

DRAFT STATEMENT

By

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**2018 High-Level Dialogue on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance in
Africa: Trends, Challenges And Prospects
*“Winning the Fight Against Corruption: A Sustainable Path to Africa’s
Transformation”.***

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PROTOCOLS

It is a great honour for me to address this dialogue on “*Winning the Fight Against Corruption: A Sustainable Path to Africa’s Transformation*”, on behalf of His Excellency Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda, in his capacity as the Chairperson of the African Union.

I wish extend my profound gratitude to the Government of Botswana for hosting this Seventh High-Level Dialogue whose raison d’etre is to explore normative, structural and implementation enablers for sustainable anti-corruption efforts in Africa.

Africa must tackle the scourge of corruption in the private sector, the public sector and the non-state sector head on, if we are to make progress towards “an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the international arena”, as enshrined in Agenda 2063 - The Africa We Want.

This is why African leaders at the AU Summit held in Addis Ababa in January 2018 committed themselves to putting in place sustainable and collective efforts to address this challenge.

Today’s gathering presents a golden opportunity to deliberate on this serious obstacle to Africa’s progress, and a contributing factor to violent conflicts on the continent. Corruption is not unique to Africa, but it continues to be at the centre of discourse on governance deficit, and in practice, undermines the effectiveness of African institutions.

According to the report of the High-Level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa commissioned by the Economic Commission for Africa and the AU, led by H.E. former President Thabo Mbeki, Africa loses over fifty billion US dollars every year through illicit financial flows.

This massive leakage of African resources through rampant corruption, primarily by foreign companies, constitutes a major drain on our socio-economic development. It surpasses by far foreign direct investment, and foreign aid into Africa.

In other words, we can achieve faster socio-economic transformation, become more prosperous and at the same time significantly reduce dependence on aid, if we prioritised accountability and public integrity.

Corruption not only hinders Africa's socio-economic advancement, it also contributes to weakening governance institutions and undermines democracy. As a direct or indirect factor in conflict and instability, corruption breeds insecurity, which in turn leads to poor socio-economic indicators we see in some parts of our continent.

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

This dialogue provides a platform for us to share comparable lessons and experiences in fighting corruption. More importantly it is an opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to the ratification, domestication and implementation of the 2003 African Union Convention on Preventing and Combatting Corruption (AUCPCC).

There is unprecedented momentum at the African Union, with institutional reforms driven by our continent's leaders already bearing fruit, towards a more effective, self-financed organisation. The Continental Free Trade Area, and the Free Movement of Persons signed this year offers extraordinary prospects for our continent's development.

As Member States, we will continue to fight against Illicit Financial Flows and work hand in hand with the private sector, media and civil society to as committed partners in the fight against corruption in Africa, in order to achieve our vision of a united, peaceful and prosperous Africa.

I thank you for your kind attention.