STATEMENT

BY

HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT LIEUTENANT GENERAL DR. SERETSE KHAMA IAN KHAMA

AT

CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE OF PARTIES (COP 22)

MARRAKECH, MOROCCO

15TH NOVEMBER 2016

President of COP 22

Majesty King Mohammed VI

Heads of States

Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki Moon

Ladies and Gentlemen

1. Let me at the onset express my gratitute to the Kingdom of Morrocco for hosting this 22nd Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

2. Botswana is proud to be one of the founding signatories to the Paris Agreement which was so successfully negotiated at CoP21. Botswana is also proud to have ratified on the 11th November 2016. It is our expectation that CoP22 provides conclusive guidance and action towards the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

3. The Paris Agreement is premised upon the recognition of economic and human development needs and priorities of developing countries, whilst emphasizing the necessary leadership in climate action of developed countries. It is therefore gratifying to note that the Agreement aims to

strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by following a sustainable development pathway,

by so doing complementing the objective of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

4. Botswana is committed to reduce her greenhouse gas emissions by 15% by 2030. Our Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) comprises measures in such areas as renewable energy, energy efficiency, and transport. Our adaptation efforts focus largely on such vulnerable sectors as agriculture, water and health.

5. In addressing climate change, we continue to incur considerable costs of an environmental and economic nature and we have thus indicated that our ability to implement our NDC pledge will require the support of the international community. We will therefore seek to utilise the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to assist us in reaching our aspirations.

6. One area in which we would like to advocate for greater international cooperation is in getting an improved understanding of the value of our natural capital and how

our resources may be affected by climate change. The Botswana tourism sector is a case in point. Largely based on our attractive nature and wildlife abundance, the sector is at risk because of shifting ecosystems, changing water regimes and species migration due to the effects of climate change. Our protected areas may in the future not hold the very wildlife species and habitats on the basis of which they are currently protected. This is indeed a daunting scenario.

7. Our rivers, forests, agricultural lands and other resources are equally at risk and in order to have a better appreciation of their current economic value Botswana has been spearheading a platform called the Gaborone Declaration for Sustainability in Africa (GDSA) which focuses on natural capital valuation and accounting for sustainable development.

8. The GDSA recognizes that the historical pattern of natural resources exploitation has failed to promote sustained levels of economic growth, environmental integrity and improved social capital and therefore a concerted effort is needed to halt and reverse the degradation and loss of healthy ecosystems and biodiversity, so as to redirect the transformation of natural endowment into enhanced

physical, social and human capital as well as improved livelihoods. The effects of climate change have a direct impact on the way we should manage our natural capital.

9. Through efforts in natural capital accounting, sustainable agriculture, payment for ecosystem services, and ecosystem-based adaptation, the GDSA will contribute directly to climate change adaptation and will build the adaptive capacity of communities in transitioning towards a green economy. The GDSA is thus committed to securing ecological health for the African region despite the fact that climate change, alongside habitat destruction, biodiversity loss, and watershed and forest depletion, poses a real threat to the sustainability of nature and human kind.

10. Although the climate challenges are immense, we need to be attuned to the fact they do present ample opportunities. Doing business in a carbon-constrained world requires a different skills base and different kinds of jobs will emerge in such sectors as energy, agriculture, tourism and transport. We need to be visionary and provide the right incentives to tap into this potential.

11. In conclusion, Botswana stands ready to play its part in the implementation of the Paris Agreement which we are in the process of ratifying within the foreseeable future.

    Thank you for your attention.