



STATEMENT

BY

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ENVIRONMENT WILDLIFE AND TOURISM,
OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE HIGH LEVEL
SEGMENT**

OF THE UNFCCC COP19

**21 November, 2013
Warsaw, Poland**

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Mr. President

Excellencies and Dear Colleagues, Honourable Ministers,

Distinguished Delegates

1. Let me at the outset associate my delegation with the statements delivered on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the Africa Group in that order.
2. Allow me to also take this opportunity to congratulate you Sir, for the excellent arrangements and facilities put at our disposal to create a conducive environment for dialogue in Warsaw. My delegation and I support you in fulfilling your mandate.
3. The delegation of Botswana joins others in expressing its sympathies to the Government and the people of the Philippines who recently endured the most powerful cyclone recorded on the surface of the Earth and others who have also been victims of climate change. These are all manifestations of extreme climate change.

Mr President,

4. As a result of global warming and climate change the number of extreme events has increased and these events not only pose a serious threat to the gains made thus far by our countries, but also have a potential to pull a lot of our peoples into poverty. Despite measures to prevent this, however good they are, the fact is with climate change they are not sustainable.
5. It is in this regard that it is absolutely necessary that COP19 should be the basis for reaching a legally binding agreement by 2015 recognising our common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.
6. Furthermore we must collectively reaffirm our commitment and our common interest to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol, the Bali Action Plan and the Durban Platform as guiding principles and roadmap to sustainable development.

Mr President,

7. Climate change has taught us that an understanding of the past climate patterns can no longer be the absolute basis for determining the future climate trends.

8. Botswana is both semi-arid and very vulnerable to climate change and its effects have manifested in frequent and severe droughts, floods, storms, heat waves and the rainfall patterns which have changed. This has challenged our food security as evidenced by 30% reduction in Sorghum and Maize yields. This remains a threat to our poverty eradication efforts.

9. As I address you today, Botswana is experiencing serious water shortages that have forced the Government to put in place water rationing to adapt to the challenges brought about by climate change.

Mr President,

10. I have the honour to inform this gathering that in our effort to respond to impacts of climate change, in 2012 Botswana held an Africa Sustainability Summit known as the Gaborone Declaration and a follow up of the same in October 2013. In addition Botswana recently hosted the 5th Special Session of the African Ministers responsible for Environment (AMCEN). At the start of December 2013 Botswana will host the Africa Elephant Summit where issues of wildlife and environment will feature prominently in the agenda.

11. The above interventions are as a result of the realization of increasing deterioration of the environment and to identify ways in promoting sustained growth, environmental integrity, natural capital accounting and improve livelihoods.
12. Economic growth and human well-being in Africa will be threatened if we do not undertake concerted action to halt and reverse the degradation and loss of healthy ecosystems and biodiversity, and to enhance society's ability to adapt to climate change and environmental risks and scarcities.
13. It is against this background that Botswana considers adaptation as a priority in order to attain resilience to climate change. We look to the global partners to be considerate, in discussing capacity building, technological transfer and the funding for climate change. But in the meantime Botswana continues to pursue a greener economy within her limited resources.

Mr President,

14. If we continue at the current pace, we may in the future have no opportunity to make any choices. We must be the generation which first realized the consequences of what we were doing. We must also be the generation that turns that around. Anything else is a total abdication of our responsibility as temporary stewards of this planet. The time to act is now.
15. Let us be mindful of the generations coming behind us, that we do not give them an environment that is in tatters.
16. Business as usual will no longer serve us and we therefore call for a total transformation in the management of the environment. Addressing climate change requires policy interventions grounded on good governance and recognition of the rule of law.
17. In conclusion, the people of Botswana look forward to a fair, transparent and credible outcome from COP19 that will set a clear roadmap for the 2015 agreement.
18. I thank you for your attention.