

REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

"Promoting Botswana's Interests Abroad"

**Special
Issue**
ECOSOC

A Year In Review



**BOTSWANA'S TENURE AS THE PRESIDENT OF THE
UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
(ECOSOC) - 2022 SESSION**





MINISTRY OVERVIEW

The primary responsibility of the Ministry is to manage and nurture Botswana's relations with the international community, and promote the country's interests abroad. As a custodian of Botswana's foreign policy, the Ministry guides the Government in the conduct of its relations with the international community.

This involves fostering strategic partnerships in, among others, the following: economic, political, trade, educational, health, and cultural sectors. The mandate of the Ministry is derived from Botswana's Constitution and its scope and breadth, is informed by Government Notice 356 of 2002. The Ministry is headed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The current Minister is Honourable Dr. Lemogang Kwaape. He was appointed to this portfolio on 26th August 2020. The Executive head of the Ministry is Ambassador Dr. Gladys Mokhawa, who assumed the role of Permanent Secretary in April 2021.



HONOURABLE DR. LEMOGANG KWAPE
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS



AMBASSADOR DR. GLADYS MOKHAWA
PERMANENT SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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Our vision

To be a respected and influential player in world affairs

Our Values

• Integrity • Discipline • Professionalism • Patriotism • Botho

Our Mission

MFA exists to promote and manage foreign relations as well as advance Botswana's interests abroad.

The Ministry also provides protocol and consular services in accordance with international norms and practice. The Ministry is committed to providing professional, effective and efficient services to its clients and stakeholders

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About the Special Issue Publication

The Special Issue is periodically published to articulate and inform on foreign policy positions and initiatives undertaken by Botswana on bilateral, regional and multilateral platforms. Notably, the publication serves to document the various global leadership roles that Botswana has held and the contributions she has made in areas such as sustainable development, peace and security.

This second Special Issue on Botswana's global leadership roles, focuses on Botswana's tenure as President of the **United Nations (UN) Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)** which ran from July 2021 to July 2022. Botswana assumed the Presidency on 23rd July 2021, and was represented by the country's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York, Ambassador Mr. Collen Vixen Kelapile. The theme for the 2022 ECOSOC Session was, **"Building back better from COVID-19 while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda"**. During her Presidency, Botswana was committed to driving the following areas in order to advance the ECOSOC's mandate:

- (i) **Swift Recovery from COVID-19** by promoting access to vaccines for all;
- (ii) Creating **Fiscal space for a COVID-19 response and recovery** by mobilising resources for response and recovery efforts;
- (iii) Addressing **inequalities within and between countries**;
- (iv) **Resuming developments after conflicts** by advancing immediate post-conflict recovery and effective peacebuilding for countries emerging from conflict;
- (v) Advancing **Science Technology and Innovation (STI)**;
- (vi) Addressing the **climate crisis and biodiversity loss**;
- (vii) Promoting **inclusivity and partnerships** towards the realisation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and
- (viii) Promoting **youth matters** by providing a platform for youth engagement and participation.

Multilateralism remains the cornerstone of Botswana's foreign policy. Accordingly, the Presidency provided the country with the opportunity to contribute to the continental development agenda and advance universal norms and standards that are consistent with our national values and interests. As such, through her steadfast leadership, Botswana was able to contribute towards global solutions aimed at addressing various issues such as climate change and advancement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Presidency further underscored Botswana's commitment to working hand-in-hand with the global community to foster eco-friendly sustainable global development, peace and security.

We thank the Ministry's team that contributed to this publication. In particular, we wish to acknowledge the Multilateral Department, Botswana Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York and the ECOSOC interns for the instrumental role they played in supporting Botswana's Presidency.

Foreword

Botswana held the key position of the President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) from 23rd July 2021 to 25th July 2022. ECOSOC is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations (UN). The other five principal organs of the UN are the General Assembly, Security Council, Trusteeship Council, International Court of Justice, and the UN Secretariat. Botswana has previously served as a member of ECOSOC from 1983-1985, 1991-1993, and 2014-2016.

I am very delighted that Botswana had a successful ECOSOC Presidency and delivered on our eight broad priorities outlined by Ambassador Collen Vixen Kelapile in his inaugural address of 23 July 2021 as reflected in this Special Issue.

The eight broad priorities of our ECOSOC Presidency were swift recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic; fiscal space for a COVID-19 response and recovery; ending inequalities within and between countries; post-conflict recovery; leveraging science, technology and innovation; addressing climate crisis and biodiversity loss; promoting inclusivity and partnerships; and increasing youth engagement.

During our Presidency, the overarching theme of both the 2022 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) and ECOSOC was **"Building Back Better from the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) While Advancing the Full Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development."**



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I wish to thank all those who supported our ECOSOC Presidency, starting with the Bureau of the Council for the 2022 Session. We commend the strong collaboration that the President of ECOSOC had with the UN President of the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly, UN Secretary-General and the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission.

I sincerely thank the Resident Coordinator, H.E. Mr. Zia Choudhury, who supported our pioneering Internship Programme. I am grateful that our five Interns were part of the Botswana delegation to the 2022 High Level Political Forum (HLPF). During their one-month stay in New York, the Interns were attached to the Permanent Mission of Botswana to the United Nations (BOTSREP) and to DESA.

We highly appreciate the strong support that we received from the United Nations Secretariat, particularly the then Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Mr. Liu Zhenmin, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), and Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM).

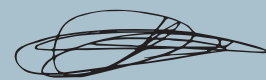
Equally, we thank all key stakeholders that embraced our Presidency, to name but a few; Members and non-members of the Council, Major Groups and Other Stakeholders, the African Union Permanent Observer Mission to the

United Nations, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA) to the UN Secretary-General, and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA).

Similarly, I thank the Team that was assembled to select our ECOSOC Interns drawn from the Permanent Mission of Botswana to the United Nations in New York; Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Ministry of Youth, Gender, Sport and Culture; Human Resource Development Council; and Office of the Resident Coordinator.

Furthermore, I wish to extend appreciation to the Multilateral Department which supervised and mentored the Interns; the Department of Global Communications of the United Nations and our Ministry's Department of Public Diplomacy, Research and Policy Analysis that assisted with communication and social media activities that widely publicized the work of the Council and the ECOSOC Presidency.

I hope that you will find this Special Issue both exciting and informative.



.....
HON. DR. LEMOGANG KWAPPE
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS



As President of one of the six principal organs of the United Nations, we established a good working relationship with the UN Secretariat and Secretary-General António Guterres, President of the General Assembly, H.E. Abdulla Shahid, and Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Introduction

The ECOSOC Presidency has assisted immensely to advance Botswana's foreign policy priorities, in particular making Botswana a respected and influential player in world affairs, enhancing the image and profile of the country.

Through our ECOSOC Presidency, we were more exposed to the work of the UN Council and its subsidiary bodies. We gained vast experience and better understanding of ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies and the contribution it continues to make to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and follow-up to United Nations conferences and Summits in the economic, social and environmental fields.

We will continue to share our invaluable experience and expertise with the Council as a re-elected member of the Council from 2023-2025.

Our ECOSOC Presidency has also assisted us to advance our economic diplomacy and to make a modest contribution to multilateralism, international cooperation and solidarity, with particular focus on matters of sustainable development, peacebuilding, humanitarian assistance, durable peace and security.

During the ECOSOC High-Level Segment on 18th July 2022, Ambassador Kelapile convened two dialogues on ***"Future-Proofing Multilateralism for a Resilient and Inclusive Recovery"*** and ***"Looking Ahead: Acting Today to Secure a Better Future,"*** to discuss

responses and recovery from the current global crises that impede implementation of the SDGs.

As President of one of the six principal organs of the United Nations, we established a good working relationship with the UN Secretariat and Secretary-General António Guterres, President of the General Assembly, H.E. Abdulla Shahid, and Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission. Ambassador Kelapile has addressed the UN Security Council on issues related to ECOSOC.

The strong collaboration between the Presidents of ECOSOC and the General Assembly and the Secretary-General facilitated the effective implementation of the General Assembly decisions on the strengthening of ECOSOC and HLPF, as well as, the recommendations of the report of the Secretary-General on ***"Our Common Agenda"*** pertaining to the work of ECOSOC.

These included the reassessment of the role of the Commission on the Status of Women with a view to strengthening efforts towards gender equality in all United Nations intergovernmental processes, reflection on youth participation in ECOSOC work, and the proposal on the Biennial Summit between the members of the Group of 20 (G-20), ECOSOC, the Secretary-General, and the Heads of International Financial Institutions. The implementation of these proposals is still ongoing and is one of the main priorities of our successor – H.E. Ms. Lachezara Stoeva, the 78th President of ECOSOC.

ECOSOC at a Glance

ECOSOC is one of the six principal organs established by the UN Charter in 1945. The first meeting of the Council was convened in London from 23rd January to 18th February 1946. Since the Council's establishment, membership has grown from 18 in 1945 to 54 Member States.

Each year in June, 18 members of ECOSOC are elected by the General Assembly for three-year terms. The Organisation's 54 members are drawn from the five UN Regional Groups. The distribution of seats is as follows:

- **14 members from the African Group;**
- **11 members from Asia-Pacific Group;**
- **6 members from the Eastern European Group;**
- **10 members from Latin American and Caribbean Group; and**
- **13 members from Western European and Other Group.**

ECOSOC's Bureau is elected at the beginning of each annual session that runs from July to July, consisting of the President and four Vice-Presidents representing the five UN

Regional Groups. The Presidency of ECOSOC is rotational. The four Vice-Presidents oversee the **Management; Operational Activities for Development; Humanitarian Affairs;** and **Coordination Segments** of ECOSOC.

On 21st July 2020, Botswana, was elected as one of the Vice Presidents to ECOSOC Bureau for the 2021 session and assigned the **Management Segment**. The Vice-President assigned this Segment, automatically becomes the President of ECOSOC in the following session. As such, Botswana became the President of ECOSOC during its 2022 session. This was the first time that Botswana assumed the Presidency of the Council.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ECOSOC PRESIDENT

The President of ECOSOC takes charge of the ECOSOC Forums such as the Youth Forum, Partnership Forum, Financing for Development (FfD) Forum, Development Cooperation Forum (DCF), Multistakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals (STI Forum) and the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF).



ECOSOC brings people and issues together to promote collective action for a sustainable world

The President of ECOSOC appoints Co-Facilitators for the FfD and HLPF outcome documents, as well as Co-Chairs of the STI Forum.

ECOSOC SEGMENTS

The President of ECOSOC divides the responsibility of ECOSOC Segments among his or her four Vice-Presidents after consulting them.

1. Management Segment adopts reports, decisions and resolutions from ECOSOC and its subsidiary and related bodies and meets twice per cycle year. It also schedules elections, nominations, confirmations and appointments to fill vacancies in ECOSOC subsidiary bodies.

2. Coordination Segment provides policy guidelines on the annual theme of ECOSOC, which feeds into the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

3. Operational Activities for Development Segment is an important accountability platform for the UN development system and results at the country level.

4. Humanitarian Affairs Segment aims to improve and coordinate the UN system's humanitarian response in the broader context of international efforts to address disasters and other humanitarian emergencies.



STATEMENT

by

His Excellency Dr. Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

It is my profound honour and real delight to share with you my reflections of our Presidency of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), for the period starting 23rd of July 2021 until 25th July 2022.

The Republic of Botswana attained this milestone position for the first time ever since the inception of the organ in 1945 and our membership to the United Nations since our independence in 1966. The United Nations Economic and Social Council is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations alongside the Security

Council, General Assembly, Secretariat, Trusteeship Council, and the international Court of Justice.

For a small landlocked developing African country like ours, this is an enormous achievement that we should be proud of as a country and as a nation. Our flag has been raised high amongst the United Nations!

Batswana betsho, I would like to extend the most sincere gratitude to Ambassador Collen Vixen Kelapile, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Botswana to the United Nations who exceptionally held the reigns as the ECOSOC President for Botswana. I equally commend the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for

having carved and coordinated this project to support the Ambassador and ensure the success of our Presidency. The Ministry for State President, other line ministries, the private sector and civil society organizations, your support and guidance have been an important part of this success story.

ECOSOC is the United Nation's pillar for the formulation of policy recommendations aimed at addressing social and economic challenges of United Nations (UN) member states. By composition, ECOSOC is the largest UN principal organ, comprising over 3200 affiliated Non-Governmental Organizations, 6 regional Commissions, functional Commissions and expert bodies.

ECOSOC has a unique role of coordinating the global development programmes, which were spearheaded in recent history by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of the Early 2000s which transformed into the current Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 Agenda. The ECOSOC calendar culminates annually in the High-level Political Forum (HLPF), which takes stock of global progress on the SDGs. I was privileged this year, to lead Botswana's delegation to this Forum in July 2022, to lend support to our Presidency and to thank the United Nations Member States for having trusted us to lead the ECOSOC at this critical time on our road to 2030.

The Republic of Botswana assumed this position at the most challenging

time in recent history due the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic. The country and the rest of the world were faced with unprecedented economic and social challenges that still smolders to this day. With that in consideration, the presidency adopted strategic objectives that coincide with our Vision 2036, our national development plan, the Economic Recovery and Transformation Plan (ERTP) and the Reset Agenda. The priorities also focused on a collective swift recovery from the pandemic particularly with reference to the developing world.

At the HLPF this year, Five (5) SDGs, were singled out for voluntary national reviews on the SDGs, in which Botswana participated for the second time. These included **SDG 4 - Quality Education; SDG 5 - Gender Equality; SDG 14- Life under water; SDG 15- Life on land; and SDG 17 - Partnerships.** In his inaugural statement as President of ECOSOC, Ambassador Collen Vixen Kelapile represented our ideals very well when he noted that the Presidency recognizes the 2030 Agenda as the formidable developmental blueprint that can be fast-tracked through fruitful and widespread partnerships. It is against this background that my government continues to cultivate and harness collaboration with various partners at bilateral level and through the

United Nations System to facilitate different sectors of the economy. The Botswana - UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2022 to 2026 is in this respect an important catalyst for our achievement of the SDGs by 2030.

Bagaetsho, Botswana has made significant strides in achieving the SDGs. This is attributed to the efforts of the government in mainstreaming the SDGs into the national development plans. On SDG 4, Quality Education, the government has adopted the Domestication Plan that has allowed widespread collaboration and to some extent decentralization of roles in the education sector. The government continues to provide compulsory basic education for all supported by the Affirmative Action Programme that facilitates access to education for the poor and marginalized. At the height of the pandemic, the government augmented the teaching staff in schools across the country as a way of ensuring sustenance of quality education. In order to facilitate access to tertiary education, the government through the Ministry of Education has in August 2022 dedicated P100million towards re-sponsorship of tertiary students.

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On SDG 5-Gender Equality, it should be noted that the pandemic exacerbated gender based violence, and also widened the gender disparity gap in the country. Unprecedented numbers of GBV cases were recorded during the lockdown periods of the pandemic. As the government, we have since then adopted new legislations targeted at the protection of women and girls against abuse. Furthermore, in 2021 the government established the Inter-ministerial Committee on GBV to coordinate GBV prevention initiatives. These include the recently enacted Sex Offenders Registry Act, Abolition of Marital Power Act and the Children's Act. Further efforts have been made to empower and uplift Women to Leadership positions. Through the Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA), the government aims to empower the youth and women to be independent and self-sufficient to curb vulnerabilities.

It is my goal to ensure satisfactory representation of this country in all international organizations and opportunities like this for the youth are the starting point. I am glad to state that the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office in Botswana has indicated commitment to supporting the government's efforts of capacitating Batswana youth through career development programmes.

than ever as the country needs an economic boost from the aftermath of the pandemic. Biodiversity loss due to climate change is an existential threat to the tourism industry of this country.

The government continues to play an important role in global climate action initiatives as a way of being proactive with regard to this threat. At the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) 50th anniversary, Botswana reconfirmed her commitment to global solidarity in addressing environmental threats and climate change.

The theme for the 2022 ECOSOC Presidency Session **“Building back better from COVID-19 while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda”** called for decisive actions in advancing development amidst the pandemic and the government of Botswana has made significant progress. I have continually called for equity in the covid-19 response, particularly in relation to access to vaccines, and I have used every opportunity to call on investors to partner with us with our own manufacturing sector. Our efforts are bearing fruits. In March 2022, we launched a breakthrough project of Pula Corbervax,



a covid-19 vaccine that will be produced locally in collaboration with Nantworks.

My government recognizes the importance of youth involvement in the development process and their empowerment as an investment for the future. It is on that background that the government found it fit to enroll 5 Batswana to serve as interns in supporting the ECOSOC Presidency. Their first-hand experience and international exposure will be advantageous in their career development. The success of this pilot programme serves as a blueprint of initiatives aimed at creating youth job creation opportunities at an international level. These 5 Batswana youth should inspire other young Batswana to take up other government youth programmes to their benefit. This however, will be motivational only if we join

efforts and recognise the unique skills developed for the interns by offering them permanent employment. It is my goal to ensure satisfactory representation of this country in all international organizations and opportunities like this for the youth are the starting point. I am glad to state that the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office in Botswana has indicated commitment to supporting the government's efforts of capacitating Batswana youth through career development programmes. As we recover from the wrath of the pandemic, the government deems youth involvement as an integral part of an inclusive and resilient recovery process and my government will continue to do all it can to empower them.

Bagaetsho,
The Presidency has been concluded on a positive note, and it has set an admirable precedence for future endeavors. With the benefit of hindsight, I can positively say this leadership role of a United Nations principal organ has enabled us to realise a key objective of our foreign policy – promoting national image and being a respected player in international affairs - beyond expectation. I am confident that we are ready and well equipped to undertake any leadership opportunity at an international level that may present itself.

Pula!!!

Inaugural Statement by

Ambassador Mr. Collen Vixen Kelapile

DELIVERED ON 23RD JULY 2021

Let me begin by thanking you profoundly for entrusting me with this important responsibility, as President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) at its 2022 Session. On behalf of Botswana, and I personally, we are indeed honoured and delighted to serve as this is also the first time we assume the Presidency of this Principal Organ of the United Nations since its founding in 1945.

I take this opportunity to warmly congratulate my immediate predecessor, His Excellency Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, for his sterling stewardship of the 2021 Session of ECOSOC. As a member of his outgoing Bureau as Vice-President, I benefitted a lot from his immense wisdom. I will build on the solid foundation he established, to further advance the important mandate of this August Council.

I, equally, commend the outstanding

contribution by my fellow colleagues Vice-Presidents of the outgoing Bureau for the 2021 Session -- Their Excellencies Permanent Representatives of Switzerland, Ukraine and the Deputy Permanent Representative of Mexico. I thank them for the collaborative atmosphere that prevailed during our tenure, which allowed us to effectively support the outgoing President of the Council.

I wish to, once again, seize this opportunity to congratulate my colleagues the Permanent Representatives of Bolivia, Finland and Thailand on their deserved election to our incoming Bureau for the 2022 Session. I look forward to working closely together once the Bureau is fully constituted with one more pending additional member, hopefully very soon.

As I assume the Presidency of ECOSOC, I do so fully aware of the associated heavy responsibilities and the legitimate expectations, especially by those whom we serve around the world who look to the United Nations for assistance. This is more so, when we are still going through an unprecedented crisis, way beyond what we could have imagined two years ago. The current surge of COVID-19 across the world, and its much more transmittable variants, threatens to further derail the much more needed global economic recovery.

In my view--as we continue our concerted efforts to deal with the challenges we face -- ECOSOC's role has become even more critical, and is no less important than the other peer Principal Organs of the United Nations, including the Security Council and the General Assembly.

In other words, the difficult circumstances we face demand that ECOSOC must rise to the occasion and play its rightful role in waging a spirited war against disease, poverty and inequality, impacts of climate change as well as effective mobilization of both global action and resources during the Decade of Action to accelerate implementation of all the SDGs.

Notwithstanding the ravages of the pandemic, I still believe that the ambitious nature of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Goals remain a formidable blueprint for all our nations to work even harder to deliver its promise.

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I am fully committed to support the UN Secretary-General to address the emerging challenges facing the international community. In his recent statement to the General Assembly, the Secretary-General spoke of four horsemen who are threatening the world: Global geostrategic tensions, existential climate crisis, deep and global mistrust in societies and the dark side of the digital world. I firmly believe that ECOSOC must also be concerned, and has a contribution to make in all these areas identified by the Secretary-General.

Distinguished delegates,
The theme of this year's ECOSOC Session is therefore at the heart of the lives of people across the world: **“Building back better from COVID- 19 while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda.”** But as we speak, today we are going through a very fragile and imbalanced recovery effort to contain the COVID-19 pandemic. Many developing countries continue to bear the excessive brunt and severity of the pandemic, and face acute lack of financial resources and urgent access to life-saving vaccines to support their response efforts.

The IMF also estimates that the pandemic has increased the financing needs to meet the SDGs by an average annual 2.5 percentage points of GDP for all low-income developing countries. At the same time, many developed countries and emerging economies have started seeing light at the end of the tunnel, in part due to better access and successful roll out of vaccines programmes and well-funded stimulus packages.

One of the most critical lessons we are learning during the ongoing pandemic is that global solidarity, multilateralism and cooperation are indeed our greatest assets. When we work together, our ability to overcome hardship is unparalleled. We have seen this in the incredible progress of science over the past year on the rapid production of the vaccines themselves.

At the same time, as the UN Secretary-General also reminded us, divisiveness stands as one of our biggest threat. Certainly, the existing North- South divide which this pandemic is deepening cannot be allowed to widen further. We

are stronger as a collective, and we must immediately address any and all differences among our nations. Failure to do so, will only worsen the geopolitical and socio-economic tensions and deeply affect our present and future generations.

Distinguished delegates,
The road ahead will therefore remain difficult, but there are obvious areas where, working together, we can make rapid gains. I would like to outline some of broad pillars that will underpin my ECOSOC Presidency:

a) Swift Recovery from COVID-19
firstly, we must ensure swift recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic through urgent access to vaccines for everyone. Scientific progress, that was seen in the rapid development of the vaccines, can only be a true measure of success if access to the vaccines is not exclusively for some. True Global solidarity requires that our saying that no one is safe until everyone is safe be followed by concrete action.

I therefore join the call for the vaccines to be treated as a global common good -- not for some but for all and everyone. We must take urgent measures to prioritize the most vulnerable, especially in developing countries, particularly those in special situations, in conflict and emerging from conflict. The current disappointing trends in which developing countries are expected to vaccinate just half their populations by the end of 2021 -- while some of the advanced economies are projected to reach full coverage sooner -- is not a sustainable way to combat a global pandemic of the magnitude we are facing.

Mid-way before the convening of the 2022 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), I therefore intend to organize a dedicated Special Meeting of ECOSOC to take stock on the progress made to date, and how we can bolster efforts to ensure universal access to the COVID-19 vaccines.

b) Fiscal Space for a COVID-19 Response and Recovery
Secondly, we must ensure adequate fiscal space for a COVID-19 response and recovery, that is also aligned with achieving the SDGs. We entered the Decade of Action with an already worrisomely slow progress in SDGs implementation and a huge

financing gap for the Development Goals. But with the COVID-19 pandemic, the clear reality now is that any meaningful progress towards achieving the SDGs, especially in developing countries, has been severely undermined further. Extraordinary measures need to be taken to mobilize resources from all sources for immediate response, as well as for long-term investments in critical socio-economic systems and infrastructure while also preserving the environment.

As things stand now, less than 20 % of stimulus and recovery funds have been spent in developing countries where the needs are much greater. Ambitious and innovative structural ways for debt reduction and relief; meeting commitments for Official Development Assistance and climate change funding; mobilizing multi-stakeholder partnerships including the private sector for the SDGs financing; improving tax systems, are imperatives for adequate fiscal space for supporting a sustainable recovery.

The Financing for Development Forum should continue to advance these discussions, building on the outcomes of the 2021 FFD Forum.

c) Inequalities within and between countries
Thirdly, the pandemic has evidently hit harder on the poorest and most vulnerable in our societies. With its multifaceted impacts on health, the economy, food security and education, the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed and further exacerbated pre-existing inequalities within and between countries. Socio-economic inequalities in access to quality public services and digital technologies have also been worsened as digital transformation sped up during the pandemic when remote work, on-line health services and learning became the “new normal”.

This crisis is having a particularly devastating effect on vulnerable groups in the labour market, including youth, women and migrant workers deployed in the hardest-hit sectors of our economies. In particular, women have been disproportionately affected as they are placed at the intersection of many disadvantages, thus worsening gender inequality.



The irony is that, even before the pandemic the extent of the inequality gaps was also extremely prevalent in Middle Income Countries, including my own country, Botswana. This does not sit well at all, especially for countries that are presumably economically doing well.

Given that the situation will worsen after the pandemic, I am convinced that ECOSOC should devote sufficient time to promote dialogue on what is required to decisively address the root causes of persistent inequalities within and between countries, and thus reinforce national and international efforts to promote equality. ECOSOC should also continue exploration of the interlinkages between inequalities, structural racism and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Building on the important groundwork begun by my predecessor, His Excellency Munir Akram, I believe that we can do more to identify and address the real root causes of inequalities and its interlinkages, such as structural racism. These are matters of serious concern which warrant our focus through dedicated discussions as ECOSOC.

d) Resuming development after conflicts

Fourth, post-conflict recovery and resuming development after conflicts is key to effective peacebuilding. Some parts of the globe, especially Africa from where I come, have historically witnessed recurrent challenges that threaten durable peace and security, in addition to other pre-existing multidimensional challenges of environmental stress, extreme weather conditions and climate change, food insecurity and hunger as well as rising rates of poverty. ECOSOC has an opportune moment to better utilize the newly mandated Meeting on Transition from Relief to development, to deliver on our mandates, particularly on the situations in the Sahel and Haiti, given their challenges.

To complement the work performed by other UN Organs and relevant bodies, I intend to leverage the role of ECOSOC to effectively assist countries emerging from conflict to return onto the road to long-term and sustainable development.

This can be achieved by further strengthening the relationship between ECOSOC and such important bodies like the Peacebuilding Commission through the joint meetings, in order to ensure more integrated support by the UN development system on humanitarian and development activities and support to peaceful societies.

e) Science, Technology and Innovation (STI)

Fifth, this pandemic has underscored the importance of transfer of technology, knowledge-sharing and scaling up support for innovation and technology, as a means for building resilience and overcoming pressing challenges. Advances in Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) have

accelerated during the pandemic, certainly with a promise for achieving the SDGs. But let us be clear that unless we close the digital divide and support the creation of knowledge everywhere, the pressing challenges including inequalities within and between countries will continue to fester and widen.

For instance, if we can work to close gaps in skills and data literacy, and reverse the setbacks incurred in access to education during the COVID-19 pandemic, we can move towards leveraging the full potential of human capabilities.

I therefore count on your continued active engagement at the Multistakeholder STI Forum to advance innovation, creative and ambitious STI strategies and policies to leapfrog our countries to achieve the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR).

f) Climate crisis and biodiversity loss

Sixth, the past decade has been the hottest on record, with global temperatures already risen 1.2 degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial levels. As already observed by many, this is dangerously close to the 1.5 degrees limit in the Paris Agreement. The escalation in the frequency of extreme weather events we are facing globally, including the catastrophic heatwaves, hurricanes, floods and droughts, is nature's painful reminder of the urgent need to address climate change and biodiversity loss. Again, we all know that the least contributors to Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions are especially the most vulnerable SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs and therefore heavily shouldering the impact.

We should also support ambitious and post-2020 biodiversity framework at the 15th Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP-15), and scale up ambition for sustainable use of oceans through Ocean conference.

ECOSOC also has an important role to contribute on the follow-up to COP-26 by encouraging further efforts to incorporate climate resilience into COVID-19 response and recovery initiatives; implementation of effective adaptation measures, especially in the most vulnerable countries, including by investing in climate resilient technologies and early warning systems as well as address the socio-economic dimensions of climate change.

I have already initiated informal exchange of views with the in-coming President of the General Assembly on how our two Charter bodies can jointly advance the climate agenda. The outcomes of joint engagement between the General Assembly and ECOSOC, together with other relevant stakeholders, should feed perfectly into the SDGs to be reviewed at 2022 HLPF on oceans and biodiversity.

g) Inclusivity and partnerships

Seventh, as ECOSOC, our efforts to address the global challenges we face cannot alone be sufficient if exclusively confined to intergovernmental engagements and without the input of those that are directly affected or have a contribution to make to reinforce our decision-making processes. The VNRs process, and other informal panel discussions that were also convened during the 2021 Session, are amongst other examples confirming that ECOSOC has since embraced the value of diversity of contributions through multi-stakeholder engagements.

The Council should therefore continue to serve as a formidable platform for inclusive dialogue and to foster partnerships involving also the views of Non-Governmental Organizations, Civil Society and private sector. In fact, Goal 17 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development does recognize the important contribution the private sector in particular can make if we are to achieve the SDGs.

i) Youth Matters

Eighth, as part of the inclusion agenda, I particularly look forward to the ECOSOC Youth Forum and to hearing from the global Youth, as an inspiration for our work in ECOSOC and the HLPF, on how we can with their involvement keep the compass on the SDGs in the current crisis. We should also leverage the strength of other global initiatives that play a prominent role in championing partnerships for opportunities for the youth, such as Generation Unlimited (GenU), which some of our global leaders are already actively engaged together with UNICEF.

During the 2022 ECOSOC Session, and within the confines of the established procedures, I will continue the work already started to ensure that the Council serves as a unique platform for inclusive dialogue and to foster partnerships with all relevant stakeholders.

Distinguished Delegates,

These were some of the broad themes I wanted to share around the work of ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies and the HLPF this year to support international solidarity and an SDG-guided recovery from the pandemic.

Let me add before I conclude that the HLPF in July 2022 will culminate one-year of ECOSOC segments, forums and other meetings of its subsidiary bodies. The HLPF will take stock of the continuing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the SDGs, in particular examining in-depth Goals 4 (on Education), Goal 5 (on Gender), Goal 14 (on Oceans), Goal 15 (on Biodiversity) and Goal 17 (on Means of implementation and Partnerships).



To support such an outcome, I believe that the VNRs process is an important mechanism for knowledge sharing, peer learning and high-level leadership buy-in in the implementation of the SDGs.



We will in the HLPF process take a critical look to determine whether our response and recovery efforts are moving us on to the path towards realizing the SDGs. My expectation is that the Forum should adopt a strong -- and hopefully another consensus-based Declaration -- with a limited number of recommendations for transformative policy actions, with emphasis also on international solidarity and multilateralism given the challenges we face.

To support such an outcome, I believe that the VNRs process is an important mechanism for knowledge-sharing, peer-learning and high-level leadership buy-in in the implementation of the SDGs. I will soon issue an invitation for countries to voluntarily express interest to present their VNRs during the HLPF in July 2022. I encourage those countries that intend to do so to carry out innovative, evidence-based and inclusive VNRs processes.

At the just ended 2021 Session, we had 42 VNRs presentations which is a commendable participation given the impacts of COVID-19. While I will encourage as many countries as possible to volunteer, it is also my view that we should aim to maximize the value of the VNRs process. We should allow reasonable interactive discussions with the presenting countries. To the extent possible, I plan to suggest an approach that limits the number of VNRs presentations at the next Session so as to ensure enough time for meaningful interaction on each review. We will certainly give priority to the first-time presenters, while also ensuring balance and diversity among presenting countries. I will also continue to make good use of the Group of Friends of VNRs, which has been led thus far with great success by Ambassador Sandoval of Mexico.

Also important is to ensure adequate follow-up to the VNRs implementation process in all countries. I am delighted that the recent reforms of the UN Development System, and the 2020 QCPR, have provided sufficient guidance on how the United Nations can help make this happen in programme countries. This will be part of the discussions at the Operational Activities Segment of ECOSOC, along with the broader follow-up to the QCPR and repositioning reforms. Placing focus on the interlinkages across the SDGs is also critical. For instance, the nexus between integrated food

systems, food security, poverty, climate change, water, sustainable agriculture is but one example where synergies can be leveraged to maximize the combined impact across the SDGs. I will count on the usual support from UN-DESA to ensure a seamless preparation of the VNRs and an in-depth review process of the selected SDGs.

Distinguished Delegates,

In conclusion, as we start to reflect on the organization of the most immediate work programme of the 2022 ECOSOC Session, including the newly mandated Coordination Segment and the Partnership Forum in January, the enhanced Meeting on Transition from Relief to Development and the process to improve the interaction between ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies, I would like to re-assure you of my commitment to encourage transparent and inclusive engagement with the entire membership of the Council.

I look forward to working closely with the members of the Bureau for the 2022 Session to implement the measures recently decided by the General Assembly in June, to strengthen ECOSOC and the HLPF. I will also use the General Assembly guidance to further improve the visibility, impact and inclusiveness of the HLPF and seek your ideas and views.

As a UN Charter body, ECOSOC has an important mandate to promote development. Its role has become even more critical in guiding and informing the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, mobilizing international solidarity as we seek to recover stronger and forge ahead to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Goals.

Building on the renewed momentum of commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of ECOSOC, I firmly believe that despite the challenges faced we can maximize the reach, relevance and impact of the Council, its segments and subsidiary bodies, the HLPF and other forums to recover stronger from this pandemic. I therefore count on your full support and cooperation!

I thank you.

KEY PRIORITY AREAS

MILESTONES REALISED DURING BOTSWANA'S PRESIDENCY

Presented below is a summary of some of the key milestones realised during Botswana's tenure. The focus is in the following priority areas:

1. Advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
2. Addressing the Challenges of our times;
3. Addressing the needs of countries in special situations;
4. Promotion of inclusivity and partnerships; and
5. Youth engagement

1 ADVANCING THE Sustainable development Goals



“ECOSOC must rise to the occasion and play its rightful role in waging a spirited war against disease, poverty and inequality, impacts of climate change as well as effective mobilization of both global action and resources during the Decade of Action to accelerate implementation of all the SDGs.” - H.E. Ambassador Mr. Collen Kelapile

Under this initiative a number of activities were carried out to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Among others, they included:

The convening of the 2022 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) and ECOSOC High-Level Segment during July 2022.

As part of the preparations for the 2022 HLPF, the Kingdom of the Netherlands and DESA co-hosted the **First Global Webinar for the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs)**, from 25-29 October 2021. **The Second Global Webinar for 2022 VNR Countries** was convened from 11-13 April 2022 in Gaborone, Botswana with financial support from the European Union and the Government of Italy. UN Regional Commissions mobilized VNR countries to participate in the webinars that assisted with preparation and presentation of VNRs at the 2022 HLPF.

In addition, the African Union's African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) in conjunction with DESA, the SDG Centre for Africa, the African Development Bank, the African Union Commission, and the UNDP Regional Centre in Addis Ababa co-organized the **African Union Capacity-Building Workshop on Africa's Voluntary National Reviews for the HLPF 2022 and Domestication of Agenda 2063** on 28 March 2022 in Abuja, Nigeria. The main aim of this workshop was to build national capacities of the 21 African Union Member States that presented their VNRs at the 2022 HLPF.

Both HLPF and ECOSOC High-Level Segments were a huge success recording high-level participation. Keynote speakers were H.E. Dr. Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi, President of the Republic of Botswana, who participated in-person, and H.E. Mr. Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, President of Portugal and Co-Host of the UN Ocean Conference, who participated virtually. Overall, six Heads of State and Government and more than 130 Deputy Prime Ministers, Ministers and Vice-Ministers participated at the HLPF.

2 ADDRESSING CHALLENGES OF OUR TIMES



United Nations

Department of Economic and Social Affairs

To address the challenges of our times, Botswana used her leadership to call for a multilateral system with a robust multi-stakeholder approach that promotes global solidarity and stronger international co-operation and supported renewed global efforts to ensure inclusive, resilient and sustainable growth.

Represented by Ambassador Collen Kelapile, Botswana participated at UN meetings and conferences addressing challenges of our times

such as climate change, biodiversity loss, food insecurity and famine, and urbanization, to mention just a few. Some of these engagements were organized by UN Member States, UN entities, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations (including youth and youth-led organizations) and civil society organizations.

3 ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF COUNTRIES IN SPECIAL SITUATIONS



“The LDCs, LLDCs, SIDS, and MICs have limited productive capacities, which constrain their ability to sustain economic growth, diversify their economies, boost resilience to shocks, achieve effective integration into the global economy and ensure the well-being of their people.” - H.E. Ambassador Collen Kelapile

During Botswana's Presidency, the needs of countries in special situations, namely Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), as well as Middle Income Countries (MICs) and African countries were prioritised. Through the leadership of H.E. Ambassador Collen Kelapile, the Council actively participated in the preparations for the **Fifth United Nations Conference**

on Least Developed Countries in 2023, the Third Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries in 2024, and the Fourth Conference on Small Island Developing States in 2024. The Council also engaged in reviews of the **Doha Programme of Action, Vienna Programme of Action, and the SAMOA Pathway** and development of successor programmes.

4 Promotion of Inclusivity and PARTNERSHIPS

On this component of promoting inclusivity and partnerships, through Botswana's leadership, there was a call to encourage strong civil society engagement in all the ECOSOC events. Among others, funding was secured from the Governments of Estonia, Germany and Switzerland to facilitate in-person participation of Major Groups and Other Stakeholders at the 2022 HLPF. The Government of New Zealand provided International Sign Language interpretation that enabled people with disabilities to follow most of the proceedings of the

HLPF. On the margins of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), Ambassador Kelapile participated in a side event entitled **"Unmute Civil Society,"** which was held on 8th July 2022. In addition, a Global Media Forum held on 15th July 2022, on **"Leveraging the Power of the Media to Achieve the SDGs,"** provided a space for experts to share best practices for storytelling to raise awareness about SDGs.



5 YOUTH Engagement

“Youth legitimately deserve to have a seat at the table, when decisions about [their] future are being made The youth are change-makers and their contribution is essential to realising the mandate of the Council.” - H.E. Ambassador Collen Kelapile

Youth engagement was also one of the main priorities of Botswana's Presidency. In this regard, various platforms were created to engage the youth including the holding of the World Youth Forum 2022 organized by Egypt on 12th January 2022.

The ECOSOC Youth Forum is a key platform that ensures young people's voices are heard at the United Nations. To ensure high-level participation of youth, particularly from the developing countries, in the 2022 ECOSOC Youth Forum held from 19-20 April, Ambassador Kelapile continued virtual meetings. As a result of this decision, the number of youth representatives who participated in the 2022 Youth Forum increased from 19,000 in 2021 to 22,000 in 2022.

CELEBRATING BATSWANA YOUTH: Reflections from ECOSOC Interns

In an effort to advance the vision of Botswana's President of creating opportunities for youth to serve in international organisations, 5 young people participated in an internship programme that supported Botswana's ECOSOC Presidency. Below are their testimonials:



Welcoming ceremony for ECOSOC interns held at the UN Place, Gaborone, Botswana.



ECOSOC Interns with His Excellency Dr. Mokgweetsi E.K. Masisi, President of the Republic of Botswana in New York



Ms. Ruth Maswikiti

My Name is Ruth Maswikiti, a Bachelor of Arts (International Relations and Political Studies) graduate from the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa. Currently, I am a part-time student pursuing MSc Project Management. I am also one fifth of a team of interns recruited to support Botswana's Presidency of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), based at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In supporting the activities of the President, I engaged in several activities at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the United Nations Headquarters, the Botswana Permanent Mission to the United Nations and the UN Resident Coordinator's Office in Gaborone. To mention a few highlights; I had an opportunity to attend the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) and the High-Level Segment in New York, key on the ECOSOC calendar. While in New York, The Office of Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for Sustainable Development of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA) engaged us on some tasks that required me to demonstrate my strong analytical, writing and collaboration skills such as drafting summary reports for the 2022 Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) and the Special High-Level Dialogue on "The Africa We Want: Reconfirming the Development of Africa as a Priority of the United Nations System".

The level of exposure and experience gained from attending high level meetings, networking, and interacting with country representatives and government officials required that I have a comprehensive understanding of current economic, political, and social affairs. I also had an opportunity to attend some side events, such as the side event co-organised by the Government of Spain, International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) titled "Role of Social and Solidarity Economy in Achieving the SDGs: Potential General Assembly Resolution". It was interesting to hear how collaborative efforts between governments and the multilateral system can yield alternative economic models that can play a significant role in achieving the 2030 Agenda.

This journey has been a combination of interesting and impactful. It has been sprinkled with a few "pinch me" moments as I met and interacted with influential and inspirational figures in the diplomatic community. My sense of career purpose and drive has been re-ignited, and I look forward to the next chapter of my professional life in the foreign service.



Ms. Oratile Jessica Nkhutelang

Iwould like to extend my profound gratitude to His Excellency, the President of Botswana, Mokgweetsi E. K Masisi, for this admirable initiative, Multilateral Affairs Department, United Nations Botswana and BOTSREP for the extreme support and exceptional work they have done in facilitating the whole Presidency, showing solidarity while nurturing us the interns and ensuring that we get an opportunity to learn and get exposure in the international system.

To me, this has been an inspirational experience since my aspirations have always been to develop my skills and gain experience in a multinational organization. My biggest highlight of this Presidency is when I developed a qualitative Gender and Inclusion Analysis that I did collaboratively with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and the level of professionalism, teamwork and dedication that was exhibited by all the team players (from MFA, UNBOTSWANA, DESA, BOTSREP) throughout this Presidency.

My ambitions have always been to advocate for and manoeuvre efforts to create inclusion (economic and social) of marginalized and vulnerable people in different societies as I had developed a passion in serving humanity and seeing humanity grow into sovereignty. And with this internship, through the Humanitarian Affairs Segment, I was able to attain a strong record of dedication and enthusiasm in serving humanity. One key knowledge that got instilled in me is with regard to being proficient in setting objectives with diversified and inclusive knowledge as well as accomplish maximum viable goals.

I want to state again what a pleasure it was working with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, United Nations in Botswana and Botswana Permanent Mission in New York. I have since affirmed that the skills I developed during my tenure as ECOSOC intern will yield tangible results in any organization.



Mr. Mmoloki Tsheole

Mname is Mmoloki Tsheole, I was assigned to serve under the Office of the President of ECOSOC as per the demarcation of responsibilities. The new role meant serving under the Department of Multilateral Affairs which brought yet another perspective of International Relations as I had previously served in a bilateral desk in the Department of Europe and the Americas. It availed an opportunity to learn and appreciate the dynamics of Multilateral organizations particularly the United Nations and the role played by Botswana at a global stage. In order to capacitate us for the internship, the RCO offered basic training on the UN system with emphasis of the ECOSOC ecosystem, as well as Ethics and Conduct in the UN.

The Presidency provided a platform of advancing not only the global agenda/mandate of the United Nations but also a stepping stone to realizing Botswana's development agenda particularly Vision 2036, Economic Recovery and Transformation Plan, and the Reset Agenda. My daily duties involved amongst others conducting research and analysis on thematic issues related

to the ECOSOC special Meetings. I also analyzed and prepared background documents such as reports, briefing notes and talking points and statements for ECOSOC events. Some of these include:

Two (2) national (Botswana) statements for the ECOSOC Special Meeting on Sustainable Urbanization and the implementation of New Urban Agenda as well as the High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda;
The statement delivered by H.E Dr. Mokgweetsi E.K Masisi, President of the Republic of Botswana at the Financing for Development Forum.

The internship was concluded by in-person experience of the United Nations system at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, USA. Under the guidance of the President of ECOSOC, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Botswana to the United Nations, I managed to complete a number of key tasks during the High-level Political forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). These include:
Compilation of a comprehensive the Voluntary National Reviews Presentations summary report.

Collation of a consolidated report on the two sessions of the- Special High-level dialogue on "the Africa we want: reconfirming the development of Africa as a priority of the United Nations system".

I have attained unprecedented insight of the role of ECOSOC as principle of the United Nations as well as how the country strives to be an influential player in the international system and the role the youth can play in making that a reality.



Mr. Kabelo Mpugwa

My name is Kabelo Mpugwa. I hold a double major Bachelor of Arts Degree in Statistics and Economics from the University of Botswana. Before joining the ECOSOC internship program I had been working with/for the civil society for most if not my entire professional life and this deployment poised an opportunity to get a piece of the bigger pie since the ECOSOC is known for its vast civil society representation in the UN system. My responsibilities in the ECOSOC aligned well with my personal career goal of Monitoring and Evaluation, whilst evoking my patriotic ethos of representing Botswana on international platforms: a noble sentiment of love, pride and dedication to carving the nation's path to excellence. I served the Presidency of ECOSOC under the Operational Activities for Development Segment, tasked with providing overall coordination and guidance to the governing bodies of the United Nations development system, serving as a key platform for Member States and the other stakeholders to review progress in the implementation of set mandates.

Over and above learning about the UN system, I have learnt that running a country is no different from running a business; it encompasses seeking out potential investors, attending meetings to build networks as well as signing binding contracts to govern the daily operations of the country. Working and volunteering for the civil society evolved from my devotion to serving communities; I then came to the realisation that diplomacy is doing so in a much broader sphere, tactfully managing international relations and leveraging from them what could benefit Botswana. My goal is to be internationally employable, harnessing skills without geographical inclination so I may be able to share through skills development with marginalised communities.



Ms. Keneilwe Connie Baitshenyetsi

We were accorded an opportunity to learn and actively contribute to advancing Botswana`s interests abroad as ECOSOC interns in July 2021, when Botswana assumed the presidency of the United Nations Economic and Social Council. This was part of the President of ECOSOC Mr Collen V. Kelapile`s youth inclusion agenda, which was in line with His Excellency the President, Dr. Mokgweetsi E.K. Masisi`s vision of positioning young Batswana at international organisations.

The experience has been a major achievement for my career development as it advanced my knowledge and skills in relation to international matters. One of the highlights of my ECOSOC tenure was joining the President of ECOSOC Ambassador Collen V. Kelapile in his fruitful discussions with the Prime Ministers of Algeria, Indonesia, Georgia, and the Vice President for Women and Family Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, among others, which resulted in substantive solutions to global problems such as climate change.

After having the opportunity to share a platform with different women and youths of various expertise and capacities at the 66th Session of the Commission on Status of Women (CSW 66) that was held under the theme "Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes", I was truly inspired to take action at my individual capacity. I strongly believe that if solidarity remains a key global asset, the deliberations that were made on promoting women`s full and equal participation in decision-making processes, which is a top priority in the fight against climate change may be fully realized.

Another highlight was having the privilege to participate at the United Nations High Level Political Forum (HLPF) held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York which marked a commendable milestone of Botswana`s ECOSOC presidency with 42 countries presenting their VNRs and Botswana presenting her second VNR. Working under the office of the President of ECOSOC and following closely the proceedings of the HLPF had prepared me adequately to deal with the broad strategic issues concerning our nation and the global economy.

I am confident that the wealth of experience and skills that we acquired from working with both the United Nations and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will be beneficial as we continue to build back better from covid-19 while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development post our ECOSOC Presidency.

MAJOR MILESTONES OF ECOSOC PRESIDENCY

The ECOSOC Presidency, enabled Botswana through Ambassador's Kelapile's representation to participate in over 50 ECOSOC-related meetings and be positioned as country, to influence and shape the international agenda and policy. The timeline below presents some of the meetings that the country contributed to:



12 July 2022



ECOSOC President delivered remarks at the **Africa Day at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)** held under the theme “Scaling Up Innovative Financing and Leveraging Partnerships for the Africa We Want.”

30 November 2021



ECOSOC President delivered remarks at the commemoration of World AIDS Day under the theme “End Inequalities. End AIDS. End Pandemics.”

5 July 2022



ECOSOC President officially opened the 2022 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), under the auspices of ECOSOC. During the HLPF a Global Media Forum was held for members of the media. Among others, the Forum deliberated on media reporting on the implementation of SDGs.

16 November 2021



ECOSOC President addressed the UN Security Council Open Debate on “Peace and Security through Preventive Diplomacy: A Common Objective to All UN Principal Organs.”

2-3 June 2022



ECOSOC President participated in the **Stockholm+50: A Healthy Planet for the Prosperity for All – Our Responsibility, Our Opportunity.**

2 November 2021



ECOSOC President introduced the **Report of the Economic and Social Council for its 2020-2021 Cycle** to the UN General Assembly, on behalf of his predecessor, H.E. Ambassador Munir Akram of Pakistan.

5-6 May 2022



ECOSOC President convened the **7th Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals.**

15 October 2021



World Food Programme

ECOSOC President shared message for the 2021 World Food Day, held under the theme “Our Actions are Our Future. Better Production, Better Nutrition, a Better Environment and a Better Life.”

25 April 2022



ECOSOC President addressed the 21st **Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues** held under the theme “Indigenous Peoples, Business, Autonomy and the Human Rights Principles of Due Diligence, including Free, Prior and Informed Consent.”

20 September 2021



ECOSOC President addressed the **2021 Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Moment** calling on world leaders to embrace transformational change and launch bold collective actions that will spur global economic recovery and sustainable development path.

21 April 2022



ECOSOC President convened the **ECOSOC Special Meeting on “Sustainable Urbanization and the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda.”**

12 August 2021



ECOSOC President issued message on the occasion of the International Youth Day reaffirming his global commitment to advance the Youth Agenda

SUPPORT FOR BOTSWANA'S
**Presidency by
the UN Resident
Coordinator's**
OFFICE IN BOTSWANA



The UN Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO) was instrumental in providing support to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Botswana's Mission to the United Nations on activities around Botswana's Presidency of the ECOSOC. The RCO was also instrumental in providing support for the development of Botswana's 2nd National Voluntary Review.

During the earlier half of 2021 and in the lead up to Botswana assuming the role of Presidency of ECOSOC, the UN Resident Coordinator's Office organized a series of interactive sessions with relevant government and UN colleagues on 'futures thinking'. An expert was hired to deliver these sessions to colleagues to ensure that Botswana is well supported for the role of the President of ECOSOC. The UN Resident Coordinator's Office also supported the hiring of six interns who were placed in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the purpose of providing dedicated support to Botswana's Mission to the United Nations toward Botswana's ECOSOC Presidency. The UN also facilitated orientation sessions for the interns during the course of their year-long internship. Financial support was also provided by the UN for the interns to travel to New York to provide on-site support during the High Level Political Forum.

During 2022 and in the lead up to the High-Level Political Forum, the RCO coordinated and led UN support to the Government toward the development of Botswana's 2nd Voluntary National Review. Alongside other UN agencies (UNDP, UNFPA, FAO, UNICEF), the RCO organized nation-wide consultations, supported the drafting process, as well as the production and printing of the VNR. The UN worked closely with the Ministry of Finance and several line Ministries including those responsible for education, gender, and environment. In addition



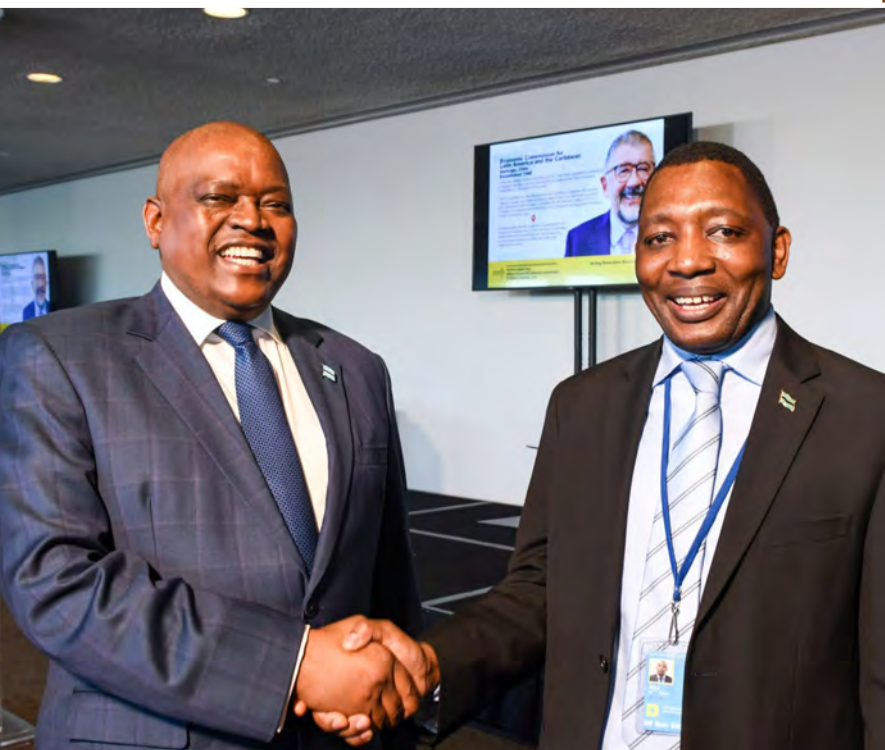
His Excellency Mr. Zia Choudhury
UN Resident Coordinator

to providing a status and performance update, the VNR highlighted key opportunities and challenges facing Botswana in achieving the SDGs, especially against the goals under review. The Ministry of Finance led the development of the VNR, drawing on the support of key line ministries. The VNR process and the accompanying report was truly an inclusive process.

Finally, the key UN Botswana staff led by Resident Coordinator, Mr. Zia Choudhary participated in the High Level Political Forum highlighting the country's achievements and sharing lessons from the VNR process.

During 2022 and in the lead up to the High-Level Political Forum, the RCO coordinated and led UN support to the Government toward the development of Botswana's 2nd Voluntary National Review. Alongside other UN agencies (UNDP, UNFPA, FAO, UNICEF), the RCO organized nation-wide consultations, supported the drafting process, as well as the production and printing of the VNR.

...highlights...
**BOTSWANA
ECOSOC**
Presidency
in Pictures





Handover Statement

by Ambassador Mr. Collen Vixen Kelapile

DELIVERED ON 25TH JULY 2022

**Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Liu Zhenmin;
Excellencies, Vice-Presidents of ECOSOC;
Members of the Council;
Dear Colleagues;
Ladies and Gentlemen;**

I am deeply honoured and elated to have served as the President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) at its 2022 session, for the one year term that commenced from **23 July 2021 to 25 July 2022**.

This was a momentous occasion for both my country and I personally, because it was the first time in our history that we assumed the Presidency of this Principal Organ of the United Nations charged with responsibility to advance sustainable development.

As I handover the Presidency, I would like to thank profoundly my fellow Vice-Presidents for their excellent collaboration and their unwavering commitment to advance the work of this important Council.

I also appreciate the full support that I received from members and non-members of the Council, Major Groups and Other Stakeholders -- who assisted me immensely to deliver on the mandate of the Council and my eight broad priorities.

A year ago, when I took over the Presidency of the Council, I shared with you my view that ECOSOC's role has become even more critical in our concerted efforts to deal with the challenges we face.

While we expected to be on the path to recovery

from the pandemic this year, we are still faced with evergrowing global challenges that require us to work even harder together and coordinate better.

With less than eight years to 2030, it is clear that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals must remain our guiding framework.

We heard this loud and clear throughout the various Segments, Forums and meetings of the Economic and Social Council, as well as the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF).

Throughout my Presidency, the work of the Council focused on the main theme of both ECOSOC and HLPF for 2022: ***“Building Back Better from the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) While Advancing the Full Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.”***

I also convened meetings of the Council that addressed my eight broad priorities -- namely, swift recovery from the pandemic; vaccine equity; fiscal space; inequalities; post-conflict recovery; science, technology and innovation; climate crisis and biodiversity loss; inclusivity and partnerships; and youth engagement.

I am very pleased that during my Presidency, the Council implemented

several decisions contained in the resolutions of the General Assembly to strengthen ECOSOC and the HLPF.

I am encouraged by the major outcomes of the ECOSOC review, that have ensured that the Council can more effectively carry out its Charter mandates, while strengthening its support to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, COVID-19 response and recovery and addressing major global challenges.

Through this review, the Council has a new Coordination **Segment** -- which renewed focus on the Council's Charter mandate on coordination.

The Coordination Segment and a revitalized Partnership Forum have generated fresh ideas and policy suggestions, to guide and inspire the work of ECOSOC subsidiary bodies.

The Coordination Segment put the Council's integral coordination role in evidence, and demonstrated how coordination is key in leveraging our efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by the target deadline of 2030.

In this respect, I would like to commend the Vice- President of the Council and incoming President, H.E. Ambassador Lachezara Stoeva, for ably leading the review of the work of ECOSOC subsidiary bodies.

Through this review process, we have learned more about the work of ECOSOC subsidiary bodies and how they can further support the Council to deliver on its important Charter mandate.

As you would recall, the Council through its Decision 2022/334, invited the President and Bureau of the Council, the Chairs and Bureaux of the Functional Commissions and Expert Bodies, all Member States and the Secretariat to implement the final recommendations.

This will be an important step towards providing the Council and Member States with tools to unlock transformative action towards the accelerated implementation of the SDGs.

Excellencies,

The revitalized Partnership Forum in February this year brought together Governments and a wide range of stakeholders, including the United Nations system, International Financial Institutions, international organizations, Parliamentarians, local Governments,

Non-Governmental Organizations, the private sector, civil society, scientists, academia, women, youth as well as other stakeholders, to exchange new ideas, expectations and priorities for the work ahead for the Council cycle and the HLPF.

The invigorated meeting on Transition from Relief to Development has enabled the Council to deal with situations of conflict, post-conflict and humanitarian emergencies, with particular focus on Haiti, South Sudan, and the Sahel region, thereby permitting in- depth discussions, informing and guiding country-level coordination and delivering better results to affected countries.

Furthermore, the Transition from Relief to Development meeting has allowed the Council to deal with challenges straddling development, humanitarian and peacebuilding, involving key stakeholders such as the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti, and the Peacebuilding Commission.

The Council addressed current challenges of food insecurity, risk of famine, and displacement.

To strengthen collaboration and cooperation, I held joint meetings with the President of the General Assembly, Secretary-General and Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission.

I have maintained an excellent working relationship with the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General in implementing General Assembly Resolutions relating to the strengthening of the Council and recommendations pertaining to the work of Council contained in the SG's report on Our Common Agenda.

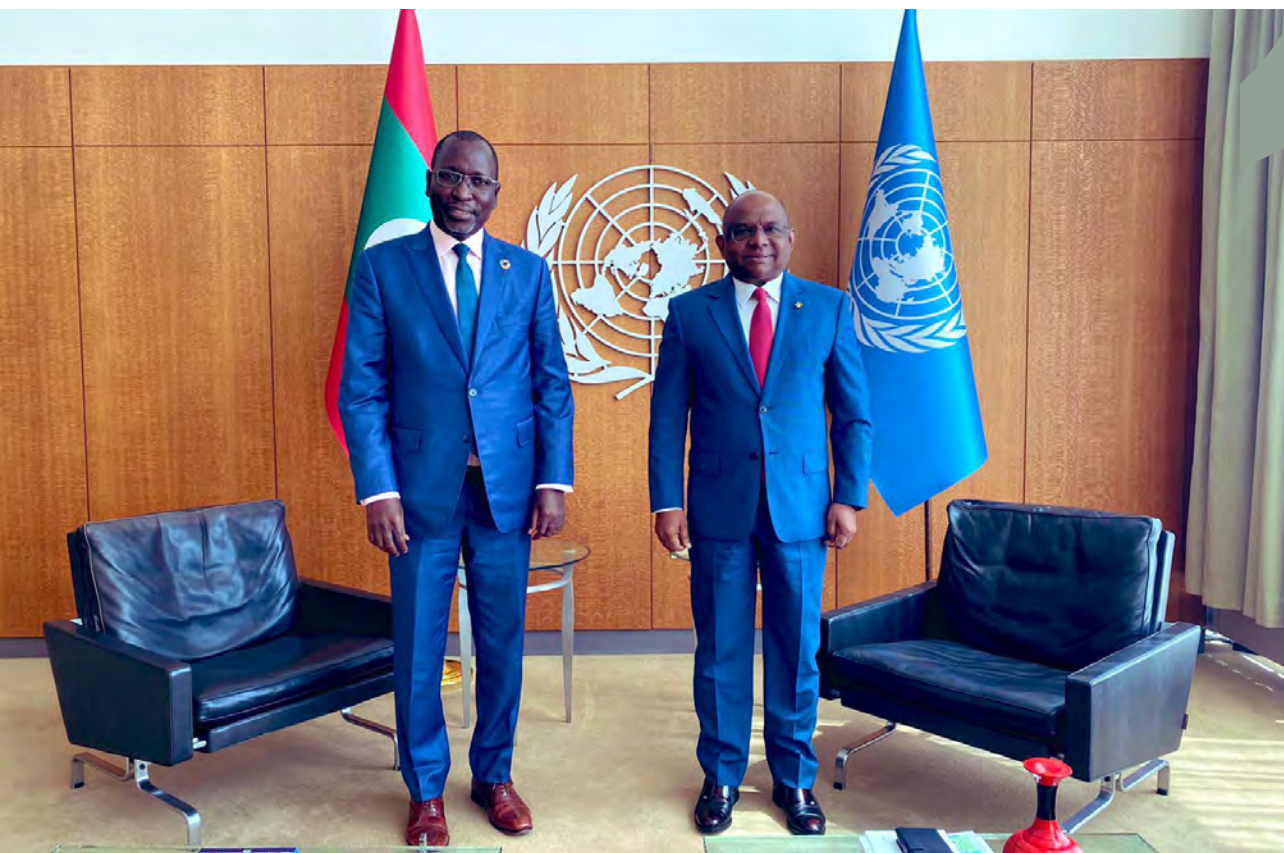
I have also participated in the United Nations Security Council meetings dealing with issues pertinent to the work of ECOSOC.

The Council continues to actively engage other UN organs and bodies in dealing with current challenges confronting us.

I convened meetings to draw attention of Member States to the outcomes of COP26 and their implications for the 2030 Agenda in December 2021; management of natural resources, peaceful societies

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and sustainable development in March 2022; and the implementation of the New Urban Agenda in April 2022.

It is my ardent hope that the Council and its subsidiary bodies, and the HLPF will continue to feature the synergies between the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and mainstream climate change in their meetings, supporting the larger efforts to end the climate crisis.

This year's ECOSOC **Operational Activities for Development Segment** underscored the importance of international cooperation and global solidarity to address today's global challenges and rescue the Sustainable Development Goals.

It demonstrated the value-added of enhanced coordination and a whole-of system approach of the UN development system under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator. It served its important role as the accountability

platform for the UN development system.

I am pleased that the Council adopted a Resolution last Friday to ensure implementation of the outcomes of the Operational Activities for Development Segment.

The **Humanitarian Affairs Segment**, with its inclusive and innovative approach, highlighted the important work being done by the humanitarian community at this highly challenging time.

It underscored the urgency of drawing lessons and actions from the pandemic recovery, reinforcing compliance with international humanitarian law, and understanding and preparing for the humanitarian impacts of the climate crisis.

The outcome document of the **Forum on Financing for Development**

Follow-up, co-facilitated by the Permanent Representatives of Grenada and Iceland and adopted by consensus, points the way forward on issues that require political momentum at the highest level.

These included Member States' consideration of the potential uses of the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) for both concessional finance eligibility and debt relief.

The **Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs ("STI Forum")** provided a platform for a variety of stakeholders to promote the role of STI in advancing the SDGs.

Excellencies, I am gratified that during my Presidency, the Council continued

to be a champion for issues of interest to countries in special situations, namely Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), as well as African countries, providing them a platform to share their experiences and development challenges.

I have also supported the special needs of LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, in my dual role as the Chair of the Group of LLDCs.

The Council has been actively involved in policy discussions pertaining to countries in special situations, review of the Programmes of Actions for these groups of countries and launch of successor programmes, including preparations for the **Fifth United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries in 2023, the Third Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries in 2024 and the Fourth Conference on Small Island Developing States in 2024.**

Given the immense challenges faced by LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, as well as African countries, I have fully supported all initiatives aimed at addressing the special needs of these groups of countries and called for strengthened international cooperation, global solidarity and partnerships to overcome their development challenges and support inclusive and sustainable recovery in these countries.

In furtherance of this, I jointly organized a meeting with the Chair of the UN General Assembly's Second Committee in October last year, focusing on **"Building Productive Capacities in LDCs, LLDCs, SIDS as well as MICs, for more Resilient Recovery and Sustainable Development in the Post-COVID Era."**

Together with the President of the General Assembly, we co-organized last week a **Special High-Level Dialogue on "The Africa We Want: Reconfirming the Development of Africa as a Priority of the United Nations System."**

Excellencies, In accordance with my priorities of inclusivity and partnerships, I engaged young people around the world, through our signature annual **ECOSOC Youth Forum**, on the achievement of the SDGs.

Through this engagement, our youth challenged us to re-examine our assumptions, re-imagine the future and work on solutions as well as provide them a seat at the decision-making table.

To promote the participation of civil society in the work of the Council, particularly the **High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)**, I have held extensive consultations with the Co-Chairs of the Coordination Mechanism of the Major Groups and Other Stakeholders, Ms. Mabel Bianco and Mr. Ajay Jha.



The Council also secured funding from the Governments of Estonia, Germany and Switzerland to facilitate in-person participation of Major Groups and Other Stakeholders at this year's HLPF.

To promote inclusion of people with disabilities, the Government of New Zealand provided International Sign Language interpretation for most sessions of the HLPF.

Excellencies, When I took over the Presidency, I also pledged that I would further improve the visibility, impact and inclusiveness of the HLPF this year and focus it on support to international solidarity and an SDG-guided recovery from the pandemic.

I also pledged to take a critical look to determine whether our response and recovery efforts are moving us on to the path towards realizing the SDGs.

Furthermore, I promised to maximize the value of the VNR process by allowing reasonable interactive discussions with the presenting countries.

I also expressed my hope that we will adopt a strong and consensus-based Declaration, with recommendations for transformative policy actions.

I firmly believe that we have succeed in delivering on all these fronts. It was a great achievement that the Ministerial Declaration was adopted by consensus at the closing of HLPF and at the High-Level Segment of ECOSOC.

I would like to once again congratulate the Permanent Representatives of Italy and Nauru and their experts for the unrelentless work to bring us all to consensus; and congratulate all delegations on their hard work, flexibility and co-operation.

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This important Declaration provides a strong re-commitment to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, as the guideposts out of the crises.

It recognizes the outcomes of the SG's Summit on Integrated Food Systems and a call to implement them.

It calls for strengthening the global health architecture and the World Health Organization (WHO), and a recommitment to vaccine equity recognizing the need for international solidarity.

Above all, it contains strong text on each SDG under in-depth review this year and on climate change; references to the elaboration of international agreements on plastic pollution and pandemic prevention, preparedness and response and a commitment to an ambitious post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework; a commitment to address the surging global debt.

Finally, it provides guidance for the 2023 SDG Summit.

Excellencies,

The 2023 session of the Council will be a critical one, as the HLPF will meet both under the auspices of the Council and under the auspices of the General Assembly.

As I handover the Presidency today to H.E. Ambassador Stoeva, Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the United Nations, I wish to assure the Council that I am fully confident about her able leadership and commitment.

Ambassador Stoeva demonstrated her true mettle as the Vice-President responsible for the Management Segment and successfully led the review of the Functional Commissions and Expert Bodies of the Council, thus placing her in a better position to take charge of the Council.

I wish her all the best as she takes over the reins of the Council, and further intensify the work of the Council on recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda during the Decade of Action.

Excellencies,

As I conclude, I would like to express my profound gratitude to all key stakeholders who extended their full support and cooperation during my Presidency.

I sincerely hope that you will extend the same support and cooperation to the incoming ECOSOC President Ambassador Stoeva.

I thank the Secretariat for its outstanding support throughout my tenure. Thank you, Marion, Irena, Leslie and DESA team. Thank you also to Emer, the ECOSOC Secretary, and her team.

I also extend my special thanks to all other colleagues in the UN Secretariat who made our work possible.

Thank you Paul and your colleagues at the Department of Global Communications (DGC) for ensuring effective communications strategy and media coverage to make the Council's important work known to the wide ranging global audience.

As a Member of the Council, and having recently been re-elected for another 3-year term from 2023-2025, Botswana stands ready to continue playing her part to help carry forward the vital work of this important Charter body in the coming cycle of ECOSOC and beyond.

I thank you.

(The ECOSOC Presidency) was a momentous occasion for both my country and I personally, because it was the first time in our history that we assumed the Presidency of this Principal Organ of the United Nations charged with responsibility to advance sustainable development.

Botswana

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