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A. WELCOME
Welcome to the latest edition of Tautona Time. As this is our first edition in several weeks some readers may have been wondering as to whether TT was still being circulated. In this respect, we are able to assure our fans that as part of an ongoing overhaul of OP communications this press circular will be once more coming out on a weekly basis beginning with its next edition scheduled for 6/6/10.

H.E. the President, Lt. Gen. Seretse Khama Ian Khama, has often spoken of the need for greater accountability at all levels of Government. In this context, the Office of the President recognizes its own obligation for improved transparency in communicating to its customers - you the public.

In addition to reviving Tautona Times as a weekly we are therefore also introducing a new Friday feature in the Daily News and also published online on the Government E-Portal - www.gov.bw entitled "Inside the Presidency", which will provide readers with a diary of some of the key activities and issues that engaged the President and those around him during the week.

The President's activities this past week included briefings by the Ministries of Minerals, Energy and Water Affairs (MMEWR) and Transport and Communications (MTC), addressing kgotla meetings in Otse and Mogobane, and meeting with members of the Sponsor a Child Trust, for which he has long served as a patron, as well as presiding over the usual Wednesday meeting of Cabinet.

This Week also witnessed the convening of the 2nd National Conference on HIV/AIDS, Sexually Transmitted Infections and other Related Infectious Diseases, which was opened by H.H. the Vice President Mompatii Merafhe, along with the Minister of Presidential Affairs and Public Administration, the Hon. Lesego Motsumi. In his opening address the Vice President noted that locally based research had contributed to an estimated 50% reduction in AIDS related deaths among Batswana.

Another key event on the President's calendar was Friday's convening of a meeting of Botswana Economic Advisory Council or BEAC. The Council, which is chaired by the President and meets twice a year, brings together prominent economists and policymakers from within and without Government to advise the President on strategic international and domestic business issues.

On Political Matters the President on Friday also addressed a joint Star Rally of the ruling Botswana Democratic Party's Women's Wing and Gaborone Region, which was a lead in to this weekend's meeting of the party's National Council [B1-2].

Focus on MMERW

In keeping with his commitment to the nation to ensure delivery, the President receives quarterly briefings on the progress, challenges and proposed ways of moving forward by all Government Ministries and Departments. These briefings, which are also attended by H.H. the Vice President, the Minister of Presidential
Affairs and Public Administration, along with senior officials, are a key component in ensuring the close monitoring and coordination of projects and initiatives across government.

On Monday His Excellency thus met with the Hon. Minister Ponatshego Kedikilwe, along with senior officials of the Ministry of Minerals, Energy and Water Affairs.

Some of the projects and initiatives that were discussed during the meeting were progress on the installation of the prepaid water metering system, the consolidation of water authorities and other water sector reforms, standardization of electricity tariffs, and the refurbishment of the North-South Water Carrier.

The occasion also provided a welcome opportunity for the Minister to update the President on the flood situation currently afflicting the Chobe-Okavango watersheds.

During the meeting the President was pleased to note that 89% of the ministries projects have remained on schedule throughout the year, while there has been 100% implementation of projects. In the process the ministry has a sterling track record of spending within its budget allocation - recording a 98% expenditure record for the 2009-10 financial year, notwithstanding the need for it to take on additional projects during the period.

Despite this achievement the briefing focused in on the need to further improve its project coordination and monitoring. To address this need the Ministry will establish a dedicated project implementation unit.

- Dr. Jeff Ramsay, Deputy Permanent Secretary for Media (21/5/10)

Contacts: Office Telephone: (267) 3975338 & Facsimile: (267) 3904019. Cell: (267) 71318598. E-mail: jramsay@gov.bw

B. STATEMENTS

B1) 22/5/10: SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY LIEUTENANT GENERAL SERETSE KHAMA IAN KHAMA - PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA AND BDP PARTY PRESIDENT AT THE NATIONAL COUNCIL:

[Salutation]...Ladies and Gentlemen

1. It is almost seven months since the General Elections were held. An election that saw the BDP returned to power with a significant increase in the popular vote. Our electoral success in the major cities has destroyed the myth which opposition parties were spreading around that our party survives on rural support only. The 2009 general elections proved, once more, that we are the only party that enjoys genuine national coverage - in both urban and rural areas - and that as stated in our election manifesto; we continue to remain the only party that Batswana can trust.
2. I wish to thank all our activists, some of whom are in this hall, for mounting a campaign to take our manifesto message to Batswana. I also wish to commend Batswana for having secured their future by voting for the BDP. I reiterate through you my pledge to our citizens that this Government promises to work hard for their benefit and welfare.

3. Fellow Democrats, Batswana have bestowed their trust in us. They have given us a mandate to run the affairs of this country for another five years. This makes us one of the few political parties in a multi-party system to be in government for nine consecutive terms. I am talking here about a multi-party system in its genuine and objective sense where you have free, fair and regular elections.

4. The responsibility that comes with this mandate is enormous. We must not allow ourselves to be blinded by the euphoria of victory. This five year term constitutes work in progress. Our development agenda is formidable. In our manifesto we promised accelerated implementation of all the Vision 2016 pillars. This means that we must complete the stock of all major on-going urban and rural infrastructure projects.

5. You will have realized by now that the fifth 'D', Delivery, has its roots in the promises we made to Batswana. The obligation to deliver is central to our pledge. I have made Delivery one of our priorities because I believe it can help us create an atmosphere within which improved delivery of services becomes an integral part of our work culture. Improvement of our work ethic is an imperative if we have to eradicate poverty, which we must, coupled with vigorous efforts to produce jobs and industry relevant students and will go a long way towards improving all our people, wherever they are, to deliver world class service. My administration has the five "D's" as its main beacons.

THE 2010/11 BUDGET

6. We went into the national elections against the backdrop of the worst economic down-turn ever experienced since the great depression.

7. Over the years we have used the revenues from our diamonds to fund some of the operations of entities created to empower citizens, provide nationwide infrastructure and significant spending on education and health amongst others, while at the same time building up sizable reserves as insurance to cushion the economy against unexpected disasters. This prudent approach has been the hallmark of our economic policy. It has served us well. Thanks to it, we had registered high rates of economic growth until the financial meltdown that occurred in 2008.

8. As usual opposition parties have been sceptical of our economic management strategies and have tried to punch holes in our policy. If we had not adopted a policy of building up our reserves during the good years the current economic crisis would have found us without anything to cushion its impact.
9. If we had exhausted our reserves before the crisis as the opposition parties had suggested, the economy would have collapsed. We would have had to halt all on-going projects in addition to retrenching civil servants. No retrenchments have occurred in the public service, and significantly few in the private sector as compared to other countries because we have managed the economy prudently. The BDP has established a tradition of giving Batswana factual information even when it may be painful and unpalatable. We are grateful that Batswana have appreciated the value of this tradition of honesty and transparency.

10. There is no doubt; we have to make painful choices in addressing this financial crisis. We have had to stretch our human and budgetary resources to the limit by among other things; freezing pay increases for public servants; introducing cost-sharing measures and most recently increasing our Value Added Tax (VAT). While a majority of Batswana may have been affected negatively by some of these choices, these have been necessary for the short, medium and long term economic stability of this country.

11. By voting us back into power and accepting the decisions we have made and restraining their own demands on the fiscas, Batswana have demonstrated that political expediency can never override prudence in the management of public resources. For this demonstrated confidence, we remain most humbled.

12. While I am pleased that the global economic recovery is under way, we are still not out of the woods yet. We must remain ever more prudent in our management of public resources by minimizing and paying close attention on Government spending. We must still pursue strategies that would ensure that our economic recovery is a durable one.

13. We have committed ourselves to a development programme that seeks to achieve that all Batswana live decent lives. We are aware that without education and life skills Batswana cannot reach their full potential.

14. We are also aware that education and skills development that is not tuned to an economy that creates opportunities for such skills to be employed would not help us develop.

15. I have asked the Ministers of Education and Skills Development and Finance and Development Planning to make presentations to this Council in order that you may be briefed in more detail on our activities in those two ministries. The Ministry of Local Government will participate in both presentations as they cover the same areas at the district level. On other issues I gave you all an outlook when I delivered the State of the Nation Address in November last year.

16. In my travels around the country, I have consulted with many Batswana of all walks of life. I am deeply concerned about the pockets of poverty that still exist. With some restructuring and some qualitative improvement in the management of relevant programmes we could eradicate poverty in our country. In this regard, I have caused the Ministry of Local Government to institute a Task Force on
This Task Force has to come up with recommendations on how the lives of Remote/Area Dwellers can be significantly improved. We have committed ourselves to a development programme that seeks to achieve that all Batswana live decent lives.

17. I have just given you a brief report on what our government is capable of doing. Allow me to say that I expect our delivery levels to rise even higher. I say this because I know we can produce more than we have up to now. In order to do this, we must remember that during our campaign and in our manifesto we renewed our commitment to promoting A MORAL AND TOLERANT NATION. We pledged to defend and promote our culture and to be UNITED AND PROUD in its diversity and wealth.

18. We must maintain the alignment of our policies to the national will. Our policies must be an investment in the interests of all the major stakeholders in the economy. This is why we must actively promote development of Trade Unions and the welfare of workers. We have ratified ILO conventions and domesticated them in our labour laws in order to safeguard the interests of workers. The lines of communication between public officers and government remain open all the time.

19. There is still work to be done to improve relations between employers and their employees in the private sector. I must in the same note urge all Batswana to remember that economic success is dependent on all of us working towards a stable society.

20. My only concern with some of our Unions is when they sound more political than those in politics. The prime function of Unions is to protect the interest of their members whilst remembering that contracts of employment also exist to guide the employer/employee obligations. Unions cause us concern when they threaten political action since the rules governing their relationship with employers have nothing to do with party politics.

21. Fellow Democrats, it would be remiss of me if I did not express my concern at the recent figures showing the rate of new infections of HIV/AIDS. Our PMTC programme has been extremely successful but the overall rate of new infections has gone up from 17.1% to 17.6%. This means that Batswana are lowering their guard and this should not be allowed to continue.

THE PARTY

22. Consistent with the theme of the conference, let me now address myself to matters which in my view continue to affect the party and its brand. I do so ever mindful that things we do not say or take for granted may be the things that lead to our downfall or failure tomorrow as a party.

23. Past successes do not guarantee a future. It is what we choose to do both individually and collectively that impacts significantly on our future. And as we meet
24. What is it that binds us as Democrats? Are we held together by a shared vision, common principles, values and beliefs or something else? The answers to these questions will determine whether we will continue to govern and deliver on the mandate given to us by the electorate.

25. I have also asked myself this question before and since it is still filled with vexation, I will ask it again. If Democrats cannot show compassion and tolerance for each other, if we continue acts that divide us, if mutual trust and respect for fellow Democrats continues to be illusive, what message are we giving to those that voted us into office? Even if I did not get an answer to that question I will tell you what will happen if we continue on that path. Batswana ba tla re thoboga.

26. When I traverse the length and breadth of this country what I often hear is that some of our members are missing in collective team spirit and mutual trust. What I also hear is that some members are promoting individualism over party interest and nudging towards opposition politics.

27. By our own conduct, we are increasingly inviting the public to view us with dissatisfaction. Within our midst, some have elevated factionalism and self interest so much so that nothing else matters. Debates on matters of national interest have become an excuse behind which to launch attacks on the party leadership.

28. Whist some may hope to profit from a public backlash against the party and its leadership, the dangers should all be too apparent - we succeed as a collective and fail as one too. If I may put it more candidly, the greatest threat facing us is one of indiscipline.

29. In a somewhat strange way, those that speak against indiscipline are roundly condemned as bootlickers and those that undermine the party and cause conflict from within applaud themselves as true democrats and party loyalists. This is unacceptable for democracy by its very nature presupposes that decisions are by consensus, that is, the views of the majority must prevail and be respected and not undermined by those whose views are in the minority.

30. For reasons best known to themselves, there are some, whose sense of self worth has blinded them to the fact that they are first and foremost BDP members. As part of a collective, they own their obligation and loyalty to the party. But if you point out this fact to them, it is to commit a cardinal sin against those opposed to the party leadership or those whose personal ambitions have yet to materialize.

31. It has now in fact become common practice for members to either buy newspaper space or give exclusive interviews to media outlets denouncing the party leadership as autocratic.
32. It is remarkable how we sometimes tend to forget that we share the same electoral fate. To dem
ocrats bent on undermining the party, either through collusion with the opposition or sponsored media editorials, therefore I say, be wary of those who seek to elevate your course for such is only meant to bring you into collision with your own party solely for the benefit of the opposition.

33. We should not seek to manipulate public perception by projecting ourselves as capable of standing up to the party leadership. A rebellion against the leadership is not a true measure of character or of principle. It is grandstanding.

34. The tendency among those not willing to work within acceptable party boundaries and structures is now to portray themselves as victims of a leadership that is irrational, intolerant and driven by unreasoning coercion.

35. The above strategy clearly designed to undermine the party leadership, has the effect of undermining the party as well. Such self-serving politics are detrimental to all and undermine party cohesion which is important in contributing to efficiency in government as well.

36. Let me end by stating that we should be a broad based and tolerant organization. We must be mindful that each phase of development or growth brings with it its own challenges. How we address these challenges can either make or break the party.

37. I am not adverse to criticism so long as it is done in an open, constructive and respectful manner. As a party leader however, let me emphasize that the party will not tolerate acts of indiscipline and sabotage by our own members. We will not applaud acts of indiscipline or shy away from taking action against wayward members, for to do so, would be abdication.

38. We must re-affirm our commitment to the party and accept and honour our responsibilities to it. This requires us to subordinate our personal ambitions to party interest and to always remain faithful to what holds us together.

39. We must always remember that no individual is greater than the party. We are strong only as a collective and weak in our individuality.

40. For my part I am deeply committed during my term of office to improve the lives of Batswana especially targeting the poor and less fortunate, by generally putting in place measures from which everyone will reap benefits from. I expect during this period to be supported by my party by backing me up in these endeavours rather than frustrating my efforts by bringing in turmoil.

B2) 21/5/10: REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT LIEUTENANT GENERAL SERETSE KHAMAIN KHAMA BOTSWANA DEMOCRATIC PARTY WOMEN'S WING FUNDRAISING DINNER, MOGODITSHANE.

[Salutations]...Ladies and gentlemen
1. It gives me great pleasure to have been invited on the occasion of this dinner hosted by the women’s wing of the Botswana Democratic Party. It is most gratifying to note that you are engaging in this fundraising event for the benefit of the disadvantaged.

2. Fellow Democrats, women have never been spectators in our efforts to bring about unity within the BDP. That is why they addressed a big rally this afternoon in support of the party. Such moves have enriched our party. Today, women have proved themselves as formidable and fearless participants in our efforts to build our Party as we prepare for another victory in 2014. Besides nurturing the young and mothering the nation, they took their rightful position in the fight for the supremacy of the Botswana Democratic Party.

3. I urge you to help the Party in disseminating proper information to the public. We need the voice of Women to help us end this growing attitude of Democrats of putting self interest before the Party.

4. Although we are a Party whose membership covers the entire spectrum of our population and whose spread on the ground extends to all parts of our country, we must acknowledge that women are the most numerous group in our membership. As such it would not be far-fetched to attribute our successes as a party and as a Government to the support we receive from Batswana women. Of course, men also play their part, but we do owe a debt of gratitude to you Bo Mme.

5. Empowerment of women has emerged as a defining feature of our democracy as evidenced by the visible number of women entrusted with positions of leadership in the public sector. Our democratic government has brought advances of many kinds for our women folk. We now have the first woman speaker at the top of our democratic institution - Parliament. Our various departments and local government have heads and deputy mayors as women.

6. Sadly, more needs to be done within our party, where lip service and intransigence rules the day. Women still occupy very few positions for example in parliament. Women as pillars of families, communities and the nation have to take positions at the forefront.

7. In the absence of legal measures to ensure better representation of women in elective bodies it is voluntary for parties to put up women candidates and hopefully provide the best prospect for gains to be made. I particularly encouraged Women to campaign for executive positions in the Central Committee and backed them in their campaign.

8. Fellow Democrats, the leadership of the Party acknowledges the challenges faced by women. However, we all need to be proactive. Women should not expect to be given leadership positions on a silver platter. They need to work hard to earn these positions. As women you are very influential, you therefore need to use your
9. Your motto as the BDP Women's Wing is RE A BONALA, LE KA RE TSHEPHA, RE TENG. It is high time you walked the talk. You can only be accorded the due recognition when you are publicly defending the Party, advocating for Batswana to know and accept Party and Government policies. I urge you to stand up and be heard.

10. I would like to thank all of you for participating at this important dinner and supporting the Botswana Democratic Party Women's Wing. I would also like to thank all those who helped organize this event, all those who kindly donated money or in kind. My appreciation also goes to our sponsors. Their act of kindness and generosity made this event possible, and will ensure that our Women's Wing continues to grow from strength to strength. Tsholetsa!

B3) 7/5/10: INAUGURATION OF SHRENUJ BOTSWANA (PTY) LTD BY HIS EXCELLENCY LIEUTENANT GENERAL SERETSE KHAMA IAN KHAMA, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA:

[Salutations]...Ladies and Gentlemen

1. I am delighted that we are all gathered here to celebrate yet another milestone in Botswana's diamonds journey; a journey that started about 65 years ago with the discovery of two diamonds along the Motloutse river. That discovery was subsequently followed by the memorable discovery of Orapa in the 1960s. While some might say the rest is history, I hold the view that the story of Botswana's diamonds is still unfolding and in the process presenting opportunities for us and the like minded to not only shape the future of this country but the diamond industry as well. It is thus pleasing for me and my government to see companies like Shrenuj joining us in our journey. A journey that has entered the crucial phase of transforming Botswana from being not only a leading diamond mining producer, but a world class diamond centre with all the components of the diamond pipeline taking place here.

2. The evolution of the diamond cutting and polishing industry started in the early 80s with one factory. Following the policy initiative of encouraging downstream diamond industries in Botswana or diamond beneficiation in 2004, sixteen diamond cutting factories have been established. Government entered into suite of agreements with De Beers that had provisions for supporting beneficiation through local supply of rough diamond.

3. The Government established a Diamond Hub in 2008 to provide an environment for efficient diamond sector operation and to spearhead activities of the diamond pipeline with a view to transforming Botswana into a fully integrated world Diamond Centre. The Diamond Hub is expected to act as a one-stop-shop for handling all requirements of downstream industry participants, creating a conducive environment for companies to do business in Botswana by minimising red tape, speeding up
4. It is pleasing to note that the diamond industry survived the recent recession even though the impact was bad in 2009. Tremendous progress in employment and utilization of rough supply that was registered up to 2008 was negated when employment fell from 3200 in 2008 to 2300 in 2009 while utilization fell from 87% to 77%. Currently employment stands at 2572.

5. Shrenuj’s operation resonates well with our ambition. The inauguration of the Shrenuj facility marks yet another milestone in our continuing efforts towards diversifying our economy. The company has been operating in Botswana in the last 9 months after taking over from DDA, who struggled due to the global financial Crisis. I wish to commend the Shrenuj Group for the positive progress made in the operation of this factory and for choosing to make Botswana part of their group at a time when the diamond industry was in turmoil. In celebrating this successful operation, we need to take stock and look at the challenges encountered during the past year and use the learning to move forward.

6. I believe that the Shrenuj Group's involvement in the gem and jewellery business in the last 102 years and operating in 13 countries around the world is testimony to their delivery of a product that wets the appetite of the market.

7. I am informed that the Shrenuj Group's employs 155 employees, 30 percent of who are hearing impaired. This answers the Vision 2016 pillar of a Compassionate, Just and Caring Nation. It is pleasing to realize that your operation has really worked hard to contribute to the achievement of that goal. Career opportunities for the hearing impaired are limited. It is hence encouraging to have a company like yours making a deliberate effort to improve the lives of those with such a disadvantage. I encourage other companies to follow your example so that Botswana can be a better place for all sections of our communities. Your success in this effort will no doubt assist in the achievement of the other Vision 2016 pillars. All these can only make our democracy, one to be proud of.

8. I am also happy to learn that sometime this year you will pioneer the establishment of the first fully fledged jewellery manufacturing factory in Botswana. I encourage you to stay focused on that as this goes a long way to show that these things are possible. By that you are unlocking Botswana’s path to diversify in the diamond industry. I assure you of our support in your noble business pursuit to together address the obstacles that usually come with a pioneer venture.

9. With a diverse business scope from cutting and polishing, jewellery manufacturing and retail, Shrenuj Group possesses attributes that will contribute to the growth of Botswana's economy. It is for this reason and the fact that Botswana is endowed with mineral resources, that we will do all to ensure a long term partnership with yourselves and other well performing Sight holders.
In conclusion I want to reassure you of my Government's commitment to provide an investor friendly environment, as it is through investment similar to which Shrenuj has made that the welfare of Batswana can be greatly improved.

B4) 7/5/10: REMARKS AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE AGRICULTURAL CONSULTATIVE FORUM (PITSO) BY HIS EXCELLENCY, THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA LIEUTENANT GENERAL SERETSE KHAMA IAN KHAMA:

[Salutations]...Ladies and Gentleman

I am pleased to once again join you to discuss and share with you our aspirations and expectations as a Government on how to improve agricultural production in our country. In 2008 I attended a similar occasion and I commend the Ministry for holding yet another, this time termed Agricultural Pitso.

I am informed that the theme of your PITSO is: "Rethinking Agricultural Development: Focusing on Breakthrough Areas". I am further informed that breakthrough areas are farming enterprises in which the Ministry wants to make a significant impact on, in the short to medium term. These are dairy, horticulture, cereal and small stock production as well as bee keeping. In my view, therefore, this theme is most appropriate and relevant. It comes at a time when we need to revive the agricultural sector to enable it to play a meaningful role in the total development of our economy.

Although agriculture contributes about only 2.9% to the GDP, the sector remains critical for sustainable growth and economic development as it provides food and offers employment to many families, especially in rural areas.

It is against this background that my Government has identified the sector as the main driver of poverty eradication. In this connection we must support the agriculture sector and ensure that our people have enough food and even export surplus. I am however disturbed by the amount of agricultural land which is lying uncultivated yet as a country we import over 60% of most agricultural products. In this regard government is working with relevant local authorities to repossess unutilised agricultural land and allocate it to serious farmers, that is, small, medium and large enterprises.

We cannot feed this nation from idle land. We have to invest in agriculture and manage our farming businesses to maximise profits. In the same vein unutilised government farms will be leased out to serious farmers both locally and externally. Plans are at an advanced stage to lease out 99,000 hectares of land in Banyana farm for livestock production.

The Integrated Support Programme for Arable Agriculture Development (ISPAAD) that was introduced in July 2008 resulted in over two fold in cereal yields. I am informed that this trend is likely to continue this season as about 288,000 hectares have been cultivated and an estimated cereal production of 83,000 metric tonnes is expected. This is about three fold of the production figures before the introduction
were around 30 000 metric tonnes in the past. However, the recent downpours may negatively affect the yield and quality of produce, especially in fields which were ploughed early in the season. I believe through ISPAAD more can still be achieved if farmers can rise to the occasion and be more committed. There are farmers who do not look after their ploughed fields and consequently attain low yields as a result of weeds and bird damage that could have been controlled if more effort was exerted. To this end, Government is committed to assist only those farmers who have shown commitment in managing their fields. I therefore call upon all arable farmer organisations to assist Government in weeding out non-farmers from the ISPAAD programme.

In addition to the ISPAAD Programme, Government introduced the Livestock Management and Infrastructure Development Programme (LIMID) primarily to assist resource poor farmers, with which you all are familiar. The programme has proved to be very popular with beneficiaries; however it needed to be reviewed to determine whether it was meeting the intended objectives and also to address allegations of possible abuse. Consequently, government suspended LIMID in November 2009 to allow the Ministry to the program with the aim of re-introducing it in a more refined and more helpful format. Government will deliberate on the review findings and recommendations shortly.

Our efforts to reduce the amount of goods and services we import as a country are already bearing fruit. Under this initiative schools bought for the first time, local agriculture produce such as watermelons and green mealies for school feeding programmes this season. In the same vein the Ministry of Local Government bought thousands of tonnes of grain from the Botswana Agricultural Marketing Board (BAMB) for its various feeding programmes. Recently, the Ministry of Agriculture advised all Government Ministries and parastatals to buy fresh produce from the operating horticultural markets around the country. To further facilitate this, the Ministry of Agriculture is restricting the importation of agriculture produce which are available locally.

With regards to dairy farming, Government is aware of the high cost of inputs associated with establishment of a dairy enterprise. In this regard, dairy entrepreneurs are encouraged to grow fodder with assistance from ISPAAD to reduce the feed bill as it is feed which is critical to the sustenance of the dairy business. I am pleased to note that farmers in the Southern District and Pandamatenga, who have adopted modern technologies under NAMPAADD, are beginning to realise significant improvements in their yields. To strengthen our drive, the Ministry of Agriculture is now considering partnering with proven commercial farmers in a joint venture to better operationalise the NAMPAADD Production and Training Farms (PTF).

I am confident that the outcomes of this PITSO will translate into meaningful and implementable action that will drive the agricultural sector to prosperity and enhance the socioeconomic well being of our people. With these few remarks, I wish you fruitful deliberations. I now declare this PITSO officially opened. I thank you for your attention.
Your Excellency, President Hifikepunye Pohamba, President of the Republic of Namibia, our Host and Chairman of this meeting, Your Majesty, King Mswati III, of the Kingdom of Swaziland, Your Excellencies Heads of State and Government of SACU Member Countries, Honourable Ministers, Members of the Diplomatic Corps, Madam Executive Secretary of SACU, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

1. It is a privilege for me to address this inaugural meeting of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) Heads of State and Government. Allow me, Mr. Chairman, to start by thanking the Government and the People of the Republic of Namibia for the warm hospitality extended to me and my delegation. I also commend your Government for the excellent preparations and arrangements which have been put in place to ensure the success of this meeting and the centenary celebrations.

2. Mr. Chairman, we in Botswana take pride in having been an active member of SACU since its inception in 1910. As we celebrate one hundred years of SACU's existence, it is appropriate that we are meeting at the highest political level to re-affirm our commitment and give new impetus to those areas that need strategic leadership. This meeting is very important and should therefore be instutionalised to regularly provide political and strategic guidance to the organisation.

3. The theme for the centenary celebrations - "A Common Agenda towards Regional Integration in Southern Africa" could not have been more appropriate. This theme underscores the understanding that we stand to benefit more if we operated as a group than as individual countries.

4. This celebration affords us an opportunity to assess our performance in the past hundred years in order to determine whether or not our set objectives have been adequately accomplished. In this way, we will be able to chart a better future for generations to come.

5. Mr Chairman, if we are to effectively deliver on our mandate as SACU, we need to increase trade amongst ourselves and with the rest of the world with a view to diversifying and industrialising our economies.

6. For this reason, I am happy to note that work is being undertaken to develop a SACU wide Industrial Development Policy, which I hope will build synergies and ensure equitable industrialisation and trade amongst ourselves. My view is that this work must be accorded the urgency it deserves as it is long overdue.

7. As SACU Member States, we face common challenges of poverty, HIV/AIDS and unemployment, among others. In this regard, we need to work together to mitigate the effects of these challenges so that we improve the living standards of our people.
Mr. Chairman, Botswana like other SACU Members has been affected by rising food and oil prices as well as the global financial crisis which together negatively impacted on the performance of our economy. This impact was experienced through reduced demand and prices for our major export commodity, diamonds resulting in significant drop in government revenues. This situation has forced us to cut our diamond production levels leading to loss of jobs and economic opportunities for our country. This therefore calls for our resolve to work together more than ever before to effectively build resilient economies in our region so that we are able to withstand these kinds of crises and their ramifications in the future.

9. For this to happen, we should redirect the aspirations of SACU through the development of a new vision and mission. This exercise should entail setting up the institutional mechanisms of SACU such as National Bodies, Tariff Board and the Tribunal. In this respect, I am pleased to inform you that Botswana is at an advanced stage in establishing her National Body. It is my conviction that we also need to seriously explore the feasibility of extending the scope of SACU to include the New Generation Issues such as Investment, Trade in Services and Competition to name but a few. This is in view of the increasing importance of some of these areas to our economies.

10. In exploring avenues for deeper regional integration, we should be cognizant of the need to consolidate and implement our commitments as per the SACU 2002 Agreement. However, as we implement the ideals of SACU we must take into account our membership to and objectives of SADC as we move forward in our regional integration initiatives. This is because it is only through working together as a team in the wider SADC context that we can ensure smooth regional integration in Southern Africa.

11. Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, the need for the provision of requisite infrastructure for our regional integration cannot be over emphasised. It is in this light that we in Botswana strongly support the establishment of One Stop Border Posts such as the one to be established at Mamuno on the Trans-Kalahari road on the Botswana and Namibian border. Such a development will reduce transport time and costs and facilitate trade within the region and beyond. In this case, we need to modernise our customs administration through initiatives such as e-customs and e-passports for the benefit of our traders.

12. As we celebrate the centenary of SACU this year, addressing outstanding institutional issues and harmonising our policies should remain a priority for the agenda of the Council of Ministers. This will ensure the consolidation of SACU as a nucleus for deepening regional integration and provide the basis for our integration at the next level.

13. Furthermore, when we negotiate as SACU with other countries and international bodies, we ought to assess the benefits that are likely to accrue from such arrangements as well as the scope of such relationships.
14. Mr. Chairman, it should no longer be considered attractive to have to judge the success or otherwise of our Union on the basis of the size of the Revenue Shares from customs duties alone as there are other benefits to be explored. Henceforth our citizens should rather be able to judge the success of SACU by the number of decent new job opportunities created as a result of deliberate pro-development regional policies and or by the number of business opportunities generated.

15. At its very best, SACU will have identified and equitably exploited complementaries in constituent Member States to optimise the use of scarce resources, do away with unnecessary duplications as well as limit unhealthy competition to a level where it may be possible to operate mega strategic regional industries in select sectors.

16. In conclusion, let us commend ourselves for having existed for one hundred years in spite of historical and other problems that have and continue to challenge our existence as a Union. Let us also note that our journey is a life time one and as such we should never tire in our efforts to maintain our solidarity for the benefit of our people and the region at large. I thank you.

B6) 23/4/10: H.E. the President on circumstances in the BDP (originally issued as BDP Press Statement)

1. In the recent past there have been several worrying occurrences pertaining to the affairs of the Botswana Democratic Party. In particular, in the run up to the elections and soon after the elections, I received reports that some members of our party were colluding with the opposition to disadvantage the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) at the elections, and subsequent to the elections in Parliament.

2. We considered these allegations sufficiently serious as to warrant an investigation, which I ordered. I am in possession of the findings of the investigation as a result of which I suspended three members of our party including a Member of Parliament in terms of powers conferred upon me by the Party Constitution pending disciplinary action.

3. Without prejudging the issues - I considered the gravity of the allegation in question to constitute extra-ordinary and unprecedented acts of misconduct never before seen in the history of the BDP. The aims and objectives of the individuals concerned were to sabotage and disrupt the successful election of the Party, or once elected to frustrate the programme of the Party in Parliament.

4. During the period of suspension of the three, they together with others organized and attended a meeting in Mogoditshane outside the institutional framework of the Party Constitution, apparently under the banner of a group in our party that calls itself "Barata Phathi". I am aware however, that this was not a meeting of the whole group calling itself "Barata Phathi" but of a small group who happened to be in that faction.
sanctioned by the Party Constitution, but the Central Committee warning them about its illegality. The same group of misguided elements then made "resolutions" and demands, which are now a matter of record, that were widely disseminated in the public arena. These have tarnished the reputation of the Party and Government, as well as sowing further seeds of instability.

6. In the weeks which followed the Mogoditshane illegal assembly of the group, several insidious and inflammatory statements have been made by them continuously in the press, both local and internationally about the BDP, its current leadership and the Government. These irresponsible statements by these individuals driven only by self-interest and position seeking, goes against membership requirements, the intent and spirit of the BDP Constitution.

7. Self interest can never be allowed to undermine the interests of the Party. On the contrary, it is our duty as democrats at all times to position first the interests of the country, the nation and the Party and not narrow personal ambitions of individuals.

8. In the middle of all this - there were announcements by the Group that they were forming a news break-away political party from the BDP. The propagators and as self-confessed spokespersons of the new break-away political party, were Messrs Sidney Pilane and Kabo Morwaeng. As a consequence, the Central Committee came to the conclusion that Mr. Sidney Pilane and Mr. Kabo Morwaeng had in so doing renounced their membership of the BDP. They have accordingly been expelled from the BDP.

9. I have been reluctant to speak publicly to the general membership of the BDP about these events in order not to prejudice the Disciplinary process. This, notwithstanding I have also been mindful of the anxiety these events have been causing BDP members in particular and the nation at large.

10. I want to reassure the nation of my government's commitment to pursue that which is good for the people of Botswana and would urge us all to cast aside the disruptive efforts of these self-seeking individuals. Desperation motivated by position seeking and personal ambition cannot supersede the public good.

11. Finally I want to make it categorically clear that the BDP is a democratic institution, not just by name but by tradition and practice. These are the values that I too, subscribe to. More importantly, the Party Constitution provides a framework for the resolution and settlement of internal grievances and differences of opinion without harming the very institution itself.

B7) 18/5/10: KEY NOTE ADDRESS BY HIS HONOUR THE VICE PRESIDENT Lieutenant General Mompati Merafhe at the Official Opening of The 2nd National HIV and AIDS, Sexually Transmitted Infections and other Related Infectious Diseases Conference
1. It is indeed an honour and privilege for me to have been invited to officially open this Second National HIV and AIDS, STI and Other Related Infectious Diseases Conference (NHASORC II).

2. As some of you may be aware, the first conference of this nature was held in 2003.

3. This year's conference, held under the theme "Research Partnerships and Capacity Development", offers local research institutions, scholars and experts in the area of HIV and AIDS a platform to disseminate information about studies undertaken in this country.

4. The overall goal of the Second National HIV and AIDS, STI and Other Related Infectious Diseases Conference is to provide a forum for sharing findings of various research projects undertaken in Botswana since 2003, with a view to informing the development of a national research agenda.

5. The research agenda will help Botswana to refocus her resolve in operationalizing the HIV and AIDS research capacity development programme.

6. It is my fervent hope that at the end of the 3 days of this conference, Botswana will be in a better position to draft her National HIV and AIDS research agenda.

7. This agenda will enable policy makers and other key players to make informed decisions for their programmes.

8. I have been informed that the role of the National HIV and AIDS Research Agenda is to ensure that there is coordinated research effort by all research institutions, thereby maximising the use of limited resources.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

9. I would like to assure you that my Government is committed to providing an enabling environment for home-grown research development in the area of HIV and AIDS as well as other related infections.

10. I strongly believe that district-specific research, which is now being proposed as the way forward, will give us tremendous opportunity to understand local issues on their own merit.

Director of Ceremonies,

11. You would know by now, that Botswana has made significant progress in scaling up some key national interventions against HIV and AIDS.

12. These include:
13. The successful expansion of these programs has remarkably improved the quality of life for many Batswana.

14. Consequently the number of deaths in this country has been reduced by half, and all of these have been informed by research.

15. In an attempt to expand our understanding of the HIV and AIDS epidemic, I am informed that the National AIDS Coordinating Agency (NACA) has embarked on the 'Know Your Epidemic - Know Your Response' study.

16. This study provides more detailed information on the epidemiology of new infections and on the alignment of resources to those most in need.

17. It is therefore not in doubt that this will assist us in aligning the national HIV and AIDS prevention response with the best understanding of where the new HIV infections are occurring.

Director of Ceremonies,

18. The data that we derive from conducting surveys such as sentinel surveillance of HIV infections among pregnant women and the AIDS Impact Surveys provide us with information for tracking the epidemic in Botswana.

19. I am informed that to date, most research on the impact of HIV and AIDS in Botswana has largely been quantitative.

20. Even though socio-economic surveys have been carried out, findings suggest that there are still some critical research questions that need to be addressed through qualitative research.

21. Such questions, if addressed properly can influence the success of our HIV and AIDS interventions.

22. I am aware that deciding on what these issues are calls for analytical, rigorous and systematic consultations with stakeholders.

Director of Ceremonies,

23. Recently Botswana received a loan amounting to US $50 million from the World Bank and the European Union.

24. The aim of this support, referred to as The Botswana National HIV and AIDS Prevention Support Project, is to strengthen and support the Government of Botswana's national strategic frameworks and programs for HIV and AIDS.
25. Programmes such as this one can only be worthy if they are informed by research.

26. In this connection, last year NACA undertook the National AIDS Spending Assessment (NASA) through which we are able to report on the flow of resources intended to combat HIV and AIDS.

27. Such exercises help us to reflect on the actual spending against set targets, as a way of accounting for the expenditure.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

28. I would like to commend some of the research partnerships that continue to work hand in hand with my Government in imparting skills to Batswana for local capacity and sustainability of projects.

29. This notwithstanding, I find no reason why after twenty five years at the helm of this epidemic, we cannot lead in HIV and AIDS research with academic institutions such as the University of Botswana and Institute of Health Sciences.

30. I urge all those individuals and institutions involved in research in the area of HIV and AIDS to strive to excel.

Director of Ceremonies,

31. I wish to challenge NACA and its partners to ensure that this conference is meaningfully used to achieve its purpose of completing the planned National Research Agenda.

32. I am told that amongst us, there are experts in the subject from the SADC region such as the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) which is a regional hub in HIV and AIDS research.

33. Let us ensure that as a country we derive maximum benefits from interacting with such experts.

34. As a way of concluding, I want to believe that the media fraternity is also amongst us this evening.

35. The role of the media as a strategic partner in informing and influencing public and professional knowledge on matters such as this one cannot be over emphasized.

36. One way of closing the gap between speculation and facts is for the media people to meet and interact with all these experts, learn from them, initiate debates on topical issues, generate stories and build alliances to inform their future reporting on HIV and AIDS.

Director of Ceremonies, Distinguished Ladies and gentlemen,
37. I strongly believe that the expertise available in this conference will indeed steer our nation in the right direction.

38. Therefore, I trust that this conference will come up with pragmatic recommendations which can be implemented for the betterment of this nation.

39. With those remarks, it is now my singular honour to declare the Second National HIV and AIDS, STI and Other Related Infectious Diseases (NHASORC II) Conference officially opened.

40. I thank you for the courtesy of your attention. PULA!


[Salutations]...Distinguished Guests Ladies and Gentlemen

1. It is indeed an honour and privilege for me to have been invited to officiate at this important occasion, the Internal Auditors National Conference Gala Dinner.

2. I am informed that your deliberations at your two day conference have been very fruitful and productive and I am confident that you will subsequently improve your internal operations and processes in your respective organisations.

3. This event takes place at a time when companies throughout the world are facing huge challenges relating to issues of corporate governance and accountability.

4. The conference which was held under the theme Internal Auditing; A paradigm shift; was indeed an acknowledgement of the fact that organizations cannot continue to do business as usual.

5. This is the 1st National Conference of Internal Auditors and its timing is significant given the enormous challenges that auditors are facing not only in Botswana but throughout the world.

6. In this regard, I wish to commend the organizers of this event for their foresight in convening such an important gathering that will chart the way forward for its members in view of enormous problems of greed and mismanagement perpetrated by some corporate leaders.

Director of Ceremonies,

7. The importance of internal auditing in any government or organization cannot be overemphasized.
I firmly believe that organizations that espouse sustainable success should measure themselves through continuous feedback that they receive from their internal auditors.

9. It is for this reason that the establishment of water tight internal controls that are strictly observed greatly assist companies to succeed in their work.

10. Therefore an effective internal audit function should ensure that transparency; fairness, superior customer care, a positive corporate image and accountability are the hall marks of any organization.

11. It goes without saying that a high degree of ethical conduct amongst corporate leaders is the key for the sustainability of any organization.

12. The internal audit profession actually lays the foundation for a high performance culture.

Ladies and gentlemen,

13. Whereas in the past the scope of internal audit was limited to financial controls and accountability, this has expanded to include a broader spectrum of areas.

14. Consequently organizations have now developed policies and procedures to ensure that they embrace the operational efficiency, excellence and quality philosophy.

15. In this regard, operational areas such as customer care, internal process efficiency and employees satisfaction have become the lifeline of modern day business.

Director of ceremonies,

16. The theme of this conference 'A Paradigm Shift' could not have been more relevant in view of the fact that this conference took place against the backdrop of the world recession which was occasioned by corporate greed and mismanagement by some leaders of multinational firms in developed countries.

17. Undoubtedly, this has put the internal audit function under the spotlight than it has ever been before.

18. You all know that the advent of Information and Telecommunications Technology and cyber-space based crime has also presented major challenges to the internal audit profession.

20. Therefore the need to reengineer internal processes and procedures has never become urgent than it is today.
21. As e-business takes centre stage, there is need for appropriate and stringent internal controls that will provide a governance environment that will ensure a safer custodianship of business assets and a more reliable corporate accountability.

22. It is no doubt that the theme of the conference takes cognizance of the fact that there is need for the internal audit profession to assume its rightful position in corporate governance.

23. It is against this background that the Institute of Internal Auditors Botswana, convened this conference in order to improve the skills of its member.

24. This was after realizing that there was need to continuously develop or train professionals in order to bring them up to date with current challenges which are complex in nature.

25. These challenges include lack of expertise in critical areas such as fraud, human resources, information technology and governance.

26. Therefore, the internal audit function to be effective, it must reengineer itself in accordance with the new and emerging corporate governance challenges.

27. Failure to achieve this will render the internal audit profession irrelevant.

28. In light of the challenges that governments and organizations face, it is critical to have a skilled, agile and versatile workforce that will effectively discharge its duties and functions.

Director of Ceremonies,

29. I would like to emphasize that internal auditors should continuously embark on self improvement and learning in order to sharpen their skills.

30. Those internal auditors who wish to serve their organizations with distinction must stay on the fast lane of learning highways and thoroughfare.

31. On the other hand, those auditors who neglect self development run the risk of being rendered irrelevant and redundant.

32. It is abundantly clear that as the world recovers from the recession, those organizations that have adhered to sound corporate governance, have come out of the economic downturn much stronger and resilient.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

33. I would like to take this opportunity to remind all of you that as a nation we are well known for sound and prudent management of our resources and it is my fervent hope that our internal auditors will continue to comply with laid down procedures and rules.
35. Let me applaud and appreciate efforts of those organizations that continue to espouse and uphold these ideals to stay the course in using the services of their auditors.

36. In conclusion, I would like to thank CQS Technology Holdings, Price-Water House Cooper, Delloite, KPMG and Grand Palm for sponsoring this event.

37. I thank you for the courtesy of attention. Enjoy your dinner.

B9) 4/5/10: OPENING REMARKS (TALKING POINTS) BY HIS HONOUR THE VICE PRESIDENT LT. GEN. MOMPATI MERAFHE AT TODAY'S PRESS CONFERENCE ON GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO ERADICATE POVERTY THROUGH PEOPLE CENTRED DEVELOPMENT

[Salutations]...Ladies and Gentlemen

1. To date Botswana has done relatively well in the alleviation of poverty.

2. Statistics show that over the years poverty has reduced significantly:

   * 1985/86 - 59%
   * 1993/94 - 47%
   * 2002/03 - 30%
   * Indications are that the rate declined further to an estimated 23% in 2009.

3. These statistics, however, tend not to take into consideration the social interventions the Government has taken to protect its citizens.

4. Such interventions include, but are not limited to * Relatively free education * Relatively free health * Provision of food at schools * Programmes for orphans * Programmes for destitute * Programmes to empower people with disabilities * Subsidised SHHA scheme * Subsidies for the agricultural sector

5. Taking into consideration these provisions, it is thus not surprising that some of our African counterparts feel we are better off.

SHIFT FROM ALLEVIATION TO ERADICATION

6. His Excellency the President, in his State of the Nation Address of 2008, has set the country a target of qualifying for high income status in about a decade.

7. His Excellency the President, in his Inaugural Address of 2009, identified Poverty Eradication and Economic Diversification Drive as the Government Flagship Programmes.
9. This goal is not only morally right, it is also pivotal for growing the economy and ensuring the future of Botswana is viable and sustainable.

10. "People Centred Development" thus predicates Government Development Agenda

11. Every Citizen is important in this agenda.

12. Government's objective is to assist the destitute to graduate to sustainable livelihoods within the shortest time frame.

13. Destitute will be provided with shelter and least costly technology will be deployed that will aid them to graduate to sustainable livelihoods through micro enterprises.

14. Those in sustainable livelihoods will be assisted to graduate into mainstream economy and wealth creation.

15. Government intends to use the country's purchasing power, estimated to be over P20bn per annum, to support Small Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs).

PROCESS

16. All Government programmes will be continuously reviewed to ensure that they are aligned to the goal of eradication of poverty.

17. New programmes will be rolled out to ensure that a robust framework is in place to lead to poverty eradication and diversification of the economy.

BATSWANA TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF CURRENT PROGRAMMES

Support for the Destitute, Orphans, and Home Based Care

Beneficiaries are:

* Destitute: 43,590
* Home Based Care: 3,084
* Orphans and Vulnerable Children: 47,000

Ipelegeng:

18. Ipelegeng is a programme developed to create basic employment to Botswana.

19. It is distinct from Namolo Leuba in that Namolo Leuba was focused on development projects.
20. The goal of Government is to create as many basic jobs as possible for Batswana through the programme.

21. We appeal to all Government structures not to confuse Ipelegeng with Namolo Leuba

22. To date over 40,000 people have benefited from the programme

23. His Excellency has recently stated that the P360 per month paid by the programme to each Motswana will be reviewed as soon as the economy shows positive growth.

24. Batswana should view Ipelegeng as one of the many paths towards self development as any form of work is better than being idle for the able bodied.

ISPAAD

25. ISPAAD was developed to aid in contributing to the country’s food security whilst at the same time aiding Batswana to have sustainable livelihoods.

26. Most Batswana in rural communities complained about not having anything to do, yet they had farmland lying idle.

27. To date the programme has benefited 94,099 farmers.

28. Government has spent P211, 729, 024 on the programme in the 2009/10 financial year and plans to spend about P180m this financial year.

29. Batswana should take advantage of this programme; it is rare that a government can plough, provide seeds, and provide fertilizers for free to its citizens.

30. Batswana should view this scheme as a necessary step for them to graduate to commercial farming.

31. Government is concerned that some of the recipients fail to take care of the fields.

32. Government is currently in the process of extending the scheme to cover horticulture.

LIMID

LIMID has benefited 5,274 Batswana to date and P36, 654, 902 was spent in the 2009/10 financial year, and P20m is budgeted for this year

Youth Programmes
Currently over 43,000 young people participate in the constituency tournaments.

34. It is an undoubted fact that sports aids in the development of youth; government thus encourages as many youth to participate in such a programme.

35. The Young Farmers Fund has disbursed P106m to 251 recipients to date.

36. In addition, Government has sponsored over 3000 youth projects.

37. More programmes will be rolled out targeted at the youth, as Government views the youth as the future and hence empowering them will ensure that they perform exceptionally in the future.

HUBS

38. Six hubs have been established to aid in the Government drive to diversify the economy; these are the agriculture, education, health, innovation, diamond and transport.

39. Billions will be invested by both Government and its development partners in the hub projects over the coming years.

40. The hubs will provide opportunities for entrepreneurs and employment for Batswana.

41. The hubs will also require individuals with highly specialised skills during their rollout and operation; hence, Batswana should gear themselves for the opportunities that would be provided.

42. Details of the hub projects and opportunities to be provided will be a subject of a future press conference.

INFRASTRUCTURAL READINESS

43. Significant strides have been made by Government to ensure that quality infrastructure is present as an enabler for sustainable development:

* 73 of the 100 villages have been electrified under the "100 Villages Electrification Project"; estimated expenditure is over P 530m.
* In addition, 29 villages have been electrified under the 30 villages Electrification Project; the estimated cost is over P150m.
* To improve services Water Utilities Corporation has been given the mandate to provide water in both urban and rural areas.
* Clinics have been transferred from the Ministry of Local Government to Ministry of Health for better coordination and effective service delivery
* 84% have access to water
* Nteletsa II to reach 197 villages.
* Mobile tele-density was 132% in November 2009
Botswana Post has completed the installation of 25 Kitsong Centres.

235 secondary schools have internet connectivity.

* As of June 2009 there were 6000 subscribers to the internet.
* E-government is being rolled out to improve communication of the government to the public and the public to the government

EXPERIENCE

44. In terms of SMMEs in rural communities we have had too many projects in the past which showed great promise only to struggle and or collapse because there was no sustainability factor built into them when their initial sponsors moved on.

46. Government intends to ensure that viable and sustainable enterprises are built based on value chains.

47. Continuous improvement of quality, market access, and effective branding are critical to product and service success.

48. The current success of Thamaga Pottery shows what the impact of Government interventions can achieve; Thamaga Pottery recently executed an order of about P450,000 for Botswana Police Services following a directive of Government for the Ministries and Departments to by craft and pottery from locals.

49. Based on the products on display at the just ended trade fair for SMMEs, it is clear that Batswana can produce goods that can penetrate the global markets; what they need are innovative interventions by Government and its development partners to assist them.

ACTION PLAN

50. Government will aid in ensuring that there is focused and holistic effort provided by various stakeholders; amongst these are:

* Financial institutions (CEDA, Venture Capital, NDB, banks, BSB, Botswana Postal Services) * Support institutions (LEA, BOBS, BNPC, BOTEC, RIPCO, BAMB, LAC, BVI, BEDIA, IFSC, NAFTEC) * Education and skills (UB, BAC, BCA, BOCODOL, schools, TEC, BOTA) * NGOs, private sector, religious groups, traditional leaders, and political leaders

51. Government is in the process of developing clear out of poverty steps that would map the alternative paths for citizens to graduate from poverty.

52. Communities will be engaged in developing and rolling their own viable and sustainable programmes

53. Government will ensure that the directives aimed at using Botswana's purchasing power to diversify the economy are implemented through effective tracking.
54. Geographical profiling of poverty will be mapped and tracked regularly to measure impact of interventions and programmes.

55. Members of Parliament and Councillors will be engaged in the development of, and participation in the use of, monitoring tools.

CONCLUSION

56. It is only through true partnership as citizens that we can achieve the goal of poverty eradication and diversification of the economy.

57. People Centred Development is about you desiring to take part and contribute to your personal development and that of the country; it is about genuine empowerment of every Motswana. It is efficacy at its best.

B10) 18/5/10: WELCOME REMARKS BY MINISTER FOR PRESIDENTIAL AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION HON LESEGO E. MOTSUMI AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE 2ND NATIONAL HIV AND AIDS, SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS AND OTHER RELATED INFECTIOUS DISEASES CONFERENCE (NHARSOC II)

[Salutations]... Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, good evening...!

1. It is such an honour for me to have been accorded the privilege to welcome you to this memorable and historic event, as we gather here to kick start three days of soul searching questions and answers to why despite all our efforts, we still are held captive by this epidemic.

2. My humble task is not to give a speech but welcome everyone here tonight. As I do so, let me thank our Guest Speaker, His Honour the Vice President Lt General Mompati Merafhe for finding it fit to officiate at tonight's event, amid his busy schedule. Your Honour, it is such a privilege for us to share this moment with you. As the Deputy Head of State and Deputy Chairperson to the National AIDS Council, there could never have been a better choice than you Sir.

3. Let me also appreciate the presence of our Ministers and Members of Parliament here present. It is my profound belief that, as advocates, legislators and key policy makers, your presence here is an epitome of leadership commitment to finding a lasting solution to the epidemic.

4. It will be fitting to also recognize the company of some of the renowned international HIV and AIDS experts here with us tonight, our local experts and practitioners, development partners, NGO’S and stakeholders within government. Your presence here is further confirmation of your vow to uphold our Multi-Sectoral Response that is people and leadership driven, which I believe will take us a long way.

5. Director of Ceremony, when I was asked to perform this task, I was told that the thrust of the conference will be on district-focused research. I believe that the
Conference is proof that we are moving in the right opportunity for us to learn from the actual actors on the ground as they share with us their best practices and lessons in their original form. Batswana and everybody here is proud that indeed we have home-grown programmes that touch on their lives. This is empowerment in its true sense.

6. Over the next three days I believe you will probe into where the critical areas for HIV and AIDS research are, and as such prioritizing on new areas of focus. Although HIV and AIDS research is as complex as the disease itself, it is through such efforts that we are able to take stock of our past actions, and through it be able to reenergize and refocus our interventions.

7. As I conclude, let me pay my utmost gratitude to the Patron of this Conference, Dr Mashalaba, who has been the driving force behind all the preparations of this event. Dr Mashalaba has served as a Medical Doctor in government from 1966 until 1983, when she went into private practice. She has worked tirelessly to guide this conference to become a success that we know it will be. I thank you Mmaetsho for your unwavering leadership.

8. To our visitors from neighbouring countries and around the globe, as I wish you a pleasant stay in Botswana, let me implore you to leave a mark behind by forming strategic research partnerships, which I believe will help in facilitating the process of the development of a National Research Agenda, and most importantly facilitate local researchers' contribution to national, regional, as well as international knowledge on HIV and AIDS.

9. Lastly, and of course not least, allow me to acknowledge with appreciation our sponsors, supporters, researchers and participants who have all made this event possible. This overwhelming support once again underscores the commitment to our national response to HIV and AIDS. You remain our most loyal friends and can only urge you to continue supporting our research initiative beyond this conference.

10. To all of you here, your choice to brave this encroaching winter and grace this occasion once more epitomizes our united stand for an AIDS Free Generation. Le ka moso. Ke a leboga Bagaetsho! PULA!

B11) 20/5/10: Remarks by the Minister for Presidential Affairs and Public Administration, Honourable Lesego Ethel Motsumi, at the Launch of New IDM Logo

[Salutations]...Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen;

1. Good morning, I am delighted to join you all in marking this important turning point in the development of a venerable institution.

2. As a few here may recall the Institute of Development Management or "IDM" dates back to 1974, when it was established as a regional organisation in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland.
Its mission has been to help develop the management capacities of the three countries' parastatal and private, as well as public sectors through training, consultancy, research, and the establishment of a Management Resource Centre.

4. In this respect the long-term core objectives of IDM can be summed up as:

* improving managerial knowledge and skills;

* providing management training and consultancy to middle and senior level personnel;

* enhancing organizational structures and administrative and management procedures in a way consistent with the region's development policies related and social and economic needs;

* expanding the data base available for decision making with respect to development; and

* promoting public awareness and involvement in all aspects of development.

5. While these historic objectives remain relevant today, the environment in which IDM now operates is much different from what prevailed 36 years ago.

6. As some of you will also recall the "BLS" countries, that is Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, were then struggling as undeveloped enclaves in a region still dominated by the forces of colonialism and apartheid.

7. IDM was thus at the time a unique institution on the frontline of a unique a trying circumstance.

8. While the challenges facing IDM today may be no less trying, they are of a more universal nature.

9. Today we are all living in a competitive era of accelerated globalisation, in which human resource development must aspire to world class standard in the face of worldwide demands, more specifically the levelling demands of the global marketplace.

10. While we can take pride in the fact that our country, and region, has come a long way in terms of the development of our human capital, as well as material base since 1974, in the global context we are still well behind other players.

11. Of course, in its training and other activities IDM also no longer enjoys the near monopoly of its early years.

12. And so, to borrow from a well known but relevant expression, the IDM of today and tomorrow must be global in its strategy, while remaining proactively local in its focused output.
13. It is in this dynamic context that the Institute has formulated its 2010 aims to transform into an autonomous and commercialised institute that will be profitable and financially self sufficient.

14. To achieve this fresh objective the IDM management has recognised that they must transform their institution into a reputable and customer focused centre of excellence that is results oriented in providing competitive quality services.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

15. The logo we are launching this morning is thus symbolic of the rebirth as well as rebranding of IDM as a commercialised entity that will be in business for business.

16. For Government this is most welcome as it dovetails with our own development strategy for diversifying the economy through a commitment to customer focused excellence across the public and private sectors.

17. In this context I am confident that the rebranded IDM, through it training and consultancy services, will continue to contribute to needed skills development.

18. Let me conclude by observing that any re-branding exercise must be about much more than coming up with a new logo. What is important are the values and competencies that lie behind the icon.

19. At the risk of becoming a commercial, in every industry and field of endeavour there are trademarks that have stood the test of time - such once local now global brands such as Mercedes-Benz and Coca-Cola, or in the field of education Harvard - that have lasted for decades, even centuries. They have thrived not because their logos were necessarily better than some of their gone and now forgotten competitors, but rather because they consistently adapted to the expectations and aspirations of their customers.

20. Let it be the same for IDM! I thank you. PULA!!!

B12) 6/5/10: Minister Motsumi at the launch of eBotswana TV

On the eve of local activities marking World Press Freedom Day the Minister of Presidential Affairs and Public Affairs, the Hon. Lesego Motsumi, passionately reaffirmed Government's commitment to nurturing an enabling environment for private sector growth and diversity in Botswana's Broadcast media in remarks at tonight's high glamour launch of eBotswana TV service. [Start] -

Remarks by the Minister for Presidential Affairs and Public Administration, Honourable Lesego Ethel Motsumi, at the Launch of eBotswana Television:

[Salutations]...Ladies and Gentlemen;
1. Good evening, it is a true pleasure to be here! What a wonderful occasion this is for the launch of the new eBotswana! It is a pleasure because tonight's event marks a significant milestone in the development of Broadcasting in Botswana, as well as this station. While GBCTV has been operating for just over two decades now, I am convinced that its re-launch tonight as "eBotswana" signifies more than a change of name.

2. My optimism is rooted in the progress the station has begun to make, as well as what it promises to achieve, since its local owner, Mr. Mike Klinck, went into partnership with Sabido Investments, through its subsidiary company E-TV South Africa.

3. In this respect, I am assured that Mr. Mike Klinck retains his majority shareholding in the company, which is consistent with the policy of Government and of the National Broadcasting Board to promote majority citizen ownership among our emerging private sector broadcasters.

4. At the same time given the significant technical and financial challenges involved in operating a commercially viable quality free to air television service, as the Minister responsible for broadcasting I recognise and appreciate the potential win-win value to entities like E-Botswana in forging cross border partnerships.

5. This is true for public service as well as private broadcasters around the world. While remaining a national asset our own BTV has and will continue to court regional and global partners in its own ongoing efforts to bring enhanced programming to Batswana.

6. From what I have been told, not only by the station's management but also by others, I am convinced that GBC-TVs relationship with ETV South Africa has been of great value in ensuring its recent viability, as well as its future success as E-Botswana.

7. Among other things the partnership has allowed the station to improve the visual quality of its VHF free to air broadcast signal, which now covers the greater Gaborone region for a radius of 80 kilometres.

8. As a result over one third of our population now has potential access to its programming.

9. Through its partnership with E-TV, the station has further benefited from additional technical, professional and programming, as well as capital support.

10. In terms of job creation the station's fulltime professional staff has grown to over two dozen, with more likely to be absorbed in both full time and freelance positions in the future.
12. In addition, I must commend the station for its policy of providing internships for students from local tertiary institutions. This recognises the valued partnership between government and the private sector on job creation or even on the job training. It is my hope that the end result of the internship programme with you will result in some permanent job offers to some of the interns.

13. My enthusiasm for E-Botswana’s continued success, however, goes beyond its current numbers. As the representative of a Government fully committed to both private sector growth and the nurturing of a diverse media culture, I welcome the promise that ordinary viewers in our country will have a viable commercial free to air station in addition to BTV.

14. In this respect there may be grounds for future cooperation as well as healthy competition between the two stations.

15. The existence of more than one local station should, for example, increase the opportunities for local production companies.

16. In this respect, while I note the E-Botswana will be bringing quality entertainment from outside Botswana to its consumers, Government will be most interested in seeing how it succeeds in growing its local content, which of course is provided for in its licence. Local content is very important for it does not only provide viewers with locally produced programmes but also skills development for the citizens.

17. Ladies and Gentlemen let me conclude by commending Mr. Klinck and his team for their perseverance and hard work in making E-Botswana a reality.

18. I am aware, Mike, that many naysayers doubted the station’s viability. I suspect there may have even been times of self-doubt too! There have been difficult times especially during the infant times of GBCTV; those were the integral developmental stages of an industry.

19. There is a common saying that nobody trips over mountains. It is rather the small rocks that cause us to stumble. But you stand up, chest up, and move on! The important thing is to hold tight and let the ship not sink. Mr. Klinck you and your team passed over the rocks in your path to scale your mountain!

20. This is to be commended as a true example of citizen self-empowerment that can inspire others.

21. Director of Ceremonies, Ladies and Gentlemen, with these few remarks it is now my pleasure to formally launch E-Botswana. I thank you all.

C. NOTICES & FORWARDING

C1) 17/5/10: Press Statement - Administration of Justice/Judicial Services Commission
Reference is made to the article that appeared on the first page of the Sunday Standard of 16-22 May 2010, entitled 'JSC climbs down as Justice Tebbutt joins fight against controversial appointments reforms'. The article is a sequel to a number of others published in the same newspaper in the past few weeks.

The JSC does not generally engage in a dialogue with the media, or anyone for that matter, on such confidential and weighty constitutional issues. However, its Chairman, the Honourable Chief Justice, has considered it appropriate to respond in view of the inaccuracies and misrepresentations contained in the said articles. This statement will restrict itself to the claim made about what transpired at its meeting of 11 May 2010, with respect to the procedure for judicial appointments.

The JSC decided, at that meeting, that the procedure it has adopted with respect to making recommendations to His Excellency the President, where more names are sent to the President than the number of vacancies, will stand until varied by the Commission. Such variation has not occurred and the claim that the JSC has 'agreed to stay the new system until a meeting where a definite decision is to be taken' is false and devoid of the truth as well as the statement that 'the JSC has resolved that pending the finalization of the issue concerning the proper interpretation of Section 96 (2) the JSC will meanwhile revert to the old system of appointment". In fact, at its meeting of the 11th May 2010, the JSC confirmed the previous decision that it has discretion to send more than the required names to the President to choose from.

The JSC is a body created by Section 103 of the Botswana Constitution, which is not subject to the directions or control of any other person or authority. Thus the statement in the article that the Commission has allowed reforms to be 'sneaked in through the back door and lobbied to JSC members' implies that the Commission has violated its constitutional mandate. This is both inaccurate and defamatory of the good name of the Commission.

The Chief Justice wishes to advise that steps will be taken against anyone who makes false allegations about the JSC, or seeks to undermine the integrity of its members. It should also be noted that the proceedings of the JSC are confidential, and that the Chairperson will not hesitate to take the appropriate action against any person who leaks information about its proceedings without authorization.

Finally, if anyone is of the view that the JSC has done anything unlawful, they are free to follow established lawful procedures to obtain redress, rather than spread false rumours that are likely to mislead the public.
His Honour the Vice President Lt. Gen. Mompati S. Merafhe would like to let it known that the article carried in the 12 May edition of Botswana Gazette Newspaper entitled 'VP bans pastor from praying' is malicious and misleading. This should be clear from its sensational and contradictory title which presupposes that the pastor was banned from praying all together, while in the text it is rather alleged that "The Vice President Lt. Gen. Merafhe has banned a United Congregational Church of Southern Africa (UCCSA) pastor, Gilbert Ramokwena, from praying at all his kgotla meetings after the pastor quoted a verse from proverbs 11.1".

For the record, at no point did the Vice President ban nor threaten to ban the said pastor from praying as per the suggestive title. Neither did he ban or threaten to ban him from praying at his kgotla meetings. We view this as a deliberate move by the paper to besmirch and defame the Vice President.

This clearly goes against the media code of ethics.

The Vice President has the right to seek recourse from the courts when he feels aggrieved. But given his firm belief in press freedom and that a responsible press contributes towards the promotion of the socioeconomic and political development of the country, he has decided not to go that route.

In light of the foregoing, one can only wish for the speedy implementation of the Media Practitioners Act (MPA) so that aggrieved members of the public could seek recourse. As per the Act, the "Media Council shall operate without any political or other bias or interference, and shall be wholly independent and separate from the government, any political party or any other body" thus ensuring its impartiality.

C3) 7/5/10: PRESS RELEASE - The Amended Public Service Act

The amended Public Service Act No 30 of 2008 will commence on Saturday 1st May 2010. The objective of this Act is to provide for a single legislation governing employment of all employees of Government. The Act also provides for the establishment of Public Service Bargaining Structures and recognized Public Service trade unions to engage in negotiations and bargaining over issues which have been identified and are matters for negotiation.

Previously there were four pieces of legislation governing employment in the Public Service. These were the Public Service Act CAP 26:01, Unified Local Government Service Act, Teaching Service Act and Tribal Land Act Part II (a) to II (f). The use of these separate laws resulted in inconsistencies in the conditions of service and uncoordinated relationships between Government as an employer and some civil servants. The Act thus establishes a single public service; ensures consistent terms and conditions of employment for all government employees; and installs systematic collective bargaining processes.
The Public Service Act No 30 of 2008 is a direct result of the ratification of three International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions by the Botswana Government in 1997. Subsequently, national labour laws were amended in 2004 to align them with the ILO Conventions following which Government appointed a Reference Committee comprising some public service unions, representatives from Government appointing authorities, Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs and Attorney Generals' Chambers to merge all employment legislations governing public employees.

Commenting on the Act, the Director of DPSM Mrs Festina Bakwena said "the Act complies with the ILO Conventions on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention; the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention; and the Labour Relations Convention which is a giant leap with regard to improving terms and conditions of service for Government employees."

C4) 5/5/10: OP PRESS RELEASE: BOTSWANA DELEGATION IN MAURITIUS TO OBSERVE ELECTION

Members of the public are informed that the Government of Botswana has sent a delegation of 5 people to Mauritius to observe the country's Presidential and Parliamentary elections. The elections started on the 5th May and are due to end on the 8th May, 2010. The team, which has been deployed to cover two constituencies each, is comprised of:-

i) Mr Sydney Modimakwane
ii) Mr Mothusi George
iii) Mrs Edith Phiri
iv) Ms Gaontebale Mokgosi
v) Mrs Tlhabologo Chephethe

The team is working alongside other observers from other 14 SADC Member States, who are deployed in all the 21 constituencies of Mauritius in order to observe all the 3 phases of elections: Pre-election, the polling day including the counting and announcement of result and the post election phase.

C5) 5/5/10: New SSKA terminal building to be completed on time for World Cup

The new Sir Seretse Khama Airport (SSKA) terminal is near completion and will be handed over before the end of the month for immediate operations.

The state of the art terminal, which has been designed to promote SSKA as an international gateway into the SADC region, will thus be opened in time for this year’s FIFA World Cup competition in neighbouring South Africa.

The news of the terminal's on time delivery was among the key announcements made by H.H. the Vice President in his opening of discussion of the 16th Progress Report of the Cabinet Committee of Economy and Employment, which was considered this week by the Economic Committee of Cabinet.
Among the report's other highlights was the announcement that 18 citizen Form 5 Achievers (each with a minimum of 6A*) will be sponsored by Government this year for further study as the first intake of the new "Top Achievers Scholarship."

The students will be pursuing studies in medicine, engineering, business and finance at leading global academic institutions. The scholarship is thus aimed at preparing select Batswana with leadership skills as part of Government's overall strategy of achieving sustainable development through excellence.

At the meeting it was also announced that a Road Map for Poverty Eradication has been drafted, which delineates Government's action plan to ensure that the country is on the path of eradicating absolute poverty. This will be achieved by empowering marginalised members of the community away from dependency towards wealth creating activities. Key to this people centred development strategy will be establishing sustainable frameworks of support for small and medium scale industries in rural communities and among the youth.

In a press conference yesterday H.H. the Vice President described the eradication of poverty as an urgent moral imperative that has now become a flagship project for Government.

C6) 5/5/10: Response by Dr. Jeff Ramsay - Re: Today's Telegraph Story "Brand Botswana Logo stolen from South Africa?"

This is to place on record my disappointment that today's Telegraph newspaper published the above story on its front-page, also largely repeated on its page 7, in which among other things it claims that:

"At time of going to press, even Coordinator for the Government Communication and Information Systems, Dr. Jeff Ramsay, had not responded to an inquiry e-mailed to him last Wednesday"

If any such e-mail was ever sent, it was certainly not received by me.

As my cell phone number and other contacts are available to journalists, as well as those of my deputies, the claim that I have failed to respond to the Telegraph is at best disingenuous.

I further note that by their own admission the other individuals that the Telegraph claims to have also tried to reach were all out of town!

This would thus appear to be a transparent attempt on the part of Telegraph to justify running a scandalous story in the absence of critical input from relevant stakeholders.
In my personal opinion, such blatantly unethical practice only serves to further underscore the urgent need to have a properly constituted Media Council, as provided for in the Media Practitioners Act of 2008, up and running as an alternative to the expensive and time consuming option of defamation suits.

C7) 4/5/10: OP Press Statement: - H.E. the President has no investments in tourism projects in CKGR

In light of recent innuendos appearing in the media, this Office wishes to state that H.E. the President Lt. Gen. Seretse Khama Ian Khama, does not have any investments in tourism projects within the Central Kgalagadi Game Reserve.

At the same time this Office wishes to affirm that citizens of Botswana are not only free but encouraged to take up opportunities to invest in tourism projects throughout the country.

Finally this Office wishes to once more record its commitment to the ongoing consultative process with all CKGR Stakeholders whose early conclusion we look forward to in line with His Excellency’s November 2009 statement to Parliament that:

"Government remains committed to ensuring that local communities are involved in, and derive direct benefits from, the sustainable management of local resources. This includes those living in and adjacent to the Central Kgalagadi Game Reserve, where a revised Management Plan now forms the basis for our ongoing consultations. It is my intention and hope that we shall achieve sufficient consensus to finally bring closure to this matter."

C8) 18/4/10: Office of the President Press Statement: Deliberations of the Media Advisory Council

This past week the Media Advisory Council held an ordinary meeting chaired by the Minister responsible, the Hon. Lesego Motsumi.

The Media Advisory Council, which reports to the High Level Consultative Council (HLCC), is a forum of media industry stakeholders that meets routinely to discuss and hopefully resolve issues of common concern.

As with other HLCC sector meetings, the deliberations of the Media Advisory Council are not open to press coverage in order to facilitate free and candid exchange.

In this respect it may be further noted that those who attend the Council do so as representatives of interested media wide organizations, e.g. BOCCIM (Media Sector), the Editors' Forum, MISA-Botswana etc., rather than on behalf of individual media houses or publications.

In the above context this Office would not, under normal circumstance, wish to comment on the Council’s deliberations. We, however, feel compelled to do so in
Contrary to what was alleged in the article there was no discussion during the Council meeting of holding "fresh elections of the Complaints and Appeals Committee of the Press Council in order for the organ to begin operations."

What Council members did discuss and agree upon was that an inclusive forum should be convened where concerned stakeholders would, without prejudice, collectively interrogate the Media Practitioners' Act of 2008.

The goal of the meeting would be to share perspectives in order to reach a common understanding of the Act's content and probable implications, including any areas of agreement and outstanding concern or disagreement.

In this respect, the Hon. Minister expressed the hope that such a process would help to re-build bridges among and between media stakeholders and Government.

C9) 4/5/10: VP addresses media as Govt steps up drive to eradicate poverty

The Vice President, Lt Gen Mompati Merafhe today addressed the media on Government's poverty eradication drive, noting that "this goal is not only morally right, it is also pivotal for growing the economy and ensuring the future of Botswana is viable and sustainable." Poverty eradication is one of the government flagship programmes that were identified by His Excellency the President in his 2009 inaugural address.

Government's objective is to assist the destitute to graduate to sustainable livelihoods within the shortest time frame. Those in sustainable livelihoods will be assisted to graduate into mainstream economy and wealth creation. Government programmes will be continuously reviewed to ensure that they are aligned to the goal of eradication of poverty. New programmes will be rolled out to ensure that a robust framework is in place to lead to poverty eradication and diversification of the economy. To date Botswana has done relatively well in the alleviation of poverty. Statistics show that over the years poverty has reduced significantly from 59% in 1985/86 to 46% in 2002/03. Indications are that the rate declined further to an estimated 23% in 2009.

These statistics do not however take into consideration the numerous social interventions the Government has taken to protect its citizens. These interventions include relatively free education and health services; provision of food at schools; programmes for orphans and the destitute; rehabilitation of people with disabilities; subsidised SHHA scheme; and a variety of subsidies for the agricultural sector.

Amongst other interventions, ISPAAD, was developed to contribute to the country's food security whilst at the same time helping Batswana to have sustainable livelihoods. The youth have been specifically targeted to participate in Government's
programmes as Government views them as the future and hence empowering them will ensure that they perform exceptionally in the future.

Furthermore, the six hubs have been established to provide a platform in the Government drive to diversify the economy; these are the agriculture, education, health, innovation, diamond and transport. Government together with its development partners will invest billions in the hub projects over the coming years, and the hubs will provide opportunities for entrepreneurs and employment for Batswana.

The hubs will also require individuals with highly specialised skills during their rollout and operation; hence, Batswana should gear themselves for the opportunities that would be provided.

With regard to infrastructural readiness, significant strides have been made by Government to ensure that quality infrastructure is presented as an enabler for sustainable development.

Past experience has shown that Botswana had been successful in economic diversification initiatives, but that many promising project in the past have also collapsed because there was no sustainability factor built into them. Government thus intends to ensure that viable and sustainable enterprises are built based on value chains.

The current success of Thamaga Pottery shows that government interventions have a positive impact. Thamaga Pottery recently executed an order of about P450 000 for Botswana Police Services following a directive of Government for the Ministries and Departments to by craft and pottery from locals. Based on the products on display at the just ended trade fair for SMMEs, it is clear that Batswana can produce goods that can penetrate the global markets; what they need are innovative interventions by Government and its development partners to assist.

Government will ensure that the directives aimed at using Botswana's purchasing power to diversify the economy are implemented through effective tracking. Geographical profiling of poverty will be mapped and tracked regularly to measure impact of interventions and programmes, and Members of Parliament and Councillors will be engaged in the development of, and participation in the use of, monitoring tools.

Alcoholism, the spread of HIV and mindset remain major challenges to poverty eradication, and it is only through true partnership as citizens that we can achieve the goal of poverty eradication and diversification of the economy, hence the concept 'people centred development'. 'People Centred' development is about motivating the individual to have the desire to take part and contribute to their own personal development and that of their country. It is about the genuine empowerment of every Motswana. It is efficacy at its best.

C10) 15/4/10: Changes in Vice President's Office to enhance delivery
In the context of any confusion that may have been caused by a recent press report, this Office wishes to confirm and clarify that Dr. John Mothibi has been recently appointed as Permanent Secretary in the Office of the Vice President.

Dr. Mothibi is assisting His Honour the Vice President in the delivery of the core duties assigned to him by His Excellency the President.

These responsibilities include:

Driving Government's economic diversification initiatives, a responsibility that further includes overseeing the progress of the Agriculture, Diamond, Education, Health, Innovation, and Transport Hubs;

Driving project delivery across Government;

Evaluating of the performance of Ministers and Permanent Secretaries; and

Driving poverty eradication efforts.

Dr. Mothibe's appointment in the Vice President's office may be seen as a reflection of magnitude of the above responsibilities as well as the urgency of this Office's commitment towards meeting them.

In this respect it is in keeping with this Office's overarching commitment to Delivery.

We are further pleased to report that, to further enhance delivery, the Vice President's Office has also been recently joined by Mr. Masego Ramakgathi, whose duties will include acting as the Office's new media liaison.

D. ALSO IN THE NEWS: Khama Presidency at Year 2 - Real Leadership for Real Delivery by Dr. Jeff Ramsay published in the Telegraph 7/5/10

The Khama presidency has now completed its second year. Predictably some are already proclaiming its failure in the media. In a democracy such criticism is to be expected, indeed welcomed. What is disappointing is the failure of most critics to focus on what one might expect to be at the core of assessing any democratic administration's success, its handling of the economy, delivery on its promises, policies and programmes, and commitment to the rule of law.

Perhaps this is because by these measures Khama has already laid a foundation of solid achievement, leaving his naysayers to endlessly focus on the soap opera of political personalities, of past as opposed to current beneficiation efforts, and above all issues of leadership style as opposed to the substance of delivery.

At least the volume of criticism is a sure sign of democratic vibrancy that belies the critic's tired cries of "dictatorship." Transformative democratic leaders have often been so labelled by their opponents. Yet, the independence of the judiciary and
The integrity of the Constitution remain intact. Debate remains vigorous, with any Parliamentary system or governance. Can anyone honestly look at the output of the domestic media and deny that freedom of expression flourishes?

In news that escaped the front page headlines, this week it was announced that Botswana's economy grew by 7.2% during the final quarter of last year, leading various global economic observers to conclude that the country has come out of recession. While the administration has remained more cautious in its recovery assessments, there can be little doubt that President Khama's economic interventions have begun to pay dividends. Besides a turnaround in the hard hit mining sector, the latest surge in growth has been fuelled by steady expansion in other sectors including the once dormant agriculture sector.

By the end of 2008 the picture was much different. The new administration was confronted with worst economic situation to beset the country since independence. Diamond sales had collapsed, copper and nickel prices were in free fall, and investment was drying up, while many had begun to feel the ill effects of energy cutbacks. In the face of such dire circumstance the President assembled a recovery task force whose recommendations have proved effective in growing employment, while expanding the non-mining sector.

Actions undertaken included stay-in business strategies, which were developed with the cooperation with the private sector to avoid mass retrenchments. In this context Government found it necessary to assist a number of companies, on a case by case basis, in order to protect jobs and long term investments.

In agriculture the "ISPAAD" initiative was accompanied by a significant expansion of the area under cultivation with a consequent rise in crop yields.

To further grow the non-mining sector, the Khama administration also took a deliberate decision to allow the already budgeted infrastructural projects to go ahead. At the same time inflation was reduced allowing banks provide further stimulus by significantly lowering their lending rates. In the upshot non-mining GDP has continued to grow, while Botswana's stable banking system maintained a supply of credit to households and businesses.

For society's hardest hit, the Ipelegeng Programme was introduced to provide supplementary income support to hundreds of thousands of Batswana, employing on average just under 40,000 a month.

On the basis of its economic handling alone the Khama presidency may thus be so far be judged a success. But this would ignore ongoing progress in other areas.

Even in the absence of economic crisis the plight of the youth would have been a major concern. Here the emphasis has been on rolling out initiatives to empower the young people to empower themselves, such as the nationwide rollout of the Youth Development Fund, which provides deserving candidates with up to P 100,000 on a
To address joblessness DPSM was instructed to register unemployed graduates for employment, while the internship programme has given many a leg up.

For the first time housing strategies were also developed targeting young adults, while the threshold for SHHA loans was raised from P 20,000 to P 40,000, and land allocation streamlined as part of the Khama administrations overall efforts to eradicate absolute poverty.

To further spur rural development, Nteletsa II project is being rolled out to provide villages throughout the country with access to telecommunication, including voice, data and internet services.

In education, the opening of new schools has allowed for this past week's announcement that the double shift system will be phased out in the senior secondary schools. In the areas of primary health care integrated services have been organised into 187 clusters served by doctors. In the field of rural electrification coverage will reach 70% in the coming months, while progress is ongoing to transform Botswana from an energy importer to exporter.

Success of these and other initiatives has gone hand in hand with the putting in place across government of regular briefings and monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure project and service delivery.

Perhaps not surprisingly some critics have tried to shift the focus from such quantifiable examples of material progress to the President's social initiatives. Yet here too there is measurable progress. For example, the constituency league football competitions, which have often been described as a waste by critics, last year attracted the participation of over 1500 teams!

The campaign against alcohol abuse has, of course, also been a target, notwithstanding the fact that the steps that have been undertaken are in conformity with WHO recommendations and consistent with international best practice.

Before 2008 Botswana was one of the few countries in the world that did not combine alcohol specific taxation with other interventions. For years the warnings of head-teachers, social workers, health specialists and other concerned individuals about the negative effects of easy alcohol access on pre-teens as well as teens were all but ignored in the face of industry blandishments. Where there was relative silence at least now there is real debate.

Meanwhile revenue from the alcohol levy is being channelled to youth recreational centres in all constituencies, to youth industries and additional activities, as well as health and awareness campaign; examples of the promotion of positive public discipline, as opposed to the negative pandering to private vice.

One could go on, but for now let us conclude by noting two areas of initiative that the Khama administration intends to focus on in the coming year - poverty
The immediate objective will be the elimination of absolute poverty - these will progress in the context "Botswana Excellence Strategy for Economic Diversification and Sustainable Growth", which has now been incorporated into NDP 10 to serve as a framework for the administration's ultimate objective of pushing the country to high income status, while leaving no citizen behind. These are the real blueprints for real delivery, which will provide

END NOTE - TAUTONA TIMES

Tautona Times was launched in May 2003 as a means to communicate to the media and other interested stakeholders. It is freely available to any who wish to receive it. But, we have no wish to SPAM. Requests for cancellation will be promptly acted on, as will any complaints about such things as double mailings. For ease of downloading all e-mailed copies of TT are sent in plain text format WITHOUT ANY ATTACHMENTS.