

**STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF WORKS,
TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS –
HONOURABLE D.N. MAGANG
AT THE FIFTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE
OF THE PARTIES TO THE
UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK
CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE
02 to 05 November 1999. Bonn. Germany.**

Mr President, on behalf of the Botswana delegation, I take this opportunity to congratulate you on your appointment and we will endeavour to support you and to ensure that your task, during the Fifth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), is made easier.

Mr President, as a Party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and as required under Article 12 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Botswana is preparing her Initial National Communication for submission to the Conference of the Parties. A study to determine our national inventory, by sources and sinks of greenhouse gases has been completed and the findings will form the requisite input into the Initial National Communication. Other studies are on-going to assess the vulnerability of the water sector, the health sector, the agriculture and livestock sectors to global warming and climate change, and we feel these will provide additional information for the Initial National Communication. A multidisciplinary National Committee on Climate Change has been established to oversee the preparation of the Initial National Communication and the implementation of the national action plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The Initial National Communication will then be discussed with all stakeholders, the non-governmental organisations, private sector and relevant government institutions. These consultations will ensure ownership of this Initial National Communication by all stakeholders in the Country. According to our implementation

schedule, the Initial National Communication will be ready for submission to the Conference of the Parties by April 2000.

Though a small scale emitter of greenhouse gases, Botswana has always recognised the need to relate environment to sustainable development, hence our commitment towards meeting our obligations under the convention. In this regard, Botswana is preparing the necessary documentation for accession to the Kyoto Protocol which identifies the guidelines for technology transfer, capacity building strategies and mechanisms for funding of projects to assist developing countries.

Mr President, since the turn of this century droughts in Botswana have shown regular pattern of occurrence. An analysis of historical climate data indicates that Botswana experiences periodic droughts every seven to eleven years. However, we are now observing, as a result of global warming and climate change, climate extremities in terms of severe droughts and floods. Droughts have detrimental effects on our rainfed agriculture and threatens the national food security. This has compelled Botswana to make financial budgets for drought relief as a measure to mitigate the effects of drought.

Due to uncertainties associated with global warming and climate change, there is a need to deepen our understanding of the possible impact of climate change on other sectors such as water resources, incidence of pests and diseases such as malaria.

Botswana therefore requires all the support to refine her understanding of the future climate, so that focused and appropriate response mechanisms can be designed for implementation. On this front, I particularly wish to commend the United States Country Studies Programme and the United Nations Development Programme Global Environment Facility for the training, capacity building and their support towards the development of the Initial National Communication.

Mr President, allow me now to turn to issues relating to climate change, investment and development:

Botswana has put in place, a number of policies, which will facilitate the achievement of the objective of the Convention. For example, our energy policy places emphasis on the promotion of renewable energy technologies and since 1992, a programme to promote the use of renewable energy technologies has been put in place. Further, a revolving fund from which members of the public may borrow to purchase and install individual photovoltaic solar systems was established by Government to promote the use of solar systems. In May this year, we inaugurated the first Photovoltaic Power Station which is supplying electricity to a village of five hundred people and it is my Government's intention to replicate such power systems in other needy rural areas situated away from the national power grid.

The application of renewable energy resources and the use of clean technologies in our commercial and industrial sectors reduces the greenhouse gas emissions. We are gradually shifting towards cleaner means of production by reducing reliance on fossil fuel in order to protect the environment.

Mr President, while we appreciate the Global Environment Facility support for enabling activities, we are nonetheless concerned at the slow pace with which funding for project development is being made available. Due to this delay, Botswana for example, was compelled to use scarce domestic funds to promote renewable energy technologies. It is time that we move faster towards the implementation of this programme so as to reduce the financial burden on the national economies.

Botswana looks forward to the conclusion on the discussions on the criteria for the implementation of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). This mechanism is intended to benefit non Annex I Parties and to address the specific situation of developing countries as well as assist small emitting countries like Botswana

to benefit from the technology development and technology transfer anticipated under the CDM Project activities. I call upon the Conference of the Parties to agree on the Clean Development Mechanism that will meet the specific situation of developing countries which are Parties to the Convention such as Botswana.

Mr President, there is also a need to further strengthen capacity building for both private and public sectors on issues relating to global warming and climate change. Botswana on her part has started to engage the private sector in the discussions that relate technology development to climate change. We feel that in this way the business communities in our country will appreciate the link between profit and climate change. For Botswana to achieve this objective, she will need support in the form of funding and expertise from the cooperating partners.

Mr President, let me conclude by thanking you for allowing me time to make this intervention and I would like to assure you that we will support you in the execution of this important task to ensure that COP5 has fruitful deliberations.