



**WELCOME ADDRESS BY EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN OF
BOTSWANA TELECOMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY
(BTA) MR. C. M. LEKAUKAU - ON OCCASION OF THE
OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE ITU-T STANDARDISATION
SEMINAR FOR SUB-SAHARAN COUNTRIES**

Hon. Bahiti Temane M.P. Maun-Chobe

ITU-T Director Mr. Houlin Zhao

Board of BTA

Local Dignitaries

Distinguished participants

Ladies and gentlemen

I am pleased to welcome you all to Botswana on behalf of the Government and the people of Botswana. Let me also welcome you all to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Standardisation Seminar for Sub-Saharan Countries. This is a historic event where both regulators

and operators meet to share ideas, and I hope that these kinds of events will be held on any other subjects in the telecommunications sector. There is a common goal for all of us as regulators and operators i.e. to provide communications at affordable prices to the public that we both serve. This calls for complementarity rather than confrontation between the regulator and the operator. It is indeed an honour for Botswana Telecommunications Authority to be afforded the opportunity to host this seminar and my team has pulled all stops to make the necessary arrangements for the success of the seminar but we would still apologise in advance for any shortcomings. I hope that you will not only find your accommodation in our hotels adequate but that you will also find the scenery and wildlife fascinating. You should explore for yourselves what makes Kasane one of the Botswana's best tourist attraction centre in the world.

When the ITU approached Botswana to host this seminar we accepted the challenge for two reasons. Firstly Botswana like most African countries still has a young and upcoming telecommunication industry. As such we are always keen to absorb all there is to learn so that we can avoid the pitfalls that those who started before us might have fallen into. Secondly as an emerging market in the global arena, telecommunication investors and suppliers from all corners of the world target Botswana as a possible future investment destination and as such standardisation is much an issue for us as universal access is. We are still grappling with the type approval and merely approving other authorities' certifications because we have not yet established infrastructure for prescribing our standards. Lastly of course, Botswana traditionally like visitors because they help us grow day by day by bringing us what we might not have known for "no man is an island".

Let me thank the ITU again for entrusting Botswana, in particular BTA with the responsibility of hosting this workshop. The ITU Regional Office is worth acknowledging for a commendable job they did preparing for the seminar in conjunction with BTA. We are indeed humbled by the confidence the ITU has on us.

I welcome you again and wish you all a fruitful seminar and an enjoyable stay in Botswana.

PULA! PULA!