerment and eventually graduation from social assistance.

4. Employment creation remains a challenge for us, but we do fully recognise Job creation as our most powerful instrument for sustainable poverty reduction, this is why through our public works program we have included a skills component to give our people skills to enable them to benefit from skills based employment opportunities in addition to efforts creating sustainable decent jobs. Our National Employment Policy (2023) strategically aligns human capital development with labor market demands through investments in Technical and Vocational Education and digital literacy programs. We uphold international labor standards in accordance with ILO Conventions, ensuring decent work conditions with particular focus on youth and women—the demographic groups driving our future prosperity.
5. It is our genuine belief that development must benefit all citizens. Through our National Policy on Gender and Development, Disability Act, Remote Area Development Programme, and other social protection programs our desire is for marginalized groups to be active participants in national development processes. Our commitment is strengthened through alignment with international obligations, including CRPD, CEDAW, and ICESCR, supported by disaggregated data systems that enable truly equitable resource allocation.

6. Botswana's social development agenda is aligned with the 2030 Agenda, the AU's Agenda 2063, and SADC's Regional Development Plan. We lead several initiatives including the Gaborone Declaration for Sustainability in Africa and the Southern African Centre of Excellence for Social Protection Policy. We actively participate in UN forums, consistently advocating for South-South cooperation and triangular partnerships that enable equitable knowledge sharing and resource mobilization.
7. In conclusion Chair, Botswana reaffirms its commitment to the Doha Political Declaration on Social Development. We endorse its call for people-centered development and its recognition that social protection is a critical investment in human capital. As we advance toward Vision 2036, we remain guided by the Doha Declaration's holistic approach integrating economic, social, and environmental dimensions. Our journey toward an inclusive society is pursued in solidarity with the global community and in fulfillment of commitments articulated in Copenhagen and reaffirmed in Doha.
8. I thank you.