

REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

# **Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

**Special  
Issue**  
ECOSOC

# **A Year In** Review

2022 SESSION



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





## 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 facilitator, coordinator, and 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 International Affairs and Cooperation. The current Minister is Honourable Dr. Lemogang Kwappe. He was appointed to this portfolio on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2020. The Executive head of the Ministry is Dr. Gladys Mokhawa, who assumed the role of Permanent Secretary in April 2021.



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



**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

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

# Foreword

**F**or one year, Botswana held the important position of the President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) from 23 July 2021 to 25 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 Secretariat.

I am very delighted that Botswana had a successful ECOSOC Presidency and delivered on the 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.”

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

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. 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.

I sincerely thank our Resident Coordinator who provided funding for our pioneering Internship Programme. I am grateful that our five Interns were part of the Botswana delegation to the 2022 HLPF. During their one-month stay in New York, our Interns were attached to the Permanent Mission of Botswana to the United Nations (BOTSREP) and to DESA.

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.

# Introduction

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ECOSOC PRESIDENCY

**T**he 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 Council and its subsidiary bodies. We now have a lot of 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. Botswana has served as a member of ECOSOC from 1983-1985, 1991-1993, 2014-2016, 2020 – 2022.

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, sustaining peace and security.

During the ECOSOC High-Level Segment on 18<sup>th</sup> 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 and the recommendations of the report of the Secretary-General on **“Our Common Agenda”** pertaining to the work of ECOSOC.

These include the reassessment of the role of the Commission on the Status of Women with a view to strengthen 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 78<sup>th</sup> President of ECOSOC.

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.



# STATEMENT

## by His Excellency the President

(HLPF), which talks 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. - SDG 4- Quality Education, SDG5- Gender Equality, SDG 14- Life under water, SDG5- 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 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

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 25th 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 Nations 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

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.

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 to 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 CEDA, the government aims to empower the youth, particularly women to be independent and self-sufficient to curb vulnerabilities.

The Tourism industry amounts to a significant portion of the Botswana's Gross Domestic Product, and it is on that background that the government embraced SDG 14 and 15 as priorities for 2022 ECOSOC session. Legislation

and bilateral partnerships have been established by the government to strengthen conservation efforts of flora and fauna. For instance, controlled fishing in the Okavango and Chobe area, enhanced anti-poaching initiatives as well as licensed hunting continues to bear results. This is more important 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 and the government continues to play an important role in global climate action initiatives as way of being proactive with regard to this threat. At the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Botswana reconfirmed her commitment to the global solidarity in addressing environmental threats and climate change.

The theme for the 2022 ECOSOC 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. 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 youths should inspire other young Batswana to take up other government youth programmes to their benefit. This however, will be motivational only if we joint efforts and to recognise the unique skills developed for these 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 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

**L**et 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 out-

going 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 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 formida-



ble blueprint for all our nations to work even harder to deliver its promise.

- 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

- First, 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

- 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.

- Second, we must ensure adequate fiscal space for a COVID-19. 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

- Third, 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, online 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 as-

sist 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 promise for achieving the



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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 Multi-stakeholder 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

- Six, 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.



*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 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

- Seven, 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

- Eight, 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).
- 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 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 co-operation!

**I thank you.**

# ADVANCING THE Sustainable development Goals



Ambassador Kelapile was involved in numerous activities advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals during his ECOSOC Presidency. In his inaugural address, he appealed 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.” He repeatedly implored countries to leverage the immense power of science, technology and innovation to attain the SDGs.

The main highlight of his ECOSOC Presidency was the convening of the 2022 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) and ECOSOC High-Level Segment from 5 to 7 July and 11 to 12 July



and 13-15 and 18 July 2022.

Both HLPF and ECOSOC High-Level Segment 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.

It was gratifying that the Ministerial Declaration of the 2022 HLPF and ECOSOC was adopted by consensus and provided political guidance for sustainable recovery and SDGs under review, namely SDG 4 on quality education, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 14 on life below water, SDG 15 on life on land, and SDG 17 on partnerships for the Goals. Ambassador Kelapile commended the Co-Facilitators of the Ministerial Declaration, H.E. Maurizio Massari, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations, and H.E. Margo Deiyee, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Nauru to the United Nations, and all delegations for reaching a consensual outcome.

It was a great honour that Botswana presented her second Voluntary National Review (VNR) during our ECOSOC Presidency. There were 44 countries that presented their VNRs at the 2022 HLPF. Out of this number, 21 African countries presented their VNRs. Since 2016, all African countries except one have presented their first VNRs, demonstrating high commitment to the implementation of both the 2030 Agenda and the African Union Agenda 2063.

Ambassador Kelapile commended H.E. Mr. Enrique Austria Manalo, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines, and H.E. Mr. Omar Hilale, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco to the United Nations, Co-Chairs of the Group of Friends of VNRs, for supporting countries that presented their VNRs at the 2022 HLPF.

The ECOSOC Bureau that Ambassador Kelapile presided over kickstarted the preparations for the September 2023 SDG Summit. This is a crucial Summit held at the mid-term point of implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

## ADDRESSING CHALLENGES OF OUR TIMES



Ambassador Kelapile has convened and participated in 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.

To address our multiple challenges and attain the Sustainable Development Goals, Ambassador Kelapile has called for a multilateral system with a robust multi-stakeholder approach that promotes global solidarity and stronger international cooperation and supported renewed global efforts to ensure inclusive, resilient and sustainable growth.

Ambassador Kelapile served as a

member of the **Advisory Committee on Sustainable Urbanization**, which advised H.E. Abdulla Shahid, President of the 76<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly to prepare for the **High-Level Meeting to Assess Progress on the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda**, held on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2022. To prepare for this important meeting, Ambassador Kelapile in his capacity as President of ECOSOC convened the Council’s Special Meeting on **“Sustainable Urbanization and the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda”** on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2022. Issues of sustainable urbanization were also discussed during the 2022 HLPF.

As advocates of the New Urban Agenda, Ambassador Kelapile and H.E. Michal Mlynar, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Slovak Republic to the United Nations, spearheaded the establishment of the Group of Friends of UN-Habitat, Sustainable Urbanization and the New Urban Agenda, which was launched on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2022, with the two serving as Co-Chairs of the Group of Friends.

During his ECOSOC Presidency, the Council has held discussions to consider root causes of inequalities within and between countries and the plight of vulnerable groups such as youth, women and migrant workers.

Ambassador Kelapile **delivered opening remarks at the launch of the flagship report *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) 2022*** on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2022. The 2022 SOFI theme was **“Repurposing Food and Agricultural Policies to Make Healthy Diets More Affordable.”**

During his Presidency, the Council organized a briefing on the outcomes of the 26<sup>th</sup> UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) held in Glasgow from 31<sup>st</sup> October to 13<sup>th</sup> November 2021. In addition, Ambassador Kelapile invited the President of COP26 and the President of the 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15) to address the ECOSOC High-Level Segment. During the Special High-Level Dialogue on Africa jointly organized by the Presidents of the General Assembly and ECOSOC on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2022, there was a dedicated Roundtable on **“Preparing for COP27 – African COP,”** to be held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt from 6<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

He participated in the General Assembly High-Level Thematic Debate on the **“Moment for Nature”** held on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2022.

# ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF COUNTRIES IN SPECIAL SITUATIONS



**A**mbassador Kelapile prioritized 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, during his ECOSOC Presidency.

In October 2021, Ambassador Kelapile and the Chair of the UN General Assembly's Second Committee organized a meeting on ***“Building Productive Capacities in LDCs, LLDCs, SIDS as well as MICs, for more Resilient Recovery and Sustainable Development in the Post-COVID Era.”***

Ambassador Kelapile and the President of the 76<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly, H.E. Mr. Abdulla Shahid, co-organized the Special High-Level Dialogue on ***“The Africa We Want: Reconfirming the Development of Africa as a Priority of the United Nations System”*** on 20 July 2022. In his address, Ambassador Kelapile championed Africa's sustainable development and called for accelerated implementation of both Agenda 2030 and African Union Agenda 2063. The two Presidents issued a Call to Action that galvanized priority attention to Africa's development needs and implementation of the two Agendas.

In his speeches, Ambassador Kelapile has decried the low vaccination rates in developing countries, especially Africa, and called for equitable access to the COVID-19 vaccines and financial resources as prerequisites to ensure an equitable recovery from the pandemic in both developed and



developing countries. He has also called for addressing existing inequalities, among and within countries.

Through the Operational Activities for Development Segment, Ambassador Kelapile has ensured that the United Nations development system continues to assist developing countries to deliver on the 2030 Agenda.

During his Presidency, ECOSOC has dealt with situations of conflict, post-conflict and humanitarian emergencies, with particular focus on Haiti, South Sudan, and the Sahel region.

Ambassador Kelapile has supported the elaboration of the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index for Small Island Development States and its potential uses for both concessional finance eligibility and debt relief.



# MAJOR MILESTONES OF ECOSOC PRESIDENCY

Below are some of the major milestones of our ECOSOC Presidency, outlined in terms of the ECOSOC cycle, which runs from July to July 2022



## 23 July 2021

**A**mbassador Kelapile inaugurated as the 77<sup>th</sup> President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). This was the first time in history that Botswana assumed the Presidency of ECOSOC. The ECOSOC Vice-Presidents were H.E. Ms. Lachezara Stoeva, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the United Nations; H.E. Mr. Diego Pary Rodriguez, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bolivia to the United Nations; H.E. Mr. Suriya Chindawongse, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Thailand to the United Nations; H.E. Mr. Jukka Salovaara, later succeeded by H.E. Ms. Miia Rainne, Deputy Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations.

## 27 June 2022

Ambassador Kelapile officially handed over the Presidency of ECOSOC to H.E. Ms. Lachezara Stoeva, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the United Nations, representing the Group of Eastern European States, in line with the principle of regional rotation. The ECOSOC Vice-Presidents for the 2023 Session: Chile, Indonesia, Italy and Zimbabwe.



## 27 June 2022

Ambassador Kelapile addresses the **2022 UN Ocean Conference** in Lisbon, Portugal underlining that *“It is a critical moment to decisively address the combined impacts of the triple planetary crisis of our time: climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.”*



## 2-3 June 2022

Ambassador Kelapile participates in the **Stockholm+50: A Healthy Planet for the Prosperity for All – Our Responsibility, Our Opportunity**, held in Stockholm, Sweden.

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



**T**he UN Resident Coordinator's Office 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 and toward the development of Botswana 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 prepared for the role of the President of ECOSOC. The UN Resident Coordinator's Office also supported the hiring of six interns that 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 provided orientation sessions to 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 (July 5-18, 2022).

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 to providing a status and performance update, 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 VNR report has been a truly inclusive process.

Finally, the key UN Botswana staff led by Resident Coordinator, Mr. Zia Choudhary participated in 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.*

Promotion  
**Inclusivity**  
 and **PARTNERSHIPS**

**I**n accordance with his priority on promoting inclusivity and partnerships, Ambassador Collen Vixen Kelapile participated in numerous meetings and side events organized by civil society, media and Major Groups and Other Stakeholders during his ECOSOC Presidency. He has 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.

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 8 July 2022.

In addition, Ambassador Kelapile addressed the Global Media Forum on 15 July 2022 on "Leveraging the Power of the Media To Achieve the SDGs," with over 300 participants joining from around the world. Experts shared best practices for story-telling to raise awareness about SDGs. Ambassador Kelapile hailed the media as vital actors for knowledge-sharing, information-sharing, source of inspiration, and champions of accountability and transparency.

# YOUTH Engagement



**Y**outh engagement has been one of the main priorities of Ambassador Kelapile. He has provided young people **“a seat at the decision-making table”** and **noted that “The youth are changemakers and their contribution is essential to realizing the mandate of the Council.”**

ECOSOC Youth Forum is a key platform that ensures young people’s meaningful engagement in the United Nations. To ensure high-level participation of youth, particularly from the developing countries, in the 2022 ECOSOC Youth Forum, 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 19000 in 2021 to 22000 in 2022.

Ambassador Kelapile fully engaged the Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth as well as the Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY) in preparing for the 2022 ECOSOC Youth Forum.

On the margins of the 2022 HLPF, Ambassador Kelapile had a meet and greet with youth delegates.

During his ECOSOC Presidency, the Council adopted a decision to add one day to the 2023 ECOSOC Youth Forum to allow the Youth Forum sufficient time to provide an input to the preparations of the 2023 SDG Summit. With the adoption of this decision, the 2023 Youth Forum will be held from 18 to 20 April 2023.

# CELEBRATING BATSWANA YOUTH: Reflections from ECOSOC Interns



**Welcoming ceremony for interns who will support the Botswana’s Presidency of the United Nations Economic Social Council (ECOSOC) for July 2021-July 2022.**



**Five Botswana youth Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) interns, expressed gratitude to President, Dr Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi and government for their experience working in a global multilateral environment.**



**Ms. Ruth Maswikiti**

**M**y 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**

I would 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.

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**Mr. Mmoloki Tsheole**

**M**y name 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 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

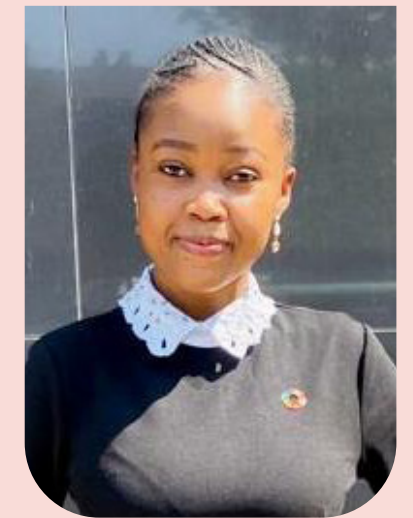


**Mr. Kabelo Mpugwa**

**M**y 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**

**W**ere 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 Botswana 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.

# BOTSWANA ECOSOC Presidency *in Pictures*



His Excellency Dr. Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi with the President of ECOSOC, Ambassador Collen Vixen Kelapile and the Ms Olga Algayerova, the Executive Secretary of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) during the 2022 High-Level Political Forum



Ambassador Collen Vixen Kelapile, outgoing President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) 2022 Session and Permanent Representative of Botswana to the United Nations, hands the gavel to Lachezara Stoeva, incoming President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) 2023 Session and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Bulgaria to the United Nations,



His Excellency Dr. Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi with ECOSOC interns



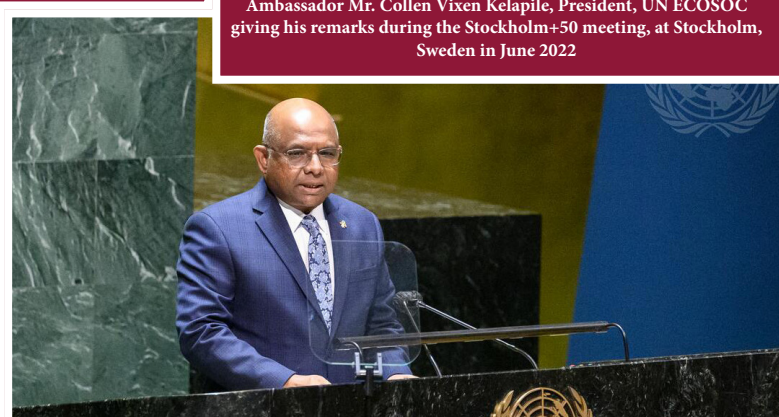
Ambassador Mr. Collen Vixen Kelapile, President, UN ECOSOC giving his remarks during the Stockholm+50 meeting, at Stockholm, Sweden in June 2022



Ambassador Mr. Collen Vixen Kelapile, President, UN ECOSOC giving his statement



From L-R: Ms. Hilde Roed, Senior Vice President, Climate and Sustainability, Equinor; Mr. Niklas Gustafsson, Vice President and Head of Public Policy and Regulatory Affairs, Volvo Group; and Ambassador Mr. Collen Vixen Kelapile, President, UN ECOSOC



Ambassador Mr. Collen Vixen Kelapile, President, UN ECOSOC attended the fourth Global Session of the UN Science-Policy-Business Forum (UN-SPBF 2022)





# Handover Statement

**H.E. MR. COLLEN V. KELAPILE**  
**OUTGOING PRESIDENT**  
**OF THE UNITED NATIONS**  
**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL**  
**COUNCIL (ECOSOC) AT**  
**THE ORGANIZATIONAL**  
**SESSION OF THE 2023**  
**SESSION OF THE**  
**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL**  
**COUNCIL**

**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 -- which 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 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

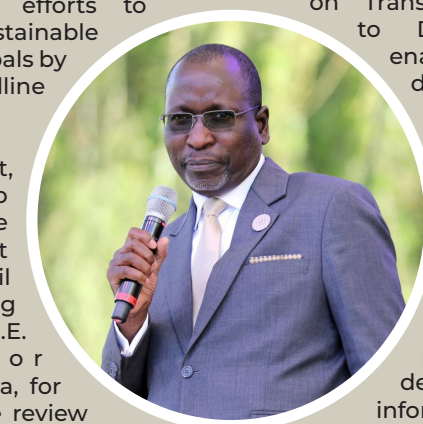
- transformative action towards the accelerated implementation of the SDGs.

## 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.

- There 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.

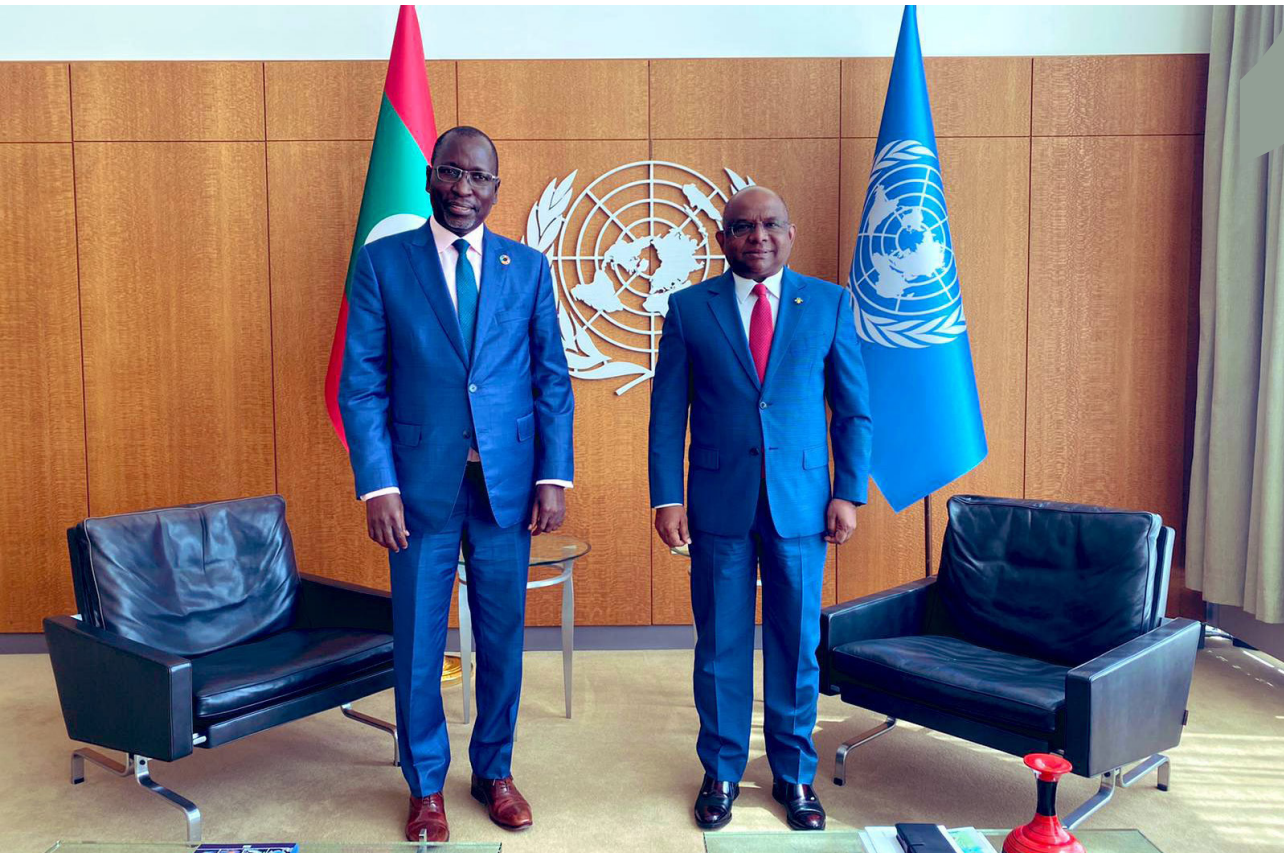
- Furthermore, the Transition from Relief to Development meeting has allowed the Council to deal with challenges straddling development, humanitarian



and peacebuilding, involving key stakeholders such as the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti, and the Peacebuilding Commission.

*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.*

- 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 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 participation of the 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 cooperation.
- This important Declaration provides a strong recommitment 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,

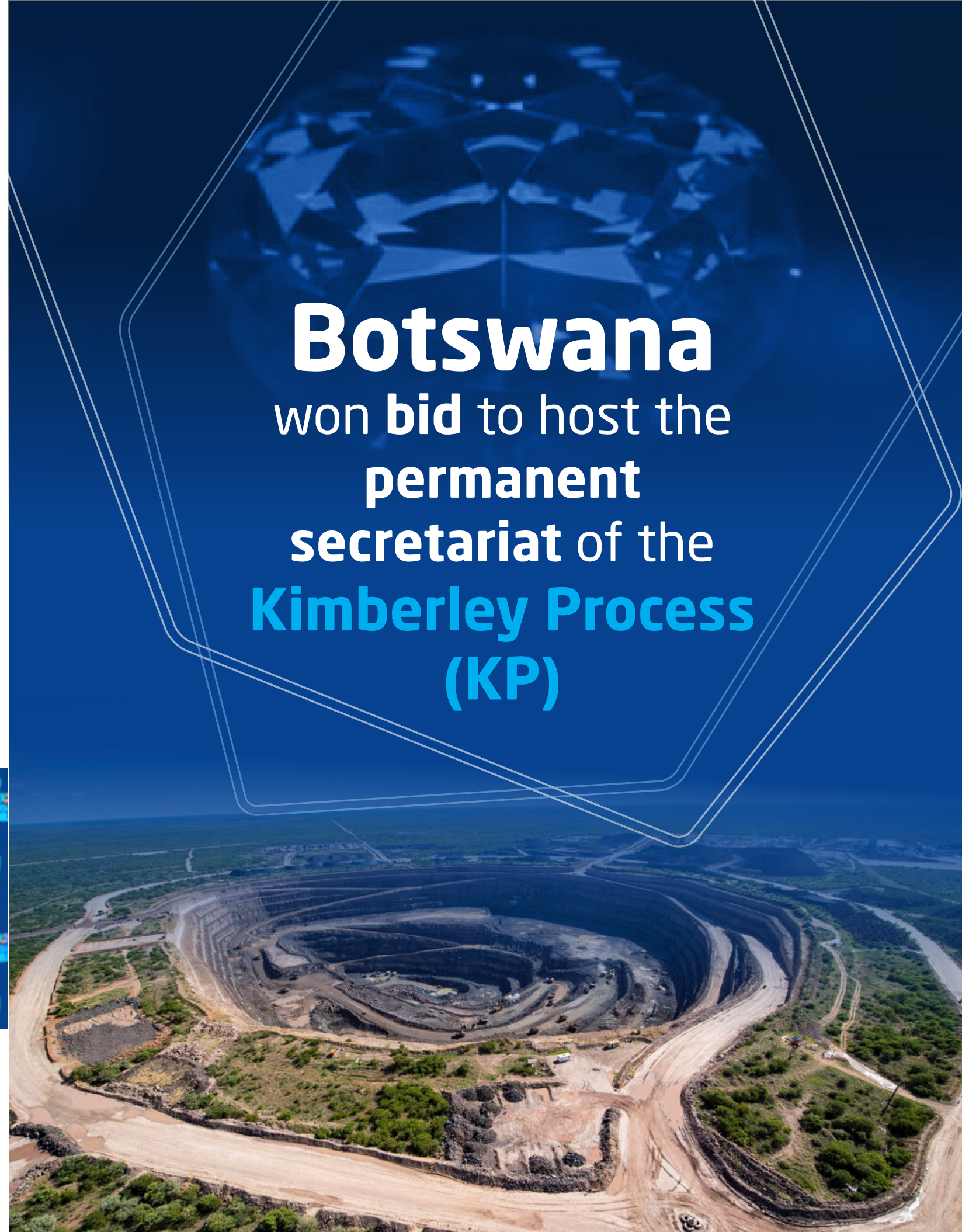
- As I conclude, I would like to express my profound gratitude to all key stakeholders who extended their full support and cooperation during my Presidency.
- I sincerely hope that you will extend the same support and cooperation to the incoming ECOSOC President Ambassador Stoeva.
- I thank the Secretariat 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



*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.*

# Botswana won bid to host the permanent secretariat of the Kimberley Process (KP)



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