



ADDRESS

BY

HIS EXCELLENCY DR. MOKGWEETSI E.K. MASISI

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

ON THE OCCASION OF

THE 2022 KIMBERLEY PROCESS PLENARY MEETING

01 NOVEMBER 2022

GABORONE, BOTSWANA



- **Director of Ceremonies;**
- **Hon. Lefhoko Moagi, Minister of Minerals and Energy;**
- **Honourable Ministers here present;**
- **Mr Jacob Thamage, Chair of the Kimberley Process;**
- **Representatives of the Kimberley Process Membership;**
- **Your Excellencies Heads of Diplomatic Missions and International Organisations;**
- **Heads of Non-Governmental Organisations;**
- **Distinguished Delegates;**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen.**

1. It is indeed a great honour to welcome you today, to this momentous occasion of the 2022 Kimberley Process Plenary Meeting in Gaborone. I am pleased to note the high in person participation by most delegations and encourage you to explore the gem that is Botswana before you return home.
2. I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Chair of the Kimberley Process, Mr Jacob Thamage and other stakeholders for convening this very important meeting

under the theme "***Diamonds, a catalyst for sustainable development***".

3. I also wish to acknowledge and thank you all for the support that you have rendered us to successfully carry out the duties of Chairing the KP during the current challenging socio-economic-political landscape. The highly attended intersessional meeting convened earlier this year in Kasane, was exemplary of your support and commitment.
4. **Distinguished, Delegates and Guests,** It is indeed, heartening to be able to meet again in person as we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. I am informed that we have also restarted peer review visits and that many more are planned for next year. Normalising our lives within the new normal is not an option.
5. The silver lining with our experiences from the pandemic, is the realisation that we do not have much time if we are to deliver on the promises of the Sustainable Development Goals. The ripple effects of escalating geo-political tensions, including the Russia-Ukraine war have also added to the burden of humanitarian crisis across the globe.

6. To deal with these challenges may require the KP, to go back to the drawing board and re-strategise. That this Plenary will consider some terms of reference to review the KPCS as part of the scheme's 3 year review cycle is an opportunity that we need to grab with both hands.
7. **Distinguished Guests,** For Botswana, as the theme suggests, Diamonds are a Catalyst for Sustainable Development. Now, more than ever, we need your partnership to protect this industry and guard the livelihoods of multitudes across the globe who depend on this industry.
8. **Excellencies, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,** Diamonds are the mainstay of Botswana's economy; whose annual production today is by value the highest in the world. The importance of diamonds to Botswana's development agenda is therefore unquestionable, hence my country's unwavering support to the Kimberley Process.
9. As a country, we have for the last two decades attached great importance to the Kimberley Process, not only because it addresses the trade in rough diamonds but also because it symbolizes the international community's resolve to collectively ensure that never again shall resources such as

diamonds, bring sorrow and suffering to humanity, as it happened in the past in some parts of our continent.

10. **Distinguished Guests**, This year's Plenary is significant in that 20 years ago this coming Saturday, 37 Participants with the European Union representing its Members States, signed the Interlaken Declaration which launched the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme. Over the years the KP has grown in leaps and bounds to the current 55 Participants representing 85 countries with the EU representation of its Members states. We hope and encourage more countries to become Participants.

11. I know I am speaking to the converted when I say that, since its inception in 2003, the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme in spite of its imperfections has significantly contributed to addressing the conflict diamonds problem. It was through this auspicious body, led by the United Nations 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 significant reduction in conflict diamonds that we are witnessing today.

12. There is no doubt that the Kimberley Process is a truly unique demonstration of human solidarity and common purpose for the good of humanity. As a multilateral initiative that has brought together key stakeholders such as Governments, the diamond industry and civil society to stem the flow of illicit and conflict diamonds from the legitimate rough diamond market, the Kimberley Process must be jealously guarded as it represents a unique example of the United Nations recognised tripartite entity.
13. The importance of the diamond sector as a catalyst for promoting economic and social development, necessary for poverty reduction has for the last twenty years been visible especially among many diamond producing states.
14. For countries like Botswana, whose diamond revenues have always been used for development purposes, the Kimberley Process has enabled us to protect the integrity and reputation of our most valued commodity, **diamonds**.
15. As I stated earlier for Botswana "**diamonds are a tool for doing Good**" and we desire that this be the case for all diamond Producing Member States of the United Nations.

16. Based on her development success story, Botswana stands ready to share lessons, experiences and best practices with other diamond producing and mineral producing countries, especially those emerging from conflict situations.
17. In this regard, we support the Africa Union's Africa Mining Vision which serves as a common platform for African countries to work together based on a shared vision towards the **"Africa We Want"**.
18. Beyond enabling socio-economic development to millions of our peoples, the combined efforts of the Kimberley Process and the United Nations have seen the settlement of conflicts and the consolidation of peace in several African countries.
19. This is why as a country, Botswana is like many in this room, a great advocate of the Kimberley Process's efforts to enhance cooperation and assistance to diamond-producing countries on best practices, capacity-building and compliance with KP minimum standards as outlined in the core document as well as the various initiatives adopted over the years to ensure best practices in the sourcing of diamonds.

20. **Distinguished Guests**, The Republic of Botswana has, since the inception of the KP in 2003, conformed to the obligations of Participants and remains committed to its shared ideals of the good governance of mineral resources especially her diamonds. We have over the years, advanced legal frameworks and strengthened institutions to support the mining and marketing of diamonds as a way of constantly ensuring that our diamonds are used for the sustainable development of our people.
21. These environmental, social and governance practices have propelled Botswana from a Least Developed country to an Upper Middle-Income economy. The same principles of good governance are still important to propel us to the next stage of development.
22. A key takeaway from the just ended 77th United Nations General Assembly is the call for States to expedite the establishment of joint sustainable solutions to interlocking global challenges to inter alia, protect future generations.
23. The tri-partite structure of the KP comprising governments, the global diamond industry and civil society, demonstrates this joint engagement. It is upon us to use this structure to

deliver scaled up solutions for among others, the artisanal and small-scale mining sector to deliver a more sustainable, inclusive and transparent diamond value chain. I firmly believe that having an established Permanent Secretariat will help us in this ambition.

24. **Excellencies, Distinguished Guests,** I hope that Botswana, will receive your support as one of the bidders to host the KP Permanent Secretariat. I can assure you that we are committed to work with all in the KP fraternity to ensure that the diamond industry is protected from infirmity.
25. As I conclude, let me reaffirm that the Government of Botswana stands ready to provide technical assistance to ensure that all Participants are able to abide by the KP principles. We also duly extend our support to the incoming Chair of the KP, the Republic of Zimbabwe.
26. I wish the Plenary, fruitful and progressive deliberations, and once again welcome and implore you to spare a day or two after the meeting to experience a bit our our culture, flora and fauna.

I thank you.