



PARLIAMENT OF BOTSWANA

**STATEMENT BY HONOURABLE N.W.T MAKWINJA
AT THE 143rd IPU ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS
26^H – 30TH NOVEMBER 2021**

Madrid, Spain

CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES TO DEMOCRACY – OVERCOMING DIVISION AND BUILDING COMMUNITY

Mister Chairman

Honourable Speakers from national parliaments,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning

1. It is indeed an honour and privilege to join you this morning on the occasion of 143rd IPU Assembly and related meetings here in Spanish Capital Madrid.
2. Ladies and Gentlemen, I am honoured to speak to you on a subject which is often contentious but very important to humanity - ***'Contemporary challenges to democracy- overcoming division and building community'***.
3. Modern democracy as a form of system has arguably become an important parameter to measure good governance and development in our nations. Some scholars posit that a larger percentage of the socio –economic challenges faced by sub Saharan Africa are largely due to inability to practise true democracy.
4. I am delighted Mr Chairman that this assembly has seen it fit to agree to the African group to deal with this issue of covid vaccines. We have seen here Democracy at work, building consensus and participation be all in decisions that affect humanity is something we cannot put a price on.
5. Investors prefer to take their investment to countries that are politically stable and conflict free. Mr Chairman, our president HE MEK Masisi is

taking every opportunity to ask investors to come to Botswana . It is time ladies and gentlemen, for Africa to be counted and contribute to efforts to make this world a better place for all, and practicing true democracy is a pathway to this ideal.

6. Mr Chairman, respect for individual rights; tolerance of divergent views; equality before the law; free and fair elections, social justice etc are some of fundamental democratic values. Botswana has and will continue to have an accessible and efficient judicial system.
7. Democracy provides people with an opportunity to take moral responsibility for their choices and decision about government policies.
10. Endemic corruption which in some instances is institutionalised results in widespread poverty, unemployment, social injustices, marginalisation, divisions, conflicts among others, and are threat to our community building and unity.
11. Politically, some of the leaders abuse their power as they prolong their stay in power in defiance of their constitutions.
12. Politics of social exclusion creates unequal society not healthy to contemporary democracy as it threaten peace and stability of our nations.
13. Institutions such as parliament, Anti- corruption bureau, and auditing bodies need to be strengthened to be able to effectively hold their leadership to account.
14. Ladies and Gentlemen, Botswana is Africa's oldest continuous democracy and has enjoyed decades of peaceful multipartyism since independence in 1966.
15. Although there is still room for improvement, our political system is inclusive and accessible, and adheres to constitutionalism, the maintenance of a liberal and democratic governance, and commitment

to renewal of a political leadership through regular, free, fair and credible elections.

16. Democracy is one of Botswana's four founding principles and is a pillar of its **National Vision 2036**. Our Vision 2036 envisages "the land of peace, freedom and progressive governance".
17. Due to her political stability, Botswana will continue to be a destination for investment.
18. Botswana has been ranked as one of the least corrupt countries in Africa and the world by well – known international organisations such as Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), which ranks Botswana as the least corrupt country in sub-Saharan Africa while Free House has classified the country as "free" since 1973.
19. Though Botswana corruption perceptions index declined in recent years, it tended to increase through 2001 - 2020 period. Thus there still more to be done as corruption is not eradicated.
20. To combat this 'cancer', the government has introduced watchdog institutions such as Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime primarily 'to investigate allegations of corruption and economic crime, educate the public on the effects of corruption and to prevent corruption'.
21. Parliamentary oversight committees such as Public Accounts Committee ensures that there is accountability and transparency on the part of government in utilisation of public funds.
22. Good governance is considered a precondition for peace and sustainable development.
23. Ladies and Gentlemen, it is therefore important not only to strengthen our institutions as a way of addressing contemporary challenges, but also to monitor and evaluate such institutions for

promotion of healthy democracy and economic betterment of our countries.

24. On that note, Mr Chairman, Distinguished ladies and gentleman.

I thank you for your kind attention.

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