



REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

STATEMENT

BY

PRESIDENT DUMA GEDION BOKO

DURING THE GENERAL DEBATE

80th SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

***"BETTER TOGETHER: 80 YEARS MORE FOR PEACE, DEVELOPMENT AND
HUMAN RIGHTS"***

**25 SEPTEMBER 2025
NEW YORK**



**Madam President,
Secretary General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen.**

1. We meet here today and this whole week; in these hallowed precincts, to remember the overwhelming gravity of the circumstances that gave birth to the United Nations. The ruins of war. A world poised to descend into further mayhem, if courageous choices were not made. Leaders, of great vision and courage, stepped up. They realized that the charms and the allurements of our unity, trumped any tendencies to divide us. And from their conviction, that humanity is better together, this institution was born. Their courage and fortitude merits our recurrent admiration.

2. So I stand, on this enchanted spot today to express my thanks, and the gratitude of the people of Botswana, to our fore-runners and to all of you. We must recommit ourselves to the vision: peace, development, and human rights for all people, in all nations. I stand here today in the composite capacities of citizen of Botswana, and as an African. Yes, I am an African; stump and root.
3. For Botswana, the ideals of the United Nations are not abstractions. They are the foundation of our identity. Since our Independence we have sought to embody democratic governance, respect for the rule of law- including an international rule-based normative order, and the dignity of every human being.

4. We reaffirm today our commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and to advancing equality- including the protection of indigenous peoples, women and youth – within our borders and across our region. Yet we also acknowledge that the pursuit of justice is an arduous journey. My administration has pledged to reform and strengthen institutions, enhance transparency and root out corruption. We do so not for accolades, but because our citizens deserve governments that serve them with integrity. We are on a quest for integrity in African leadership.
5. Excellencies, Botswana has been blessed with the gift of diamonds. For decades, this resource has financed schools, hospitals, and infrastructure. But today, we confront the fragility of that reliance. Diamond markets fluctuate. Our people's needs do not recede.

Our vision is clear: to diversify our economy, empower our people, and create resilience. We invite global partners to invest in renewable energy, technology, sustainable agriculture, and value-added industries. We extend an open hand to businesses, innovators, and institutions ready to walk with us on this journey of transformation.

6. Botswana is a semi-arid nation. Our people know the meaning of drought. We know the anxiety of scarce water, of crops that wilt and wither under a relentless sun, of livelihoods eroded by forces beyond our control. Climate change is not a distant threat; it is a present reality. That is why I have joined the Global Center on Adaptation, because adaptation must be at the centre of sustainable development. I call on this Assembly to scale up financing for climate adaptation. Let us invest in water infrastructure,

early warning systems, and climate-smart agriculture. Let us ensure that the promise of the Paris Agreement is not confined to paper, but realized in the lives of farmers, herders, and children across the Global South.

7. Earlier this year, Botswana faced an acute shortage of essential medicines. This crisis exposed not only the vulnerabilities of our supply chains, but the wider inequities of the global health system. Access to medicines is a human right, not a privilege. We call upon the United Nations, international financial institutions, and the private sector to work with us to build resilient health systems. Together, let us explore local production, regional supply hubs, and fairer mechanisms to ensure that no nation is left to face health emergencies alone.

8. As an African I stand here, as one of the trumpet voices of Africa, a continent too often treated with affable indifference. Africa's voice is not heard. This United Nations cannot be truly international; it cannot be truly together, and will not be better until our continent- home to one fifth of the population of the world- is afforded an equal voice at the highest body of this organization. Friends and partners in the Permanent Five: it is time to make good on your promise to a continent. Agree a permanent seat on the UN Security Council for Africa, for 80 years the only continent without one.
9. I also welcome the decision by Britain, Australia, Canada, and France, to recognize the State of Palestine, joining other nations that have already done so. No people should be dispossessed of their lands, and we stand in solidarity with the Palestinian

people in their pursuit of a home and of dignity. So too we reaffirm our support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. We urge all parties to stop the war, and seek a peaceful resolution.

10. Distinguished delegates, the theme of this General Assembly is "Better Together." This is not a slogan; it is a truth. We are better together in combating pandemics, better together in adapting to climate change, better together in securing peace, and better together in ensuring that human dignity is not the preserve of a few, but the inheritance of all. Let us therefore recommit ourselves to multilateralism, not as a matter of convenience, but as a necessity. For none of us can weather the storms of this century alone.

11. As Botswana looks to the future, we do so with humility, but also with determination. We stand ready to contribute, to partner, and to lead where we can. Together, let us ensure that when future generations mark 100 years of the United Nations, they will say of us: They were the generation that turned words into action, promises into progress, and hope into reality.

I thank you.