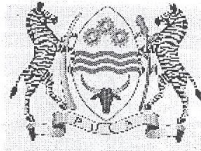


TELEGRAM: DEFA
TELEPHONE: 3600700
FAX: 3913366
TELEX: 2414 BD



Republic of Botswana

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
PRIVATE BAG 00368
GABORONE, BOTSWANA

PRESS RELEASE

Gaborone, 06 September 2013 – “Evil Triumphs when good men do nothing”:

The Government of the Republic of Botswana remains deeply concerned about the ongoing state-sponsored massacre in Syria, which to-date is reported to have claimed the lives of over 100 000 people and caused two million others to flee their country, of whom more than half are children. As we explicitly expressed before, we hold the view that bloodshed and brutality being perpetrated by Assad’s regime will only come to an end if there is regime change.

For a long time, it has been conspicuous that Assad’s regime is prepared to use chemical weapons to thwart any resistance to his tyrannical rule. We therefore find the statement made by the United States Secretary of State on the 26th August 2013 that the Syrian regime on 21st August 2013 used chemical weapons in the Damascus suburbs to be convincing and compelling.

However, we wish to reiterate our earlier position that punitive action in whatever form, should have long been taken against Assad’s regime as mass murder whether with conventional or no-conventional weapons is tantamount to a crime against humanity.

We once again wish to register our disappointment with Russia and China who as permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, have in the past, and in the case of Russia recently, continue to frustrate resolutions aimed at interventions that could find a lasting solution to the ongoing carnage in Syria. The United Nations Security Council as the body charged with the responsibility for international peace and

security should assume a leading role in responding to any actions which violate human rights. These two members should not allow their historical political differences with others on the council to undermine that responsibility. The cold war is long over, and the mentality of that era has no place in today's international affairs.

We can only hope that this time around the international Community will act immediately and in unison in a manner that will see an end to the atrocities that have claimed so many lives of the people of Syria, including women and children. Some form of robust and immediate actions are essential in order to deter further use of any type of weapons in Syria that cause so much death and destruction.

The undemocratic nature of the veto power in the Security Council is being abused in this case, while atrocities are being carried out. The world must not await a mandate from the Security Council under such circumstances. The effect of this deadlock has seen the situation grow worse, leading to the latest incidents in the use of chemical weapons. It will get even worse if there is no meaningful intervention. There is Evil in Syria. Those who are part of it and the few who support them have caused it to triumph. It is time for the good to confront the evil.

Contact –Public Relations, Research and Information Department
Tel: (267) 3600763/755 Fax: (267) 3913366
Email: dmmualefe@gov.bw
foreignaffairs@gov.bw

Website: www.mofaic.gov.bw

'Promoting Botswana's Interests Abroad'

