



**STATEMENT
BY
HIS EXCELLENCY FESTUS G MOGAE
FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA**

**DURING
THE
SPECIAL MEETING OF ECOSOC
ON
"NATURAL RESOURCES, PEACEFUL SOCIETIES AND
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: LESSONS FROM THE
KIMBERLEY PROCESS"**

NEW YORK

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**Mr. President,
Honourable Ministers,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,**

- 1.** At the outset, **Mr. President**, let me take this opportunity to commend you for convening this Special Meeting on ***"Natural Resources, Peaceful Societies and Sustainable Development: Lessons from the Kimberley Process."*** This is a timely event which addresses current challenges that the world is grappling with and provides solutions accordingly.
- 2.** I am therefore honoured to share my ideas on this important subject as one of the founding leaders of the initiative that came to be known as the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme.

Mr. President,

- 3.** Some twenty two (22) years ago at the height of the global outcry against "blood diamonds," Southern African diamond-producing states convened in Kimberley, South Africa, to reassert their commitment to the utilization of diamond revenues for economic development.
- 4.** We also discussed ways to rid the global diamond trade of diamonds that are mined through and for funding conflict. This was an important discussion given the enormous significance of diamonds to our economies.
- 5.** In addition to the imperative to protect our national economies, we were driven by our belief that natural resources should be a force for good, an engine for development, rather than a cause for armed conflict and human suffering.

6. Subsequently, the discussion was picked up by the United Nations General Assembly, which adopted a resolution supporting the creation of a diamond trade mechanism that established the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPSC). This initiative was also endorsed by the Security Council.
7. The certification scheme was created to be inclusive. It was conceived as a tripartite structure comprising governments, the global diamond industry and civil society organisations.
8. As we have heard during this special meeting, the Kimberly process has been successful. It is evident that in the two decades of its existence, the Kimberly Process has helped to significantly reduce the trade of illicit diamonds. This is a commendable achievement and indeed an immense contribution to international peace and security.
9. I believe I am also speaking for my contemporaries when I note that that the mechanism has during its two decades of existence become exactly what we envisioned when we first gathered in the town of Kimberley.
10. Notwithstanding this success, **Mr. President**, there is still more work that needs to be done to eradicate illicit diamond trading, especially in countries in conflict. What is key will be to continually strengthen institutions and building capacity to foster compliance.

Mr. President,

11. The strides attributable to the Kimberly Process, which we have alluded to, throughout discussions during this Meeting attest to the importance of cooperation and collaboration by all stakeholders – in this case, the governments, the private sector, and civil society.
12. I therefore encourage natural resource-endowed developing countries to take a leaf from the work of the Kimberly Process to ensure that

natural resources become catalysts for sustainable development, especially during the remainder of the Decade of Action for delivery of Sustainable Development Goals.

13. The principles and purposes driving the Kimberley Process are not only applicable to diamonds and other mineral resources, they can also be adapted to non-mineral resources such as fertile land, forests, oceans, flora and fauna. The triple planetary crisis consisting of Climate Change, Biodiversity loss and Pollution poses security threats in relation to access to and utilisation of non-mineral resources hence the need to ensure that they are conflict-free.

14. In conclusion, **Mr. President**, let me underscore that the ethical sourcing of natural resources as well as the prudent management and fair distribution of their proceeds contributes positively to peace and development.

I thank you.