



# UNCTAD 14

## Nairobi, 17–22 July 2016

FOURTEENTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT



UNITED NATIONS  
UNCTAD

### General Debate

Statement by the Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry of Botswana

Wednesday, 20 July 2016

Speaker: Honourable Vincent T. Seretse

*Not checked against delivery\**

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\* This statement is made available in the language and form in which it was received. The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of UNCTAD.



**Republic of Botswana**

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**STATEMENT**

**BY**

**MINISTER OF INVESTMENT, TRADE AND INDUSTRY**

**HON. VINCENT T. SERETSE**

**AT THE FOURTEENTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT**

**(UNCTAD 14)**

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**Date: 20<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2016**  
**Venue: NAIROBI, KENYA**



**Your Excellencies Heads of State and Government;**

**Distinguished Ministers or their Representatives;**

**Secretary General of UNCTAD;**

**Madam President;**

**Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen;**

1. Madam President grant me the honour to join others in expressing our sincere gratitude to the Government and the people of the Republic of Kenya for their warm hospitality and courtesy extended to me and my delegation since our arrival, as well as the conducive environment for our deliberations.
2. I would also like to extend our appreciation and gratitude to Dr Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD and his team, for the time and energy invested in preparing for this Conference.

**Madam President,**

3. Reflecting on the past, I could not help but notice that the theme adopted for UNCTAD 13, "**Development-centred Globalisation: Towards inclusive and sustainable growth and development**", continues to have resonance to date. As we meet four (4) years after Doha it is time for us to pause and look back, it is time for introspection, a time for stocktaking so that we can identify our achievements and challenges we encountered. This will benefit our discussions immensely going forward. In the Doha Manar, we reaffirmed our commitment to collectively address challenges and build a more development-centred globalisation, a more inclusive and sustainable growth and development. The backdrop then was a global economic and financial crisis, fragile recovery, high food prices, energy challenges and natural disasters, just to mention a few.

4. Equally important then was the recognition that cross-cutting issues were just as critical. These include good governance, peace and security, respect for human rights, gender equality and empowerment of both women and the youth, and an overall commitment to justice and democracy. We recognised then that these are essential for sustainable and equitable growth and development.
  
5. **Madam President.** It is quite disheartening that despite our good intentions, Post-Doha remains much the same as Pre-Doha. The record shows that poverty persists between and within states – world population living in extreme poverty is estimated at over 1 billion – with most living in middle income countries; growth remains sluggish and fragile; FDI does not always go to sectors with enormous multiplier effects, and therefore has not contributed meaningfully to sustainable development; unemployment has risen; unhealthy dependence on debt remains; diversification remains elusive; benefits of growth are unevenly distributed- climate change

and environmental degradation are also threats to developing countries.

6. We know colleagues that in our interconnected world, crisis in one area ripples through the world; the financial crisis in 2008 is a perfect reminder, that indeed we live in a global village. Security in one place undermines security in a myriad other places; and worst of all, damage to the climate imperils the entire globe.
7. The unprecedented levels of migration; devastating droughts, rising water levels and internal conflicts are just some additional examples of issues at the centre of our discussions.
8. So we gather here today, encouraged by what is possible, but also anxious given the scale of the development challenge, the complexity of the issues that need to be tackled, and the magnitude of resources required to respond adequately. Our resolve to deliver on the promises made through the various landmark agreements of recent times will definitely be put to

the test. We should remain resolute in our pursuit to achieve the goals we have set to make a world a better place for us and the future generations.

9. **Madam President**, the story is no different for Botswana. The country is faced with challenges relating to persistent unemployment, which is highest among the youth; the uncertainties, which come with primary commodity dependence; inward investment which is rather limited to the extractive industries; and most of all, elusive diversification. Being landlocked, over burdened by supply-side constraints and the challenges of middle-income categorisation, makes the challenge all the more daunting. Resources should therefore be geared towards strengthening the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action and the Sustainable Development Goals, so as to address the special needs, challenges and vulnerabilities of the landlocked developing countries (LLDCs).

10. As a people centred democracy, which places a high premium on good governance and embraces accountability by public figures and institutions, accepting that political power comes with responsibility and subordination to the will of the people, we leave no stone unturned to deliver inclusive growth, sustainable development, and peace for our people. The actions we take are necessary but insufficient. Technology transfer, FDI for job creation, international cooperation and the work of UNCTAD are greatly needed in this endeavour. UNCTAD's universal membership provides an opportunity for inclusive and transparent engagement in a manner that accommodates the interests and voices of all.

11. In this connection, **Madam President**, we reaffirm the central role of UNCTAD, as the focal point within the UN for the integrated treatment on trade and development and interrelated issues in the areas of finance, technology, investment and sustainable development. Botswana believes that UNCTAD should be adequately resourced to make a



positive contribution through research and consensus building on appropriate policy responses on the best ways to harness our productive capacities for real economic structural transformation. In this regard, we call for support to be extended to UNCTAD's work to ensure the implementation of Agenda 2030 for sustainable development.

12. In this debate, **Policy space** remains a critical enabler to reaching our development objectives, which we believe has been the case for all countries – across the development divide, at one point or the other. We, therefore, need to collectively come to the realisation and understanding, from a development perspective, of the difference between protectionism and the use of legitimate policy measures to promote industrial development.

**Madam President,**

13. Discussions taking place in other fora are also important here. In this connection, we reaffirm the continuing relevance of the rules-based Multilateral Trading System and its potential

contribution to the realisation of sustainable economic growth, as espoused in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We are gratified that the Conference (MC-10 that is) agreed to maintain the centrality of development and reaffirmed that special and differential treatment shall remain integral to any future WTO work. The development agenda, therefore, requires the WTO's complementary role.

**Madam President,**

14. We underline and recognize the thrust and momentum created by the significant decisions of 2015 aimed at shaping the development agenda. These include the: Addis Ababa Action Agenda; 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 21); and the 10<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference. In addition, the recently held Istanbul Humanitarian Summit, which sought to reinstate human wellbeing at the pinnacle of everything we do. This would not have come at a better time. It is only logical that focus should be directed at ensuring that UNCTAD 14

translates these landmark commitments into actions, in line with the theme of this Conference, "***From Decision to Action: Moving towards an inclusive and equitable global economic environment for trade and development***".

**Madam President,**

15. Botswana remains committed to supporting the **strengthening of UNCTAD's mandate** to deliver on its programmes of research and analysis, consensus building, technical cooperation and capacity building, so that it is better equipped to deliver on the needs of the developing community. We call on the Conference to strengthen UNCTAD, including through the **provision of adequate resources** in order to effectively deliver on its mandate.

16. Let me conclude, **Madam President,** by reiterating my Government's commitment and support for the mandate and role that UNCTAD plays in the development agenda. The

analytical capital of UNCTAD must therefore be strengthened for the benefit of us all. This can in-turn facilitate opportunities for developing countries to effectively integrate and benefit from new and unfolding global developments.

**I THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION.**