

Republic of Botswana TAUTONA TIMES vol. 9 no. 19 (9/8/2011) The Electronic Press Circular of the Office of the President "REAL LEADERSHIP FOR REAL DELIVERY"

"I am pleased to note that the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Health of Botswana and the Mauritius Cardiac Centre signed last September, has made possible the performance of cardiac surgeries at Princess Marina Hospital by Mauritian cardiologists. This cooperation has multiple benefits such as reduced cost of cardiac surgeries and also affords medical practitioners from Mauritius an opportunity to impart specialised skills to our medical practitioners, thus enhancing our Government's efforts towards building local capacity in such critical fields" – H.E. the President [B1]

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A. THE WEEK THAT WAS:

Dear Readers – Welcome to another edition of Tautona Times, your window into issues and events involving the Botswana State Presidency.

His Excellency the President Lt. General Seretse Khama Ian Khama, has been hosting the Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius, the Rt. Honourable Dr. Navichandra Ramgoolam, who arrived yesterday for a two day official visit. [B1][C1-2] As two of Africa's oldest multi-party democracies Botswana and Mauritius have long shared common values and interests, cooperating at bilateral and multilateral levels.

During the visit the President held official talks with the Prime Minister [C1] and hosted him for a State Dinner. [B1] The two leaders also travelled to Molepolole today, where the Prime Minister was the Guest of Honour at the official opening of the new Molepolole Institute of Health Sciences.

The Prime Minister will be returning to Mauritius this evening.

Also during the past week, H.E. the President, Lt. Gen. Seretse Khama Ian Khama, presided over three meetings of Cabinet, his party's Central Committee and briefings by the Ministries of Agriculture and Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

Discussions with Agriculture focused on ongoing progress in bringing Foot & Mouth Disease under control and reopening BMC access to the EU market. With respect to arable production, it is notable that the total area planted in 2010/11 is 11% greater than the previous season.

On Thursday, the President addressed dikgotla and greeted the residents of Mokolodi, Gabane, Metsimotlhabe and Mmopane in the Kweneng.

In Parliament the Minister for Presidential Affairs and Public Administration, the Hon. Mokgweetsi Masisi, responded to Members Questions on the use of the National Anthem and NBB licensing. [B3]

Over the weekend, Minister Masisi was also the Guest of Honour at a Francistown UCCSA Fundraiser. [B2]. While in Francistown he also used the opportunity to inspect poverty eradication projects in the area including the Kabelano Botshelo Bakery.

As previously reported, last week OP participated in the annual Botswana Consumer Fair. This week we are pleased to report that the Department of Information Services scooped position one in the media category at the Fair's Prize Giving, while Broadcasting Services achieved third position in the same category.

- Dr. Jeff Ramsay, Deputy Permanent Secretary for Government Communications (9/8/11)

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B. STATEMENTS

B1) 8/8/11: REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY LT. GENERAL SERETSE KHAMA IAN KHAMA, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA, AT THE STATE DINNER ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL VISIT TO BOTSWANA BY THE RT. HONOURABLE DR. NAVINCHANDRA RAMGOOLAM, PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS

The Honourable Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius; Speaker of the National Assembly; Cabinet Ministers from Botswana and Mauritius here present; Heads of Diplomatic Missions and International Organisations; Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen;

1. I would like to extend to you Honourable Prime Minister, your Dear Spouse and other members of your delegation, a very warm welcome to Botswana.

2. The Government and people of Botswana are humbled that you made time from your busy schedule to visit our country. This visit is a clear testimony to the excellent relations that exist between our two countries. It also provides an opportunity for us to further strengthen cooperation between Botswana and Mauritius.

3. We feel very honoured that you kindly accepted the invitation to officially open the Molepolole Institute of Health Sciences, which is one of six public health training institutions in Botswana.

4. Your participation in the opening of this facility is both symbolic and relevant, given the strong partnership between our two countries in the health sector. Investing in health is investing in people. Botswana therefore applauds your country for such investment in this sector, which is also one of our development priorities.

5. I am pleased to note that the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Health of Botswana and the Mauritius Cardiac Centre signed last September, has made possible the performance of cardiac surgeries at Princess Marina Hospital by Mauritian cardiologists.

6. This cooperation has multiple benefits such as reduced cost of cardiac surgeries and also affords medical practitioners from Mauritius an opportunity to impart specialised skills to our medical practitioners, thus enhancing our Government's efforts towards building local capacity in such critical fields.

7. Although Botswana and Mauritius enjoy strong and mutually beneficial relations which predate the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1997, a lot can still be done to further enhance these relations. The two countries face unique challenges in their development efforts. For instance, Botswana is a landlocked country while Mauritius is an Island State. Our countries also face common challenges such as economic diversification, and we need to co-operate more in areas such as trade.

8. We have for example opened our doors to Mauritian companies willing to invest in Botswana. For example, Botswana recognises the presence of B & M Garments which has a textile factory near Francistown, employing more than six hundred (600) of our nationals.

9. It is important that our two countries broaden collaboration in other areas also such as Financial Services, Tourism and Air Services where there is great potential. I believe that conclusion of sectoral agreements between our two countries in these fields, is of paramount importance to help improve connectivity and open up possibilities for commerce and travel. I would like to urge our officials to continue to explore other avenues, in order to broaden and deepen the scope of our cooperation for the mutual benefit of our countries and peoples.

10. As members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), our countries share a common vision for the economic integration of the region, underpinned by peace and stability, democracy, good governance, respect for human rights and the rule of law. In this context, the peaceful and credible elections, which your country held in May 2010, attests to your country's commitment to uphold these democratic principles and values. The elections were also a consolidation of a deep rooted democratic culture for which your country is renowned.

11. I am therefore delighted to note that Mauritius, Mr. Prime Minister continues to be a beacon of democracy, not only in our region but for the African Continent as a whole.

12. Although our sub-region continues to enjoy relative peace and stability, we still have some challenges to resolve. The issue of Madagascar continues to occupy SADC's attention despite Former President Chissano's sterling work in the search for a peaceful and viable political solution.

13. The political stakeholders in Madagascar should be reminded that the people of Madagascar have the right to live in peace and harmony. To achieve this, the political process in Madagascar should be inclusive, leading to a credible, free and fair election. The interest of the Malagasy people should be placed above narrow self-interest of a few.

14. In this regard, we commend Mauritius for demonstrating commitment to help find a lasting and peaceful solution to the crisis in Madagascar, in order to pave the way for a return to constitutional democracy. Coming to another item on the SADC agenda, I am sure we will work hard together with others in the Region to ensure free and fair elections in Zimbabwe when the GPA arrangement ceases.

15. I should also express what I see as a challenge for our continent in the area of political governance like the crisis sweeping across North Africa which continues unabated, as does the phenomena of piracy in the Horn of Africa.

16. The tendency by some leaders to stay in power without their people's mandate or to manipulate the electoral processes to extend their tenure of office should attract the condemnation of the international community. We call for regime change in Libya

and the swift appearance of Gaddafi before the International Criminal Court. The same should apply to any regime and its leader anywhere in the world who slaughter their people to stay in power as is currently the situation in Syria. We also call upon the use of minimum force to restore law and order and urge demonstrators not to resort to violence in their efforts to have their grievances addressed.

17. In conclusion, let me once again thank you, Honourable Prime Minister, for honouring us with your visit, which will remain indelible in the memories of the people of Botswana.

18. May I now invite you all to join me in drinking a toast to:

➤ His Excellency the President of the Republic of Mauritius, ➤ Stronger relations between the Governments and peoples of Botswana and Mauritius; and to ➤ International peace and security;

PULA!!!

B2) 6/8/11: KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY MINISTER FOR PRESIDENTIAL AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, HON. MOKGWEETSI E. K. MASISI UNITED CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA FRANCISTOWN LOCAL CHURCH, FUNDRAISING DINNER, ADONSONIA HOTEL, FRANCISTOWN, AUGUST 06, 2011

Director of ceremonies, Pastors, The Church Executive, Deacons, Chairpersons of respective organs and committees present here today, all members of the congregation gathered here this evening distinguished guests, Good evening.

1. It is a pleasure for me to have been invited to this auspicious occasion of the fund raising dinner for the Francistown United Congregational church of Southern Africa.

2. I am honoured to be a witness to the fact that like many other organizations, the Francistown UCCSA is demonstrating one of the basic principles of our Nation - self reliance that is and continues to be the corner stone of the prosperity and social advancement of our nation. This is a clear demonstration of the critical role that any religious group plays in bringing about social stability in any given society. The UCCSA is no exception.

Ladies and gentlemen,

3. It is organizations such as churches that provide and encourage unity and a spirit of cohesiveness, which is crucial in terms of nation building and bringing about social stability and peace that eventually metamorphoses into political and economic stability. The church is indeed, a vital force that helps maintain social stability and I am happy to say the UCCSA is playing its part for it was among others which intervened to help

government as the employer and Public Sector Union representatives reconcile during the most recent public sector employees strike.

4. Challenges that call on The Church in Botswana and yourselves in the Francistown UCCSA in particular, to the respect accorded to our national values, social and cultural norms as well as the integrity of authority have been posed. Challenges to these manifested themselves in ways that broke our time tested decorum and were, in many instances, an affront to Christian values not to mention Setswana values.

5. I am informed that this noble idea of fund raising is geared towards the building of a new Francistown UCCSA church and multipurpose hall; the construction of which are already underway. The need for a bigger structure emanates from the tremendous growth the church has experienced. The increased numbers of congregants have unfortunately rendered the church building in White city small as it can no longer accommodate all the members.

Ladies and gentleman,

6. Let me take this opportunity to commend Rev Aaron, the church executive, the building committee and the entire congregation for your commitment and dedication to this cause; despite the fact that it originally sounded like a dream that could not be attained. This has been a long journey that predates to 1999.

7. It is clear that for the past twelve years, you pursued this dream of building this church despite the challenges that you had to contend with. That on its own demonstrates your level of commitment to this cause. This also shows your high level of optimism and the conviction that through God, everything is possible. You are a living example of true believers and you remind me of the scripture in Phillipians 4 verse 13 " I can do everything through him who gives me strength". You lived up to this scripture and surely God gave you the strength, commitment and endurance. I salute you for your perseverance and most importantly your faith.

8. The financial setbacks that the church is enduring in its quest to develop this structure must also be acknowledged. The expenses incurred thus far began with the purchasing of the plot from the Botswana Christian Council at a cost of P45 238. The estimated cost of construction was P2.2 Million in 1999 but has since ballooned to a staggering P5.5 million currently.

Ladies and Gentleman,

9. I must acknowledge that for a non-profit making organization such as the UCCSA, these figures sound like an insurmountable challenge. Notwithstanding, the church has already spent about P1.3 million to date and the structure is currently at window level. A most commendable feat. Undoubtedly, through God's grace, individual

commitment and proactive leadership of the organization the target of P3.3 Million will be reached.

10. Let me take this opportunity to acknowledge the individual contributions of the congregation. The high level of participation by members of the church through the annual harvest (thobo) initiative has not gone unnoticed. I encourage you all to continue with such gestures. They are in line with the national initiative of Poverty Eradication led by His Excellency the President and driven through my Ministry of Presidential Affairs and Public Administration, under the tutelage of His Honour the Vice President. The initiative will ensure that no Motswana lives in abject poverty. It will also enable all Batswana to be able to feed themselves as well as sustain their livelihoods by setting up backyard gardens or alternative enterprises: working towards a dignified, self-sufficient nation. Consistent with ideals of the UCCSA and church in general.

11. The UCCSA Church's community outreach initiatives cannot be left unmentioned. I am informed that the church has constructed a house for the needy at Borolong village. It has also generously donated to SOS Children's Village and the Centre for the Deaf and the Blind. The church is also continuously supporting the Lephoi Centre.

12. This church must also be commended for the promotion of wellness amongst its congregation. It is against this background that the church has organized and staged activities such as a sponsored walk and cycling for fitness. This is a clear demonstration of the fact that the church is indeed concerned about both the spiritual and physical well being of its congregation.

Director of ceremonies,

13. Let me take this opportunity to thank the church leadership and its congregation for having come up with initiatives such as the ones I have mentioned above. These activities suggest alignment to the pillars of vision 2016 which also encapsulate the UCCSA pillars of "A molelo o tuke" and "In Christ there is a future".

14. Finally, I implore you all to continue working towards building this church with the understanding that you are doing so not only for yourselves but you are by extension contributing to the development of the whole country.

15. I pledge P 1000 per month from August to December 2011.

B3) 2-4/8/11: RESPONSES IN PARLIAMENT BY THE MINISTER OF PRESIDENTIAL AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, THE HON. MOKGWEETSI MASISI.

Please find below the texts of answers given in Parliament by the Minister for Presidential Affairs and Public Administration in response to a Member's Questions on compliance by Botswana Television, Radio Botswana, RB2 and the Daily News with the

license requirements of the National Broadcasting Board and the singing of the National Anthem

B3a) PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION No. 984 Asked on Thursday 4th August 2011 by Mr. W.B. Mmolotsi, MP (Francistown South)

QUESTION: To ask the Minister for Presidential Affairs and Public Administration whether:-

- i) Botswana Television, Radio Botswana, RB2 and the Daily News comply with the license requirements of the National Broadcasting Board; and
- ii) He is aware that they do not adhere to balanced reporting.

ANSWER:

1. Madam Speaker, Radio Botswana and RB2 do comply and operate in accordance with the license requirements of the National Broadcasting Board, as they have been licensed by the Board.
2. However, Botswana Television and Daily News have not been licensed by the National Broadcasting Board and therefore have no terms and conditions from the said board to comply with.
3. Madam Speaker, since the issue of balanced reporting is a matter of opinion, I leave it to audiences to judge for themselves whether or not Daily News, Radio Botswana and Botswana Television adhere to balanced reporting. I thank you Madam Speaker.

3Bb) PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION No. 1089 asked on Tuesday 2nd August, 2011 by Mr. M. M. Goya, MP. (Palapye)

QUESTION: To ask the Minister for Presidential Affairs and Public Administration to state:

- I. If he is aware that the singing of the National Anthem varies, that is some choral choirs do not repeat the chorus of the Anthem while in public gatherings like Kgotla meetings, the chorus is repeated;
- II. if people are allowed to jokingly use the National Anthem and change some of its lyrics as evidenced in the recent strikes; and
- III. What plans he will put in place to ensure that there is a unique and common singing of the National Anthem.

ANSWER: Madam Speaker,

I. I am aware that some choral choirs do not repeat the chorus of the National Anthem. Having said that, I am aware that in the past, Government stepped in to advise the nation about the importance of singing the National Anthem correctly, after it was observed that there were instances where at some fora and social gatherings, people were not always singing the second stanza as well as repeating the chorus. To my knowledge all Batswana are aware that the National Anthem should be sung in full irrespective of the type of social gathering where it is deemed fit for it to be sung. It is also my belief that at large Batswana treat our National Anthem with respect that it deserves.

II. No person is allowed to jokingly use the National Anthem and change some of its lyrics and it has been brought to my attention that during the public service strike some people did, in fact, to do that. A copy of an almost putrefactions corrupted versions of our sacred National Anthem was passed by myself to Acting Minister of Defence Justice and Security for appropriate action. It is rather unfortunate that at this time and age, some disgruntled members of our society can stoop so low as to show some disrespect to our symbol of pride, dignity and nationhood. Madam Speaker, I want to give advice to all our citizens that according to Section 91, sub-section (d) of the Penal Code (CAP 08:01): "Any person who does any act or utters any words or publishes any writing with intent to insult or bring into contempt or ridicule – the National Anthem, is guilty of offence and liable to a fine not exceeding P500".

III. Botswana adopted the National Anthem at Independence and ever since that day, the national Radio Botswana has been using the recorded choral version of this song as both epilogue and prologue to their live broadcasting in a standard manner that, I believe, is original and unique and should be maintained. I thank you.

C. NOTICES & FORWARDING

C1) 9/8/11: PRESIDENT KHAMA AND PRIME MINISTER RAMGOOLAM HOLD OFFICIAL TALKS.

His Excellency the President Lt. General Seretse Khama Ian Khama this morning held official talks with the visiting Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius, the Rt. Honourable Dr. Navichandra Ramgoolam, at the Office of the President.

The meeting followed a private Tete-a-Tete between the two leaders.

For the talks the President was joined by H.H. the Vice President, Lt. General Mompoti Merafhe, and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Hon. Phandu Skelemani, Health, the Hon. Rev. Dr. John Seakgosing, Transport and Communications, the Hon. Frank Ramsden, and trade and Industry, the Hon. Dorcas

Makgato-Malesu and the Permanent Secretary to the President, Mr. Eric Molale, along with senior officials; while for his part the Mauritian Prime Minister was joined by his Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, the Hon. Dr. Arvin Boolel, Secretary to Cabinet and Head of the Civil Service, Mr. Suresh Chundre Seeballuck and other senior officials.

In his introductory remarks, His Excellency thanked the Prime Minister for the reception he and his delegation had received during their 2009 State Visit to Mauritius. He further welcomed the fact that the Prime Minister was accompanied by a high level business delegation who would be meeting with members of the local business community to explore mutually beneficial partnerships. He noted that a number of Mauritian companies had already set up in Botswana, having invested over 100 million into the economy.

His Excellency also once more thanked the Prime Minister for the ongoing medical cooperation between the two countries, which has resulted in the performance of cardiac surgeries at Princess Marina Hospital by Mauritian cardiologists.

The Prime Minister responded by expressing his own desire to build upon the existing strong and mutually beneficial relations between Botswana and Mauritius. Identified areas of potential further partnership include ICT, textiles and tourism.

Following the talks the two leaders departed for Molepolole, where the Honourable Prime Minister is Guest of Honour at the official opening of the Molepolole Institute of Health Sciences.

As two of Africa's oldest multi-party democracies Botswana and Mauritius have long enjoyed cordial relations, cooperating at a bilateral and multilateral level.

C2) 8/8/11: THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS, THE RT. HONOURABLE DR. NAVICHANDRA RAMGOOLAM ARRIVES FOR OFFICIAL VISIT.

The Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius, the Rt. Honourable Dr. Navichandra Ramgoolam, arrived in Botswana this afternoon, at the invitation of His Excellency the President Lt. General Seretse Khama Ian Khama, for a two day official visit, from the 8th -9th August 2011.

This evening H.E. the President will host the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister with a State Dinner at the GICC from 1800 hours.

Tomorrow morning, from 0900 hours, the two leaders will hold official talks at the Office of the President. Thereafter, from 1030 hours, Honourable Prime Minister will be the Guest of Honour at the official opening of the Molepolole Institute of Health Sciences.

During his visit the Honourable Ramgoolam will be accompanied by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Hon. Phandu Skelemani, the High Commissioner of Botswana to Mauritius, Mrs. Gladys Kokorwe, and senior Government Officials.

C3) 6/8/11: PUBLISHED IN THE WEEKEND POST NEWSPAPER - "ONE COUNTRY" BY DR. JEFF RAMSAY, DPS GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS

Throughout Africa it is a truism that local civil society organisations tend to rely on external donors to pay their bills. Quite often such donations are sourced either directly or indirectly from agencies of Western; one could even say NATO, governments.

Evidence of this phenomenon can be found in the acknowledgements of various NGO publications. It would be absurd, however, to characterise such documents as western intelligence reports. As an example, the fact that the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) the other day acknowledged that it is dependent on grant funding from the European Union and two western embassies, does not mean that its surveys have been produced specifically for foreign interests.

Yet, this is the twisted logic that lies behind a local newspaper's extraordinary claim that it based a series of articles on an AFRICOM compiled intelligence report.

The report – "Botswana: Assessing Risks to Stability" – is an 18 page public document published by CSIS, a Washington D.C. based NGO, who freely distributed it online as part of a series of ten such risk assessments of Sub-Saharan countries. CSIS furthermore explicitly states at the beginning of the paper that "all views expressed in the report are solely those of its author", who happens to be British scholar named David Throup. AFRICOM merely sponsored the CSIS series.

Given these facts one does not need an embassy press release to confirm that Dr. Throup's modest study is not an official (or quasi-official) document, much less a military intelligence report.

What it is, is one academic's modest attempt to assess medium to long term risks to our country's socio-economic wellbeing based on his own speculative projections of "worst case scenarios". In this respect, Throup's final analysis is at variance with some of the interpretations appearing in our media, making one wonder whether a few of those who have embraced the study as a stick with which to beat Government have bothered to read it.

While online enabled readers can easily download the document for themselves, reproduced below is Dr. Throup's conclusion in its entirety:

"Botswana is quite unlike any other African state. It is essentially a rentier state that is dependent on its mineral wealth. But unlike most African rentier states, its revenue from diamonds has been well spent on improving the road network, providing schools and health clinics, boreholes and barbed wire, and an extensive network of social services and short-term employment-generating activities.

"GDP per capita is now 100 times higher than it was at independence. This is a real achievement. An arid, poverty stricken, landlocked state has been turned into one of the wealthiest societies on the African continent.

"Moreover Botswana is a true nation, endowed with a strong sense of pride in its achievements, rather than a state without political legitimacy. By virtually any criteria, Botswana has been well ruled for the past 45 years. Democracy and open political debate are firmly entrenched and defended, and it is not riven by ethnic or sectarian cleavages. In comparison with other countries in this study, this places Botswana in a fortunate circumstance.

"Under normal circumstances, few indicators suggest that the current development strategy will not work for the next 10 years. Growth will continue. Botswana is widely regarded as a model for the continent. It will not implode or even face serious problems. There are few politically and virtually no ethnic pressures posing serious challenge within that time frame.

"But over a longer period, Botswana will have to grapple with serious social difficulties and make fundamental economic decisions. The tried-and-tested development paradigm is coming to an end of its utility. A new, micro-economic, job-generating approach is essential. Without it, disaster lies ahead, but not until the 2020s or 2030s or, if Botswana is lucky, the 2040s – and by then the world will have been transformed and the day of reckoning may never come."

Anyone can cherry pick critical details from the report to prop up their own agendas, but Dr. Throup's final analysis speaks for itself, as does his opening line: "Botswana is rightly regarded as the great success story of post-independence Africa."

Of course one can fault his analysis. Given his Cambridge doctorate in African history, his page four stab at our past is all the more appalling.

What is unfortunate is the tendency of a few to go out of their way in amplifying anything that appears negative, as if they wish to negate the progress our country has achieved over the past four and a half decades, an achievement whose benefits do not belong to any one group. As our President once put it:

"Let us here recognise that while the nation can be united in its diversity, it cannot be divided in its loyalties. Even in a global village one must know one's own yard from that of one's neighbour. As citizens we can have but one country we call home."

C4) 7/8/11: PUBLISHED IN THE SUNDAY STANDARD NEWSPAPER – "INTERROGATING THE CSIS REPORT ON BOTSWANA" BY DR RAPHAEL DINGALO, DIRECTOR, RESEARCH AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT, BGCIS

The Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) has published a report entitled 'Botswana: Assessing Risks to Stability' that has caused waves within the country, with some in the media raising its stature to 'an intelligence report compiled by US-Africa Command (AFRICOM)'. That the said report was commissioned by AFRICOM does not imply that it is an intelligence report much as it is stated explicitly that "CSIS does not take specific policy positions; accordingly, all views expressed herein should be understood to be solely those of the author(s)".

In going through the report it is important to bear in mind the following qualification by the Author David Throup: "The papers in this study are not meant to offer hard and fast predictions about the future. While they sketch out some potential scenario for the next ten years, these efforts should be treated as thought experiments that look at how different dynamics might converge to create the conditions for instability. The intention is not to single out countries believed to be at risk of impending disaster and make judgements about how they will collapse. Few, if any, of the countries in this series are at imminent risk of breakdown. All of them have coping mechanisms that militate against conflict".

Reinforcing on the qualification above David Throup notes that "Botswana is likely to remain stable at the national level in the coming decade". He further points out that the country has built a strong record of open political discourse and competition as well as prudent fiscal management, giving priority to the well-being of the citizenry, much as fostering an open, stable, and transparent investment environment making it one of the most economically competitive nations in Africa.

That notwithstanding, David Throup highlights the State's overdependence on diamonds as the "most serious problem facing the government and the country's greatest weakness – along with its greatest blessing". The challenges associated with dependence on diamonds are and have been well documented by government. It is stated as follows in NDP 10: "The more immediate problem, for NDP 10, is how to respond to the current economic crisis, which has negatively affected the Botswana economy and in particular the diamond mining and sales". For this reason, the strategic thrust of development policy in the NDP 10 plan period is accelerated diversification from diamond dependency towards increased private sector growth. Indeed during the last 3 years of NDP 9 there was an acceleration of growth in the non-mining sector

averaging 8%. The Government therefore seeks to capitalise on this growth and extend it far beyond.

In the 2010 State of the Nation Address, His Excellency the President Lieutenant General Seretse Khama Ian Khama pressed further the case for diversifying the economy: "To build a more equitable as well as diversified economy our drive for citizen empowerment must become synonymous with a shift towards increased wealth creation by the private sector, rather than carrying on with the unsustainable distribution of trickle down state benefits. This imperative is at the heart of the Botswana Excellence Strategy, which is our enabling framework for diversified growth". He further pointed out that in order to ensure delivery, the Strategy incorporates a range of actions and instruments to promote effective education and skills development, address bureaucratic inefficiencies, and improve work ethic, while reinforcing society's commitment to zero tolerance of corruption.

Delving on 'Trends to Watch: Power of the Presidency', David Throup holds that "Even more worrying is the passing in December of the Media Practitioners Act, which imposes stringent training and reporting standards on professional journalists and requires them to register through a government appointed Executive Press Council". It should here be stated that on this very issue David Throup has misrepresented the facts. This is disturbing if we consider that the organisation he represents should be the Centre of Excellence and hence expected to carry out their studies and present facts with precision lest they are accused of bias and acting on hearsay.

The fact is, nowhere in the Act are professional journalists expected to register with "a government appointed Executive Press Council. As per the Act, there shall be established the Media Council 'which 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'. The membership of the Council shall consist of all publishers of news and information, whether or not in the private or public sector and the governing body of the Council shall be the Executive Committee which shall consist of a chairperson, vice-chairperson, treasurer; and six additional members.

It is critically important to note at this point that the Executive Committee which as indicated earlier is the governing body of the Media Council shall be elected at an ordinary general meeting or a special general meeting of the Media Council. Ipso facto there is absolutely no government appointed Executive Press Council, as the Media Council is wholly independent from Government because it consists of publishers of news and information.

The major contention surrounding the Media Practitioners Act is with regards regulation whereas some in the media are of the belief that the Media Practitioners Act is about regulating the media as against their preferred self-regulation. UB Professor of Law, Tachilisa Balule, in one of the Academic Journals making reference to "Article 19, of the

Global Campaign for Freedom of Expression”, pointed out that self-regulation in the media is diverse. While its preferred option is a voluntary body, it recognises that in some cases, a statutory body may be the only realistic option.

He concluded by pointing out that “a statutory media council is not per se a violation of media freedom as contended by critics of the MPA. The critical question is whether the body is independent of the state. In the writer’s opinion, the mere fact that the Media Council is a creature of an Act of Parliament is not conclusive that its existence amounts to a violation of media freedom” thus clarifying and shedding light on the misconception that the Media Practitioners Act is a violation of media freedom. Another UB Media Academic guru, Letshwiti Tutwane also argued vehemently in favour of the Media Practitioners Act in an article penned in one of the local Newspapers.

In sum, one is compelled by the commanding and authoritative winding up by David Throup, when he attests that “Botswana is a true nation, endowed with a strong sense of pride in its achievements, rather than a state without any political legitimacy. By virtually any criteria, Botswana has been well ruled for the past 45 years. Democracy and open political debate are firmly entrenched and defended”.

C5) 3/8/11: BOTSWANA DONATIONS RECEIVED IN KENYA

On Monday, Botswana delivered 55 tons of food aid for Somalia refugees to the World Food Programme (WPA) in Kenya.

Upon its arrival in Nairobi the Botswana Defence Force (BDF) plane carrying foodstuffs and blankets, was met by Botswana's High Commissioner to Kenya, Mr. Charles Mogotsi, who formally handed over the goods in a ceremony, which was also attended by Kenya's Assistant Minister for Special Programmes, the Honourable Mohammad Ali.

In his remarks, High Commissioner Mogotsi emphasized that the current drought in the Horn of Africa was affecting neighbouring countries such as Kenya, as well as Somalia and southern Ethiopia.

For his part Kenyan Assistant Minister Ali expressed his gratitude upon receiving the goods, noting that the donation was a gesture of true friendship. The Assistant Minister reported that his country was being overwhelmed by the ongoing influx of tens of thousands of refugees from Somalia, further appreciating that Botswana's donation catered for the most basic needs of food and water.

The Aid Airlift is a product of joint effort by the Botswana Government and local business community.

Speaking to reporters in Gaborone before the plane's departure, Botswana's Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Honourable Phandu Skelemani, said

that the donations were organised in response to United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki Moon's recent appeal to the international community to avert a humanitarian crisis in Somalia. He further noted that Botswana was unable to send food aid directly to Somalia due to the continued instability in the country, which posed the risk of the food not actually reaching those in need.

The Minister, on behalf of the Government of Botswana, expressed his gratitude to local businesses who have contributed the following items of assistance to the airlift:

Botswana Meat Commission -	2100 cans of ECCO Corned Beef
Batho Botlhe Milling of Pitsane -	2000 12.5 KG bags of Maize Meal and 2000 5kg bags of Samp (maize product)
Botswana Agricultural Marketing Board -	2000 5 KG Bags of Beans
Trans Africa Cash & Carry -	1716 750ml bottles of Cooking Oil
Sunrise (Pty) Ltd. -	20,000 bottles of water
PUMA Botswana (Pty) Ltd. -	1500 blankets

He also reminded reporters that the aid airlift is not the first time Botswana has joined UN efforts to assist Somalia, noting that in 1992 BDF personnel were part of the UN Peace Keeping Mission in the country.

C6) 3/8/11: OP SUPPORTS CULTURAL FUNDRAISING EVENT FOR DISABLED PERSONS

Office of the President in collaboration with Kerala Samajam Botswana will on the 6th of August 2011 conduct a Cultural fundraising event for disabled persons. The event will be held at SSKB Auditorium from 18:30 hours. Twelve artists from India are expected to participate at the event. Also during the function, the High Commissioner of India Mr. Madhava Chandra will donate ten wheel chairs to Disabled individuals. Members of the media are invited to cover this event.

Should you require any additional information, do not hesitate to contact Office of the President: Coordinating Office for People with Disabilities on 3950887 or email ttmotingwa@gov.bw . Thank you.

D. ALSO IN THE NEWS:

NB: NEWS REPORTS, STATEMENTS AND/OR VIEWS REPRODUCED BELOW ARE FROM NON-GOVERNMENT SOURCES AND THUS ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF GOVERNMENT OF BOTSWANA.

D1) 1/8/11: MONETARY POLICY COMMITTEE DECISION STATEMENT

FYI - attached and below a statement just released by the Monetary Policy Committee of the Bank of Botswana, following the meeting of the MPC held in Gaborone today,

Monday, August 1, 2011. For more information contact - Andrew Onalenna Sesinyi, Head of Communications, Bank of Botswana

STATEMENT OF THE MONETARY POLICY COMMITTEE: AUGUST 1, 2011.

1. Introduction

1.1 At the meeting of August 1, 2011, the Bank's Monetary Policy Committee observed that the medium-term outlook for inflation continued to be positive. However, short-term price developments imply that inflation will continue to be above the 3 – 6 percent objective range due to a revised forecast for inflation in South Africa and higher food prices. As a result, inflation is forecast to converge to the medium term objective range in the second half of 2012.

2. Recent Economic Developments

2.1 The global economic recovery continues, albeit at a slower pace. The moderation in global economic expansion reflects the transitory impact of supply-chain disruptions following the natural disaster in Japan and higher commodity prices. Nevertheless, emerging market economies continue to grow at a rapid pace, with output exceeding pre-crisis level in many countries, thereby supporting the increase in commodity exports and global economic activity.

2.2 In general, policy focus is directed at increasing economic activity and employment rates, reducing budget deficits and debt to sustainable levels, and ensuring stability of the financial system. However, for emerging market economies, there are upward pressures on inflation which, in addition to the increase in international food and oil prices, contribute to a heightened threat of rising world inflation. As a result, the latest round of policy decisions have ranged from maintenance of low interest rates in some developed countries and tightening of monetary policy in emerging market economies.

2.3 Domestic inflation fell to 7.9 percent in June 2011, from 8.3 percent in May. The decrease in inflation was evident across several categories of goods and services, but was mostly due to the dissipation of the impact of the increase in fuel prices in June 2010.

2.4 The level of output in the twelve months to March 2011 is estimated to be 6.4 percent higher than in the same period in 2010, thus reflecting the 7.2 percent growth in mining output and the 6.1 percent increase for the non-mining sectors. Nevertheless, output is estimated to remain below trend and will, therefore, moderate demand pressures on inflation.

3. Economic Outlook and Assessment of Risks

3.1 It is projected that the recovery in the global economy will continue to be uneven across regions and countries and mostly be sustained by robust output expansion in emerging market economies and some developing countries. For advanced economies, high rates of unemployment will continue to undermine consumer and business confidence and constrain global economic activity. In addition, measures to consolidate the fiscal and public debt positions by some advanced economies, and the need to implement enhanced financial sector supervisory measures, have the potential to slow down global growth in the short term. Therefore, following an expansion of 3.9 percent in 2010, the world economy is projected to grow at a lower rate of 3 percent in 2011 and 3.6 percent in 2012. However, the increases in demand and uncertainty about the supply of commodities, especially food and oil, and robust growth in emerging market economies have generated upward momentum on global inflation. This is moderated by the prevailing low levels of capacity utilisation, high unemployment rates and generally well-anchored inflation expectations in advanced economies.

3.2 In South Africa, GDP is projected to grow by 3.7 percent and 3.9 percent in 2011 and 2012, respectively, after increasing by 2.8 percent in 2010. However, it is forecast that output will remain below potential, thus exerting minimal pressure on inflation. Upside risks to the inflation outlook in South Africa arise from any possible large increase in administered prices as well as higher food and oil prices. The South African Reserve Bank anticipates inflation to marginally breach the upper end of the inflation target of 3 - 6 percent in the last quarter of 2011.

3.3 For Botswana, it is expected that non-mining GDP will remain below trend in the medium term. Although exporting sectors will benefit from recovery in world demand, output in the domestic economy will be moderated due to lower growth in government spending, especially reduced development expenditure. Furthermore, it is anticipated that the impact of demand on economic activity will be subdued, and this would reflect the sluggish pace of growth in personal incomes and the increase in administered prices and other government levies. In the circumstances, the interest rate policy stance pursued since 2010 continues to be supportive of economic activity and will contribute to a narrowing of the output gap in the medium term.

3.4 Low demand and the forecast modest external inflationary pressures contribute to the positive inflation outlook in the medium term. In the short-term, however, inflation is expected to remain above the Bank's medium term objective range of 3 – 6 percent due to the impact of transient factors. These include the upward revision of the forecast for food prices going into 2012 and a higher inflation forecast for South Africa in the short-term. Given the foregoing, inflation is expected to converge to the medium term objective range of 3 – 6 percent in the second half of 2012. Upside risks to the inflation outlook include any unanticipated large increase in administered prices and government levies, as well as an increase in international oil and food prices beyond current forecasts.

4. Monetary Policy Stance

4.1 The current state of the economy and the assumptions on both the domestic and external economic outlook, as well as the inflation forecast, suggest that maintaining the prevailing level of interest rates is consistent with the achievement of the Bank's 3 – 6 percent inflation objective in the medium term. Accordingly, the Monetary Policy Committee decided to maintain the Bank Rate at 9.5 percent.

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 text format WITHOUT ANY ATTACHMENTS.