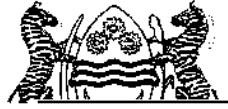


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1. Mr. Chairman, The delegation of Botswana extends warm congratulations to you and all Members of the Bureau for assuming the leadership of this 44<sup>th</sup>

Session of the Commission on Population and Development. You have the full support, cooperation and goodwill of my delegation in this important task of

council whose membership consists of public and private sector representatives  
and is chaired by the Minister of Finance and Economic Development.

7. Mr. Chairman, on another note, Botswana continues to make concerted efforts to respond to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The epidemic is a serious national challenge as the response entails diverting resources from development programmes and projects. We are however receiving substantial assistance from

our development partners. These are essential to the fight against