

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY HON. BAHITI K. TEMANE M. P.  
FOR MAUN/CHOBE AND DEPUTY SPEAKER OF THE  
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON OCCASION OF THE  
OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE ITU-T STANDARDISATION  
SEMINAR FOR SUB-SAHARAN COUNTRIES**

BTA Executive Chairman – Mr. C. M. Lekaukau

ITU-T Director Mr. Houlin Zhao

Local dignitaries in your respective capacities

TRASA Members

SATA Members

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

On behalf of the Government and the people of Botswana, I am pleased to have been invited to officiate at this historic workshop on telecommunications standardisation. Naturally, as an outsider in the telecommunication sector, when I was invited to come and officiate at this occasion I was hesitant at first. I was hesitant because I knew that I was required to come and address telecommunications experts, and I knew I have no expertise in this field. However, on second thought I knew that this was an opportunity for me to learn and so I took it. Here at home it is ironic that I have to officiate at the commencement this seminar for I am known to have previously demanded full justification why government should place emphasis on access to Internet and website when people in the rural areas still lack basic services including telecommunications services.

Master of Ceremonies this seminar is about standardisation and with a bit of research I have learnt that in this era of

globalisation, standardisation of telecommunications equipment and services is more relevant than ever before for a number of reasons.

Paramount among these reasons is the need to **reduce variety** of physical components of telecommunications equipment for commercial reasons. Obviously deployment of different components does not add any commercial value.

**Harmonisation** of new telecommunication networks with old networks to allow for exchange of telecommunication traffic is another reason why standardisation is required in telecommunication. I appreciate and accept that standardisation is necessary in today's competitive environment for **intelligence** purposes where it allows users to access general directions in technology development and similarly allows them to access their own evolving technology and commercial strategies in comparison to their competitors and customers. The other reason for

standardisation include **market positioning** where companies increasingly realise the need to link their marketing and research & development strategies to standardisation for the introduction of new product lines and services. In layman terms I understand standardisation to be a way of making it possible for anyone to successfully phone anyplace in the world from any telecommunication equipment and go through with no problem whatsoever.

Ladies and gentlemen, given the above reasons, it is quite commendable the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) through its Telecommunications Standardisation sector (ITU) is holding such seminars as this one to try and address standardisation in the telecommunication industry. I am informed that the ITU, is among the front-runners in a bid to harmonise telecommunication standards. As the ITU-T's mission statement aptly states, its objective is to ensure

efficient and on time production of high quality standards covering all fields of telecommunications.

Lessons learnt from the past teach us that without harmonisation of standards in industries, such as telecommunications, which are key to economic development, globalisation will remain but a dream. ITU-T is instrumental in a bid to bring that dream to fruition. I can only urge the ITU-T to keep up this good work.

We in Africa (especially lay persons), often wonder why there is no manufacturing base for telecommunications equipment in Africa. I believe standards are a starting point in trying to realise this noble objective/ideal.

I am humbled by the ITU's decision to hold this seminar in Africa and in particular in Botswana for the reason that Africa is one continent that still has a lot to do in order to enjoy the

benefits of the information technology. I am pleased to note that Sub-Saharan countries which are targeted by this seminar have actually attended in significant numbers. I hope that this will not be the last seminar of its kind but only the beginning of a lot more others.

To you participants, I trust that you will make this an eye-opener and utilise whatever knowledge you acquire from this seminar for the good of our continent. I wish you all an enjoyable stay in Botswana and fruitful deliberations during the seminar. With those remarks, I declare the ITU-T Standardisation Seminar for Sub-Saharan Countries official launched.

I also invite you to stay on for a few days thereafter in order to view the exceptional tourist horn of Botswana here in Kasane. This is where you see the water and various

species of flora and fauna - a beautiful scenery which Mr. Lekaukau alluded to.

I thank you