

REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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REMARKS BY

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AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**ON AGENDA ITEM 33: THE KIMBERELY PROCESS
“THE ROLE OF DIAMONDS IN FUELLING CONFLICT:
BREAKING THE LINK BETWEEN THE ILLICIT
TRANSACTION OF ROUGH DIAMONDS AND ARMED
CONFLICT AS A CONTRIBUTION TO PREVENTION AND
SETTLEMENT OF CONFLICTS”**

**DURING THE
73RD SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**1ST MARCH 2019
NEW YORK**

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Mr. President,

1. At the outset, our delegation joins others in thanking you for convening this annual briefing on the Kimberley Process entitled ***“The role of diamonds in fuelling conflict; breaking the link between the illicit transaction of rough diamonds and armed conflict as a contribution to the prevention and settlement of conflicts”***.
2. We express our sincere appreciation to the delegation of the EU for their able stewardship of the Kimberley Process in 2018. Indeed, during their tenure the Kimberley Process had two main successful sessions, being the intercessional and plenary meetings respectively, through which the *2018 Kimberley Process Communiqué* was adopted by the 55 Participants, representing 82 countries including the 28 Member States of the European Union.
3. We therefore commend the EU, as outgoing Chair, for presenting the 2018 implementation report and the draft Resolution contained in document A/73/L.75.
4. As both the report and the resolution before us emphasize, the Kimberley Process has in the past 16 years made great strides, including achieving the widest possible participation in the Certificate Scheme.
5. Since its establishment in 2003, conflict diamonds have dropped from 15% as a proportion of the global trade in rough diamonds to less than 1%. It was this auspicious body, the UN General Assembly, that supported the call by the diamond industry especially African producing States to launch an international trade regime that would monitor and regulate the trade in rough diamonds, hence the gradual reduction in conflict diamonds that we witness today.

Mr. President,

6. Through the important resolution we have just adopted today the United Nations has once again re-confirmed the importance of the diamond sector as a catalyst for promoting economic and social development, which is necessary for poverty reduction and addressing inequalities in our countries.
7. The Assembly has recalled the positive benefits of legitimate diamond trade to producing countries, including transparency and accountability and the contribution the diamond sector continues to make on the economies of producing, exporting and importing States, and therefore underlined the need for international action with regards to the ethical exploitation, sale and trade in diamonds.
8. The resolution also encourages further strengthening of the Kimberley Process to enhance its effectiveness in addressing the challenges posed to the diamond industry and implications on the lives of the communities that should benefit from the associated gains. This includes the link to instability and conflict prevention, and to ensure that the Kimberley Process remains relevant in contributing to sustainable development, peace-building and sustaining peace.
9. Crucial to also note is the commitment by the KP to continue discussions on reform and review, as noted by its Ad hoc Committee on Review and Reform, which will continue consultations on the areas of consolidation of the Core Document and

strengthening of Peer Review Mechanisms, establishment of the Permanent Secretariat, Multi Donor Fund, and how to strengthen the scope of the Kimberley Process.

10. Furthermore, our delegation is pleased that the resolution has also called for efforts to enhance cooperation and assistance to diamond-producing countries including through sharing of best practices, capacity-building and required compliance with the KP standards, rules and procedures as well as the certification system.

Mr. President,

11. There is no doubt that the KP is truly a unique multilateral initiative that has brought together key stakeholders such as Governments, the diamond industry and civil society to for concerted effort to stem the flow of illicit and conflict diamonds from the legitimate diamond market.
12. The tripartite nature of the Kimberley Process continues to be the main source of strength of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme. In this regard, we have good reason to jealously guard this multi-stakeholder partnership, which remains one of the best examples of a United Nations-led initiative for a common endeavour. It is for this very reason that the Chairs of the KP are mandated by the UN General Assembly to annually brief the Assembly on the state of the diamond industry and compliance by member States.
13. Beyond enabling socio-economic development for the benefit of millions of our peoples, the combined efforts of the Kimberley Process and the United Nations have seen the settlement of intractable conflicts and the consolidation of peace in several African countries.
14. It is our fervent hope that soon the entire Central African Republic will also be declared a full green zone exporting State, so that the people of the CAR can also enjoy the fruits and positive dividend of the minerals sector.
15. We therefore look forward to seeing the CAR implement their Post Sanctions Strategy, and Botswana avails itself to contribute this end which is also crucial to the neighbouring countries.

Mr. President,

16. The continued success of the Kimberley Process is important and confirms what can be accomplished when global commitment is matched with global action. The Kimberley Process Certificate Scheme has a direct impact on effective mobilisation of resources to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
17. Furthermore, effective implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1459 (2003) has significantly reduced the trade in conflict diamonds for many member States, thereby enabling them to use the economic gains to uplift the living standards of their people.
18. For countries, like our own Botswana, whose diamond revenues have always been channelled towards development purposes, the Kimberley Process has enabled us to protect the integrity and reputation of our most valued commodity, **diamonds**.

19. As the world's leading diamond producer by value, it is without saying that diamonds which account for the larger part of our GDP are unquestionably the mainstay of Botswana's development agenda. As Botswana's Former President Mogae once said when presenting the KP report to this General Assembly a decade ago in his capacity as the then Chair of the KP, ***"For our people in Botswana every diamond bought means food on the table, better living conditions, better health care, safe drinking water, more roads and much, much more."***
20. In short, for Botswana **diamonds are for development**, and we aspire the same for all Producing member States.
21. Through sound policies, our Government has successfully ensured that the proceeds from diamond sales contribute to the implementation of our successive National Development Plans and national visions including our Vision 2036.
22. Through our national roadmap, we are equally committed to applying these gains to realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union's Agenda 2063, all of which Botswana fully ascribes to.
23. We encourage all the members of the KP to adhere to high standards, which include putting in place enabling national legislation and competent institutions as well as stringent internal controls to ensure transparency and to facilitate the exchange of statistical data.
24. Based on her development success story, Botswana stands ready to share lessons, experiences and best practices with other mineral producing countries, especially those emerging from conflict situations.
25. In this regard, we support the AU's Africa Mining Vision adopted in 2009 and its ongoing transition and hope it will serve as a pivotal common platform for African countries to work together based on a shared vision towards the **"Africa We Want"**.
26. In conclusion, we once more underscore that through the KP and strong commitment by the UN General Assembly we can let enhance our prospects of achieving peace and security and the commitments set in the United Nations' Agenda 2030 as well as Africa's Agenda 2063 and associated initiatives such as Africa's Mining Vision.
27. We reaffirm Botswana's commitment to the KP initiative. Moving forward, we take this opportunity to welcome the selection of India as the Chair of the Kimberley Process for 2019, and the Russian Federation as the Vice-Chair for 2019 and subsequent Chair for 2020. We assure them of our full cooperation and support during their tenure.
28. Thereafter, as already agreed, our own country will be ready to serve as the Vice-Chair for 2020 and the Chair for 2021.

I thank you for your kind attention.
