



REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

INTERVENTION

BY

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**AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

DURING

**UNCTAD BRIEFING FOR AMBASSADORS OF LANDLOCKED
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (LLDCs)**

VIRTUAL

7 DECEMBER 2020

Excellences;

Distinguished Ladies and Gentleman;

- 1.** Our Chair, here in New York and the Coordinator in Geneva, dear colleagues Magzhan (Kazakhstan) and Pervesuren (Mongolia) have both eloquently represented the common challenges we face as LLDCs and as Botswana we endorse their assessment of the situation.
- 2.** Indeed, under the present circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, more than ever before active engagement by UNCTAD and other UN entities including OHRLLS is urgently required to enforce support to countries with special needs like our own through implementation of the relevant SDGs and 3Cs as it was already said.
- 3.** Our economies are undoubtedly facing significantly subdued growth, characterized also by the severe disruptions of the supply chains needed for cross-border trade that is particularly crucial for LLDCs.
- 4.** We therefore join our Chair, Megzhan, to call for active involvement by UNCTAD and other entities to support the outcomes of the September LLDCs Ministerial Declaration.
- 5.** For some of our countries, we are not just constrained by landlocked status. We are also dependent on a limited list of options for economic diversification and overly dependent on specific sectors; and in our case mainly reliant on an extractive sector-led economy.
- 6.** We are therefore extremely exposed to global shocks, such as the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- 7.** As Paul rightly said, COVID-19 just added to, and compounded this vulnerability, given also that in Botswana the minerals sector had already been underperforming.
- 8.** That said, anything that UNCTAD and other entities can do to enhance our ability to effectively diversify the economy and trade better will be welcomed.

- 9.** Despite the challenges however, we also remain hopeful that the road to recovery can still be achieved. We particularly see the opportunity in our case as Botswana given that presently our National Development Plan (NDP) 11 is at Mid-term Review.
- 10.** While thanking UNCTAD for the ongoing support already being provided to our countries, we would highly recommend that the timeliness offered by Mid-term reviews of National Development Plans should not be missed so that national policy makers can benefit better from your competencies in analytical research that can ensure quick and better recovery.
- 11.** I would conclude by appreciating the excellent briefs by both Paul, Patrick and Mussie on the support UNCTAD is providing to our countries, and the emphasis you just placed on productive capacities.
- 12.** Be reassured that, together with fellow LLDCs colleagues here in New York, as Botswana we will continue to play our active role to ensure that UNCTAD is properly resourced and capacitated to better support developing countries in particular those with special circumstances like Botswana.

I thank you for your kind attention.