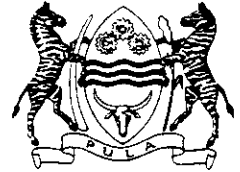


REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT

BY

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BOTSWANA**

ON AGENDA ITEM 3 (b): FOOD, HUNGER AND DISEASE

**DURING THE 14TH SESSION OF THE PERMANENT
FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES**

**20th APRIL 2015 – 1st MAY 2015
NEW YORK**

Please Check against Delivery

Madam Chair,

1. Allow me to join other delegations in congratulating you on your election as Chair of the 14th Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. I wish to assure you of the full support and cooperation of the Botswana delegation.
2. My delegation and I welcome the opportunity to contribute to the global discussion under this agenda item. We find the discussion to be as timely as it is propitious in coinciding with the finalisation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, the new global framework which seeks to deliver a prosperous future for present and future generations, leaving no one behind.

Madam Chair,

3. Botswana attaches great importance to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. These international instruments, as well as other Treaties and Conventions Botswana is party to, continue to guide our national development plans and implementation processes in the endless enterprise by the Government to deliver inclusive and sustainable development for all people of Botswana.
4. These efforts are consistent with the Botswana Constitution which guarantees fundamental freedoms and basic human rights including equality before the law for all Botswana and, proscribes all forms of discrimination on the basis of colour, race, ethnicity, religion, gender or social status amongst others.

Madam Chair,

5. Botswana has made significant progress regarding the Millennium Development Goals, particularly goals 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 that address eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, education, promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women, as well as reduction of infant mortality as well as combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria, and other diseases.

6. Having achieved universal access to education, Botswana is currently working hard to ensure its quality and relevance in the job market. Botswana has also almost achieved universal access to health with all public health services including maternal and child welfare services, being offered free of charge throughout the country.
7. Furthermore, Botswana adopted a National Health Policy in 2011 which commits to exploring and promoting the evidence-based utilisation of herbal and other alternate medicines through mutual collaboration with alternative-health practitioners.
8. Efforts to eradicate absolute poverty in Botswana have also intensified with the introduction of a national flagship programme which primarily seeks to empower communities to initiate economic empowerment projects. This Poverty Eradication Programme offers grants to communities, targeting mainly the poor, youth, people with disabilities and women.
9. In addition, the Government of Botswana has a deliberate programme that empowers local communities to utilise natural resources found in their areas and engage in income-generating activities which uplift their lives whilst also creating employment.

Madam Chair,

10. To further address the socio-economic and development challenges of remote area communities, the Government of Botswana approved an Affirmative Action Framework for Remote Area Communities in July of 2014.
11. The Affirmative Action Framework was introduced specifically to promote and enhance regular consultations with remote area communities, implementation of identified programmes and projects for their benefit amongst others. It is regularly monitored by the Botswana Government for its effectiveness and impact.

12. In conclusion Madam Chair, Botswana wishes to reaffirm her steadfast commitment to ensuring that all citizens in the country enjoy their fundamental freedoms and basic human rights as enshrined in the Botswana Constitution and international instruments on human rights. To this end, the Botswana Government will continue to engage the UN and other relevant stakeholders at the national, regional and international levels.

I thank you for your kind attention.