

President of COP 21

His Excellency the President Francois Hollande

Heads of States

Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki Moon

Ladies and Gentlemen

1. Let me at the outset express condolences to President Hollande and the people of France and other nations on the loss of lives as a result of the cowardly act of extreme terrorism that befell their nation on the 13th November, 2015
2. The scourge of extremism and terrorism has created a path of death and destruction of many lives and property. We have witnessed many incidents of these crimes against humanity across the globe. More recently men, women and children were killed for example to mention a few in Tunisia, Mali, Cameroon, Lebanon as well as the downing of a Russian commercial airliner and continuing acts of terrorism in Nigeria
3. On behalf of the people of Botswana and on my own behalf, we stand with all nations over these tragic

experiences and pray for your strength in overcoming your losses and for the speedy and full recovery for the those injured. You are assured of our support for all actions you take to address these brutal crimes committed by sick minded extremists.

4. Finally, Your Excellency President Hollande, We commend your leadership in the manner you have led your nation during this difficult period.

5. Coming now to the matter we are here for which is climate change. We take note of the unusual process being used at COP21 where heads of state lead the process before ministers and officials embark on the negotiation process, we can only hope that this experiment will deliver on expectations.

6. Climate change is having far reaching consequences and it should be given the urgent attention it deserves. Botswana like many countries has not been spared by climate change and we continue to incur considerable costs in addressing challenges of both environmental and economic nature. Due to such effects, rainfall has significantly reduced and we are currently suffering a

prolonged drought. As a result, the reservoirs providing our capital city with water have all dried up and water is now supplied through a pipeline from other parts of the country. Just recently at the start of our summer we experienced two heat waves of extreme proportion. However, it is not only our country which is facing drought and high temperatures but others in our region as well.

7. Climate change has affected vegetation and pastures resulting in significant declines in livestock and arable agricultural production. Beef exports are our third highest foreign income earner and about 70% of the population is dependent on subsistence farming.
8. Wildlife is also affected. In order to reduce the impact, we have had to drill boreholes across the country to provide water for wildlife. However, these boreholes are now also running dry.
9. Like other countries, Botswana has a variety of natural resources which have been used for the socio-economic development of our people and we have been able to develop Botswana from being one of the poorest states in

the world at Independence to being a middle income economy.

10. Developed country parties over the years through Conference of Parties have been called upon to provide political leadership in climate change taking into consideration their historical responsibility. We must categorically state that they have failed to take the lead especially in reforming their industrial processes. As a result the world is suffering from the impacts of climate change.

11. Countries in Africa, in responding to climate change and committed to ensuring sustainability of our natural endowments have adopted the Gaborone Declaration for Sustainability in Africa Initiative which emanated in 2012 from the first ever Summit for Sustainability in Africa, held in Gaborone, Botswana. Attended by 10 participating countries, namely: Botswana, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, South Africa and Tanzania. These countries reaffirmed their commitment to implement all conventions and declarations promoting Sustainable Development. The Summit was furthermore attended by local and transnational corporations,

development partners and civil society organisations who also signed the Declaration.

12. The Gaborone Declaration was presented at the 15th ordinary session of the African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN) which was held in Cairo, Egypt in March 2015 where it was endorsed and earmarked for inclusion in the African Union (AU) structures of programmes implementation.

13. The **GDSA** recognizes that the historical pattern of natural resources exploitation has failed to promote sustained levels of economic growth, environmental integrity and improved social capital and therefore a concerted effort is needed to halt and reverse the degradation and loss of healthy ecosystems and biodiversity, so as to redirect the transformation of natural endowment into enhanced physical, social and human capital as well as improved livelihoods.

14. The **GDSA** recognizes the limitations of Gross Domestic Product as a measure of wellbeing and sustainable growth that values environmental and social aspects of progress. It therefore underscores the

importance of Natural Capital Accounting as a tool for incorporating the value of natural resources and ecosystems into our national development plans and economic decision-making.

15. It is important to note that the **GDSA** is not meant to replace or compete with existing frameworks such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) etc., but rather, it is complementary and is a vehicle for their implementation. By incorporating the value of natural capital into the development agendas of countries the GDSA promotes sustainable production and consumption patterns which will lead to climate-compatible sustainable development on the continent. On the other hand, such sustainable production and consumption patterns are at the core of climate change mitigation and adaptation in Africa.

- Through sustainable agriculture, payment for ecosystem services, and ecosystem based

adaptation, the GDSA will contribute directly to climate change adaptation and will build the adaptive capacity of communities in transitioning key sectors towards a green economy.

- The GDSA is committed to securing ecological health for the African region as climate change, alongside habitat destruction, biodiversity loss, and watershed and forest depletion poses a real threat to the sustainability of nature and human kind. The ecosystem restoration component of the GDSA is an effective approach to ecosystem-based adaptation and to Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD).
- Botswana therefore encourage other parties to adopt the GDSA model in the interest of protecting our environment.
- The Southern African Development Community (SADC) recently adopted the principles of the GDSA. We would like to reach out to other developing countries to endorse and sign this agreement for the greater good.

16. The climate challenges are immense, but at the same time they present an opportunity. Creating jobs and

sustaining growth as well as eradicating poverty in a carbon-constrained world demands a restructuring of energy and transport systems and a deeper appreciation of the boundaries of the ecological systems. It is therefore imperative for us all to seize this opportunity now and into the future.

17. Through our Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs), we have put forward energy and transport actions which we will undertake to contribute to reducing global emissions. However, these are very costly and will cause us to deviate from our normal development path. Assistance in both financial resources, technical capacities and clean technologies will be needed to achieve these INDCs.

18. As a Party to the Climate Change Convention, we have been consistent and constructive in taking the global negotiations forward. We need a fair, equitable and effective multilateral agreement which supports our long-term sustainable development pathway. We believe that the outcome from Paris must strengthen the rules-based multilateral system.

It is therefore imperative that our 2015 Paris agreement should be premised on the recognition of development needs and poverty eradication priorities of developing countries, whilst emphasising the necessary leadership of developed countries in climate action. This agreement should not in any way seek to replace the current Framework Convention on Climate Change, but should further articulate objectives of the convention capturing the agreed temperature patterns that ensure our survival.

In conclusion we wish to enjoin the world not to be selfish in denying future generations opportunities to survive. We owe that to Nature, to ourselves, and to these generations to come.

I thank you.