Republic of Botswana

CLOSING REMARKS

BY

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Under-Secretary-General, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

 I am delighted to receive encouraging feedback that, after two days of active engagement by all the participants at this important Workshop, comprehensive thought has been shared and elaborated for the benefit of policy makers on the kind of transport connectivity that can help us advance implementation of the SDGs.

- 6. Without a doubt, for the LLDCs the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic particularly on the disruption of transport systems and trade supply chains due to our landlocked status was overwhelming and unprecedented -- and moving forward it requires that we be more proactive in mitigating such incidents in the future.
- 7. Such mitigation should include scaling up investment in dimate- and disasterresilient transport infrastructure and establishing proper legal and regulatory frameworks that promote efficient transit transport, as well as ensure adequate financing of transport connectivity.
- 8. The discussions during this Workshop clearly indicated that some progress has been made under the Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA), as many LLDCS have made incremental investments in quality infrastructure, and in raising awareness of trade-facilitation issues, which resulted in significant reduction in lead time to import and export on most corridors -- with connectivity issues, such as the development of internet and Communications Technology (ICT), also proving useful.
- 9. However -- as has also been indicated during the Workshop -- progress has been slow in relation to the implementation of regional cooperation schemes to facilitate transit of goods, and the closing of gaps and shortfalls in bilateral, regional, and multilateral agreements.