REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

CLOSING REMARKS

BY

HON. DIKGAKGAMATSO N. SERETSE
MINISTER OF DEFENCE, JUSTICE AND SECURITY

DURING ADOPTION OF BOTSWANA UPR REPORT

AT THE

15TH SESSION OF THE UPR WORKING GROUP
OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

21 January – 01 February 2013
Geneva, Switzerland

Mr. President,

Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates,

1. My Delegation and I are indebted to you for your invaluable contribution to our review.

2. We received 178 recommendations, accepted 95, deferred 45 for further consultations and unfortunately declined 38. Feedback on the deferred recommendations will be provided not later than the 23rd Session of the Human Rights Council, in June 2013.

3. **Mr. President,** Our acceptance of recommendations requiring alignment of our customary practices, laws and procedures to common law is premised on the understanding that this will be done through public education, to ensure wider and informed acceptance, as opposed to prescription by law, the latter of which has been the premise for our non-acceptance.

Mr. President,

4. While we accept the spirit of some of the recommendations, we declined them for want of contextualisation. For example, the use of the term "indigenous peoples".

5. All other recommendations that have not enjoyed our support, either do not have public support for change in our country, or are redundant or unreasonable.

Mr. President,

6. I wish to assure you that Botswana takes all the recommendations made to her very seriously. We believe that this process is meant to improve the human rights standards of our people.

7. May I conclude, **Mr. President**, by expressing our sincere gratitude to the Members of the Troika, namely: Austria, Poland and Uganda for their facilitation and assistance in the preparation of our Report.

8. Our special thanks go to the Secretariat, especially Mr. Sugan Naidoo and Ms. Thi Thuy Van Dinh, for their active support during the entire process of our review.

I thank you and God Bless You!