

REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT

BY

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OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND HOME AFFAIRS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA**

DURING THE GENERAL DEBATE

OF THE

FIRST INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION REVIEW FORUM (IMRF)

17-20 MAY 2022

UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS

NEW YORK

H.E. Mr. Abdulla Shahid, President of the General Assembly,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Botswana thanks the President of the General Assembly for convening this important meeting. As a country that is faced with unique and complex migration challenges, we have adopted a comprehensive approach to migration.
2. Botswana is a country of origin, transit and destination for various categories of migrants, including migrant workers, refugees, asylum seekers, and has recently received an increasing number of victims of human trafficking.
3. Botswana is a land-locked country and has a number of borders with the Republic of South Africa, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe and they collaborate through the Bi National and Joint Permanent Commissions for successful implementation of some objectives of the GCM. The Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa (MIDSA) is another forum with which SADC countries discuss migration issues.
4. Botswana is fully committed to the principle of protecting vulnerable migrants. To demonstrate this commitment, Botswana voluntarily participated in the first review of the GCM implementation.
5. In addition, Botswana signed the Decent Work Programme with the International Labour Organization (ILO) to advance three priorities on Sustainable Employment creation, particularly for young women and men; improved quality of social protection of work for all; and effective labour market governance institutions and practices. This is an inclusive programme that is driven by tripartite plus, that is, Government, Business/private sector, Labour, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

Excellencies,

6. To ensure inclusiveness, migrants are facilitated to have work and residence permits as well as Citizenship through Immigration Laws and procedures. They are also provided with health and educational services. During COVID-19 pandemic, migrants with or without permits had access to vaccines as the right to health is a universal right that one has to enjoy irrespective of their status and location.
7. Furthermore, those that expressed interest to return to their countries during the State of Public Emergency were facilitated with transport as some had lost their jobs. This exercise was done in consultation with their Embassies and was inclusive of irregular and undocumented migrants.

Excellencies,

8. Botswana is fully committed to objective 21 of the GCM on Return and Integration. When asylum seekers and refugees are returned, Botswana ensures that they return to a safe environment.
9. When it comes to readmission, Botswana has committed to receive her own nationals.
10. Botswana cooperates with other countries on repatriation of their nationals. Repatriation of foreign nationals is carried out with a detailed profile of the nationals to achieve smooth integration, for example, education level of children repatriated and chronic illness medication.
11. In 2008, Botswana assisted Bakalanga ba ka Nswaswi who were repatriated from Zimbabwe to obtain serviced land to settle.

Excellencies,

12. The Government of Botswana has adopted flexible pathways for regular migration, and these include issuance of Visa at ports of entry - which was introduced in 2018, Online Visa that was introduced in 2021, flexible payment for Visa, Gratis Visa for Employment Visa and Students.
13. Botswana has signed bilateral agreements on community crossing points with neighbouring countries to allow communities living along the International Borders to easily interact with each other.
14. In conclusion, Botswana highly appreciates the support we continue to receive from the international community to fulfil our commitments under the GCM. We also thank the international community for assisting Botswana in the diaspora to get vaccinations and for facilitating their return to our country.
15. Botswana reaffirms her commitment to the GCM and looks forward to implementing the outcomes of this meeting.

I thank you for your kind attention.
