

REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

**Statement by His Excellency Mr. Festus G. Mogae,
President of the Republic of Botswana
at the
International Conference on Financing for Development
Monterrey, Mexico
18th - 22nd March 2002**

Mr. President,

If I were to convey a single message to this Conference, it would be that whereas individual countries bear the primary responsibility for their own advancement, development nonetheless, is a global challenge requiring global solutions and the active participation and inclusion of all stakeholders. Indeed mobilisation of domestic and international resources, including foreign direct investment and other private flows; policies conducive to equitable growth of international trade; increased Official Development Assistance (ODA); resolution of external debt; and conducive, coherent and consistent international monetary and trading systems as well as the fight against HIV/AIDS are pivotal to poverty eradication across the globe.

This Conference should therefore mark the beginning of a common global approach to development financing.

2. Let me also emphasise that for developing countries to overcome poverty, significant volumes of ODA are required to spur economic and social progress in the short to medium term. Whilst increased efficiency of aid should be a major concern, it should however not be used as a pretext for not allocating additional ODA resources. ODA can contribute to building the human and institutional capacities. Furthermore, the value of aid can be considerably enhanced by untying it, harmonising donor policies and procedures as well as making it more responsive to developing countries needs.

Using aid as an instrument of promotion of economic activity in donor countries themselves distorts development priorities of the recipient countries. Aid policies should also be flexible and forward looking and ensure equitable access by developing countries at various stages of development. Penalising countries that have made some advances by not giving them sufficient resources with which to overcome remaining challenges is counter productive.

3. That additional ODA is necessary does not in anyway detract from the major responsibility of developing countries in their own development in terms of optimising domestic resource mobilisation and ensuring good governance-as well as appropriate social and economic policies that recognise the crucial roles of the private sector, civil society and other stakeholders.
4. It is estimated that 20% of the world population enjoy 80% of its wealth and that over 1.2 billion people around the world live in poverty. This requires immediate redress and development strategies focused on poverty eradication.

We in the developing world, especially in Africa, look to the Monterrey Consensus to give greater impetus to global, regional and national strategies and actions for resource mobilization, particularly resources for investment in poverty reduction and improvement in health, education and physical infrastructure.

Mr. President,

5. In particular, the poor economic and social conditions in Africa should be a major concern of this Conference. There exist wide disparities in human development, as indicators between Africa and the rest of the world illustrate. And even worse, these disparities are widening, depriving a vast number of people the basic necessities of life and human dignity.

The sluggish economic growth, imprudent socio-economic policies and management, political instability and an unfavourable global economic environment continue to aggravate the prevalence and depth of poverty, disease, hunger, malnutrition, illiteracy, unemployment and inadequate shelter. This in turn leads to loss of hope and an insecure future for multitudes of people. All these factors pose the greatest threat to world peace, stability and security.

6. We, therefore, implore the international community to support the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). NEPAD is anchored on the fundamental principles of African ownership, leadership and accountability as well as good governance and maintenance of peace and security.

NEPAD envisages a strong partnership with the international community built on mutual goodwill, respect and solidarity. The support of developed country partners in increased access to their markets as well as technological know how, higher volumes of Official Development Assistance (ODA) and technical assistance, in line with NEPAD's established priorities, are imperative to the success of NEPAD. This is necessary in order to, inter alia, bridge gaps in infrastructure, foster regional integration, combat HIV/AIDS, enhance availability of information and communications technologies (ICT), and ensure Africa's meaningful integration into the global economy.

Mr. President,

7. HIV/AIDS is a human tragedy and core development issue of our time and there can be no development in Africa without concerted efforts to ensure adequate financial resources to combat the pandemic. HIV/AIDS is a major crisis requiring emergency response from the international community. Unless additional ODA and technical assistance resources are allocated to fight the scourge, sustainable development will be seriously compromised.

Mr. President,

8. Botswana is severely affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The war against HIV/AIDS is being waged with determination and resolve so that the socio-economic progress we have achieved is not reversed.

Whilst HIV/AIDS is a daunting challenge, it is not an insurmountable challenge. With the requisite international support, political will and resources, we will be well-positioned to turn the tide against the pandemic and realize our full development potential.

9. Botswana has long recognized that sustainable development has to be a nationally owned and led process that requires sound democratic institutions, prudent economic management. Adherence to these principles, coupled with exploitation of mineral resources and donor support, has propelled Botswana from the category of the poorest countries at independence in 1966 to the middle income status of today.

Botswana continues to take constructive steps to solidify peace, democracy and good governance upon which ' our pursuit of development is grounded. We are also committed to fostering partnerships with the broad spectrum of stakeholders, including both foreign and domestic, in order to achieve "Prosperity for All" as enshrined in our national vision, Vision 2016. Continued donor support is still necessary in order to consolidate the development achieved and to ensure sustainable development.

Mr. President,

10. Now is the time for a new architecture for development cooperation. Firstly, the scope of development cooperation should be broadened to include not only development assistance—but trade, private sector development, private investment, access to technology as well as and equitable and inclusive global governance. Development assistance should also be synergistic with private sector development and contribute to national capacity-building. Common interests and complimentary needs of the rich and poor countries, as well as global goals forged through the United Nations, must provide the basis for new partnerships and compacts.
11. It is unfortunate Mr. President, that at this confluence of immense needs and great opportunity in the world, we find that official development assistance (ODA) is declining. The ODA target of 0.7% of developed countries GNP should be met, or even surpassed, in the immediate future if the Millennium Development Goals are to be achieved. The present level of 0.24% is a serious under achievement that needs correction.

It is critical also, that in the new development financing agenda, small and middle income economies which continue to demonstrate true commitment to global governance, the rule of law, economic reform, but are unable to access private sources of capital due to lack of interest by investors or perceived lack of strategic value, be supported as they grapple with uplifting the standard of living of their people and emerging challenges of globalization.

12. Dialogue and positive engagement with stakeholders, especially those in the private sector who make decisions, which profoundly affect development around the world, is a matter of great importance to us.

My Government values interaction with the private sector. We have in fact, instituted consultative mechanisms to ensure continuous engagement with the private sector and civil society in an effort to enhance their contribution to national development.

Mr. President,

13. It is clear that trade is the primary means through which developing countries could be integrated into the global economy. For trade to have an enduring impact, developed countries need to take concrete steps to address the concerns of developing countries over the implementation of the Uruguay Round undertakings, particularly the Agreement of Textiles and Clothing, the

Agreement of Agriculture, the provisions concerning special and differential treatment, and the provisions on technical assistance.

The WTO has to be transformed to incorporate the development dimension of trade and to ensure coherence in global trade, financial monetary and development policies.

Mr. President,

14. We are encouraged by the dialogue and cooperation between the U.N., World Bank, IMF and other important stakeholders that has characterized the financing for development process. This cooperation should be further consolidated to ensure coherent and mutually reinforcing multilateral development policies. Similarly, development policy concerns that do not precisely fall within the purview of existing international organizations should be addressed as a vital step in bridging the "global governance deficit".

Mr. President,

15. The United Nations must also ensure that there is adequate follow up to resolutions of previous world conferences. Concrete proposals such as the feasibility of an international tax system, the International Development Association (IDA) providing a greater proportion of its resources to the poorest countries in the form of grants, rather than loans, should be analyzed objectively and firm proposals put forward without procrastination. The U.N. must promote good global citizenry so that countries are not just pre-occupied with their parochial interests.

The world will be safer and more secure with shared values, broad based development and when all its inhabitants can see promise of a bright future instead of perpetual despair. The United Nations strong advocacy for human centred development should therefore be intensified. In this regard, my Government wishes to reiterate its unfledging support for the U. N. System.

16. It is my ardent hope that this Conference will herald a paradigm shift in international development cooperation underpinned by strong political commitment, by both developed and developing countries and coordinated support of multilateral development institutions.

However, this would be incomplete without the establishment of clear mechanisms to monitor the implementation of resolutions of this conference and achievement of Millennium Development Goals to ensure that the Monterrey Consensus leads to sustainable development financing and poverty eradication in the world and, more importantly, that all stakeholders play their full part in the global partnership.