

## **BOTSWANA STATEMENT AT 112<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE IOM COUNCIL**

1. Chair, Director General, Your Excellencies and Honourable Ministers here present, Excellencies and Distinguished delegates.
2. Botswana aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of Africa by Niger. We wish to congratulate IOM as the organization marks 70 years of existence this year.
3. Chairperson, we extend our congratulations to you and other members of the Bureau on your election to lead the 112th Session of the IOM Council. Botswana would also like to thank the outgoing Chairperson, HE Mr Evan P. Garcia, the Permanent Representative of The Philippines, for his leadership in the past 12 months.
4. We would also like to take this opportunity to welcome and congratulate to Ms. Amy Pope and Ms. Ugochi Daniels on their appointments respectively as DDG in charge of management and reform, and DDG in charge of operations.
5. We have noted the Director-General`s comprehensive report presented yesterday and we would like to express our gratitude to him and his staff for working tirelessly to ensure that the organization remains effective, operational and fit for purpose during these challenging times.
6. Chairperson, we are still reeling from the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic, as evidenced by the recent discovery of a Covid 19 variant called “omicron”. In response, some countries have imposed flight bans and travel restrictions targeting Botswana and some of our neighbours in Southern Africa, which have a negative impact on human mobility. However, as indicated by World Health Organization (WHO), travel restrictions do not significantly avert the spread of Covid 19 infections. On the contrary, these restrictions place a heavy burden on the economies of the affected countries. Moreover, we would not

be where we are, had covid 19 vaccine supplies been distributed more equitably.

7. Botswana continues to support the IOM's continued focus on conflict situations worldwide where there are humanitarian crises, including Afghanistan, Mozambique, and Ethiopia. At regional level, we welcome the launch of the IOM Capacity Building Center of Moshi in Tanzania, dedicated to African States, organizations and other stakeholders in the management and governance of migration.
8. We commend the Director-General for leading efforts to implement the Global Compact as the UN Network for Migration Coordinator. After completing the regional reviews, we hope that the International Migration Review Forum, which will take place in May 2022, will also progress well. With the roadmap outlined by the DG last month, we hope to participate fully in this significant event.
9. As I conclude, allow me to express my delegation's gratitude for the projects currently being implemented by IOM in Botswana. These include the Ethical Recruitment project that IOM is implementing with our Ministry of Defence, Justice and Security. The project aims to support the Government in improving assistance to vulnerable migrants and victims of trafficking and ensuring the protection of migrants' rights, including adopting ethical recruitment standards and practices.
10. We are also delighted that earlier this year, IOM and our Ministry of International Affairs and Cooperation commenced the implementation of a two (2) year Diaspora Engagement project under which there will be a mapping of Botswana diaspora in selected key destination countries.