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## **Ex-Botswana president Ian Khama vows to make successor 'one-term' president**

### ***Екс-президент Ботсвани Ян Кхама обіцяє зробити наступника президентом «на один термін»***

*Колишній президент Ботсвани Серетсе Кхама Ян Кхама, ключовий член опозиційного Патріотичного фронту Ботсвани (БНФ), каже, що однією з його найбільших помилок було те, що він проклав шлях Мокгвітсі Масісі, щоб той став його наступником. Тепер він працює над тим, щоб М. Масісі та правляча Демократична партія Ботсвани (БДП) були вибиті з парламенту в 2024 р., щоб «повернути демократію» та не підпускати до себе егоїстичних лідерів. Я. Кхама звинувачує М. Масісі у використанні державних ресурсів для його політичного переслідування.*

<https://www.news24.com/news24/africa/news/ex-botswana-president-ian-khama-vows-to-make-successor-one-term-president-20230412>

Former Botswana president Ian Khama, a key member of the opposition Botswana Patriotic Front (BPF), says one of his biggest mistakes was paving the way for Mokgweetsi Masisi to succeed him.

Now, he is working to make sure Masisi and the ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) are voted out next year to "bring back democracy" and keep away selfish leaders.

"We are human, we make mistakes. I made a big mistake because this has affected the whole country and it's a mistake I regret. I have admitted it publicly back in Botswana.

"I have apologised to the nation for bringing this upon them and I have said that I will do my utmost to get him [Masisi] out of office in the next elections," Khama said on the current affairs show, In Conversation with Trevor Ncube, last week.

Next year's general elections will be for 61 National Assembly seats and local councils.

The president is elected through a double simultaneous vote whereby votes cast for National Assembly members are tallied to give the presidential result as well.

Khama was interim president in 2008 and 2009 after Festus Mogae retired.

He would later get his first full term in 2009, finishing his second in 2018.

Botswana 2024 polls: 'I have to fix the mistake I made in appointing Masisi' - Khama

**WATCH | Former Botswana president Ian Khama planning vigorous campaigning to dethrone his successor**

For the greater part of Masisi's first term, the two former allies have been at loggerheads.

Khama accuses Masisi of using state resources to politically persecute him while there is a warrant of arrest issued for Khama back home related to the alleged illegal possession of firearms.

Khama has been living in South Africa since November 2021.

In the interview with Ncube, he said he was in the country because of persecution.

"I am here primarily because of persecution. In Botswana, for a long time, we thought we were immune from what we saw in some parts of the continent.

"Leaders who are driven by greed, corruption and self-interests undermine democracy, assuming that being in office or being in power is only about themselves."

Khama called the deterioration back home, also cited by numerous think tanks and human rights defenders, a "tsunami" which had "overturned decades of democracy and the reputation we had earned ourselves as a country".

He said anyone viewed as an associate of his back in Botswana was a marked person, adding this compromised free speech and association.

Khama rolled out a script that is evident in many of Africa's failed democracies.

"The state security has been weaponised in order to go after his [Masisi] opponents," he said.

But Khama too was accused of intolerance during his time.

An Afrobarometer study released in the last year of his presidency said freedom of speech had plunged to its lowest level in the country's history.

"Most Batswana see their country as a democracy, but satisfaction with the way their democracy is working has declined by 24 percentage points over the past decade from 83% in 2008 to 59%," the report stated.

In the interview, Khama said numerous people - including some Cabinet ministers, and captains of industry - warned him about his would-be successor's alleged traits.

But he claimed he did not see the bad side of his vice president even though calls for him to fire Masisi reached his office.

"They said this man is intolerant, he's divisive, he's immature, and they would come to my office in ones, twos or even threes, pleading with me."

A trusting Khama claimed that later he would invite his second-in-command and tell him what he was hearing from the ground, but Masisi had a clever way of explaining himself.

He said:

He would come with stories and everything about 'these are probably people who want my job' because in politics that can happen.

Caught in-between his ministers and a hated vice president, Khama held a two-day Cabinet session to address the issues raised against Masisi.

But when that happened, there was an element of fear as they did not speak out.

Khama said this was understandable in a cultural sense because people had to be polite to each other.

But not taking a bold decision then to stop Masisi from being his natural successor was a big mistake, he added.