

REPUBLIC OF  
BOTSWANA



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
BOTSWANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND  
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION,  
HON. PHANDU T.C. SKELEMANI AT THE HIGH LEVEL  
MEETING ON BIODIVERSITY**

**22 SEPTEMBER 2010**

*Check against Delivery*

Co-chairs,

1. I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to make a few remarks on this issue. This meeting comes at an opportune time when Member States of the United Nations are reviewing progress made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Most importantly, it comes at a time when the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biodiversity are preparing for their Tenth meeting scheduled to take place in October 2010, in Nagoya, Japan.

Co-chairs,

2. Environmental Sustainability cannot be attained without protection of biological resources.
3. Therefore, the adoption of the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) in 1992 was thus a confirmation that the international community recognized and accepted that the protection of biodiversity is pivotal to environmental sustainability. In fact, biodiversity is a source of life.
4. The implementation of the objectives of the Convention and the target of reducing biodiversity loss as reflected in the Strategic Plan of the CBD for the Period 2011-2020 is therefore not an option but a compelling undertaking to contribute significantly to sustainable development.

Co-chairs,

5. It is unfortunate that the third edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook reflects that the global 2010 biodiversity targets have not been met as there is still a continued loss of biodiversity, reduced freshwater resources, increasing poverty and reduced resilience levels by ecosystems. This clearly calls for the scaling up of our efforts to reverse these trends.

Co-chairs,

6. Botswana has made significant strides in honouring her obligations under the Convention on Biodiversity since ratification in 2001. In fact, policy and legislative measures geared towards biodiversity protection had been in existence prior to ratification of this Convention.
7. Furthermore, at least 40% of the total land area in Botswana has been designated as '*protected area*'. This is made up of national parks, game reserves, concession areas, wildlife management areas and forest reserves.

Co-chairs,

8. Our efforts to implement biodiversity action plan are hampered by limited financial and technical capacity as well as the negative impact of climate change.
9. In this regard, I would like to appeal to our cooperating partners to provide predictable technical and financial resources to help enhance our capacity to implement sound biodiversity programmes, in accordance with our national priorities.

Co-chairs,

10. In conclusion, let me state that my country is keenly following the debates on Access and Benefit Sharing. In particular, we are looking forward to the adoption of a legally binding instrument which will, among other things, prevent biopiracy and ensures a fair and equitable benefit sharing mechanism at the Tenth biennial meeting of the Conference of Parties which will be held from 18-29 October in Nagoya, Japan.

Thank you.