

**VOTE OF THANKS BY MR. C. M. LEKAUKAU, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE BOTSWANA TELECOMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY (BTA) ON THE OCCASION OF THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS OF THE BOTSWANA TELECOMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY (BTA) - GABORONE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE (GICC) – 14 DECEMBER 2006.**

**Honourable Minister of Communications, Science and Technology**

**His Lordship the Chief Justice and Mrs. Nganunu**

**Former President**

**Honourable Ministers Present**

**Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps & Foreign Missions**

**Secretary General- elect, ITU, Mr Hamadoun Toure,**

**Members of Parliament**

**Members of House of Chiefs**

**Members of BTA Board, National Broadcasting Board and other Boards**

**Visiting Heads of Regulatory Authorities**

**Distinguished Guests**

We at the BTA are humbled to host of this momentous occasion on behalf of the people of Botswana. I have been particularly moved by all the positive comments which have been made about BTA by all the dignitaries to who spoke before me during this occasion and I thank them for that.

Over the years we have toiled to bring about improvements so that not only the urban few but the rest of the country can enjoy the better telecommunications services. As such, we are proud of our choice of the theme 'Harvesting the fruits of hard labour' "Go roba maungo a mohuhutso wa phatla" to mark our celebrations. As the Good Lord has said we should work as hard as we can but remember to take some rest, today we have decided to take some well deserved rest and reflect on the passage of time since we were established.

My assignment here tonight is to thank you for making your precious time to come and celebrate with the BTA its 10 years of existence. I thank your Lordship the Chief Justice Mr. Nganunu and the Former President – Sir Ketumile Masire for gracing our occasion and all of you in your distinguished and respective capacities. The Former President started it all off when he

seconded me to the Ministry responsible for Communications to establish this Authority. My sincere appreciation goes to our Guest of Honour Mr. Hamadoun Touré, the ITU Secretary General Elect and currently the Director of the ITU Development Bureau (BDT) whom I have known since 1998 Minneapolis USA, for having found time despite his heavy schedule to come and share in our joy and in particular that he has emerged from a gruelling campaign over a few years though in the end it paid dividends and was elected. In addition, Mr. Touré has just come from a three weeks' Plenipotentiary Conference in Turkey and a week's long World Telecom 2006 held in Hong Kong, China. It is encouraging that even after all these commitments he could still find time to visit Botswana. This is indeed a testimony to the good relationship that we have had with ITU and his Bureau which is responsible for telecommunications development. For us Regulators, his capable Regulatory Forum Unit manned by ladies only has been immense assistance to our development through, inter alia, the Annual Gen.

In the same breath, I wish to express our gratitude to thank all our friends who traversed long distances from Africa and abroad to be with us this evening. Here I want to acknowledge the presence of representatives from regulatory bodies in the SADC region who

are members of the Communications Regulatory Association of Southern Africa (CRASA); a strong contingent of board members from the Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK) and those from other countries that I may have missed. Your presence today gives us reassurance of your continued support and well wishes.

We also have former regulators here with us, Mr. Emanuel Ole Kambainei from Tanzania who was the first Regulator in Africa Mr. Nape Maepa who was the first Chairman of SATRA, the predecessor to ICASA in South Africa and Mrs. Julia Hope who just retired from our counterpart ICASA about two years ago. Let us continue networking colleagues. I am joining your ranks of the unemployed.

Coming back home, allow me to thank all of you beginning with the Government of Botswana represented by our Minister of Communications, Science and Technology Mrs Pelonomi Venson-Moitoi. I am sure that good relationship that you have had with the BTA will continue for years to come and I am comforted by the Hon. Minister's statement in the commemorative brochure that will be released soon to the effect that "the partnership between my Ministry and the BTA is a bond that needs to be nurtured to take

Botswana to greater heights.” Similarly, I want to thank the entire ICT industry for the support it has given BTA. We have enjoyed cordial relations with industry for the last ten years. We started together and have grown together during which time we earned Botswana a place in the global ICT arena as one of the best regulatory practice models. I have always portrayed this cordial relationship to the world at large in my speeches outside the country and let us continue to have one vision which is to provide Botswana with good quality of service communications at affordable prices.

I have decided to retire at the end of this month after starting BTA from scratch in December 1996. My belief is that one has to leave when most people are still singing praise songs about him/her and not to wait to be pushed out. My tenure at BTA has been a rewarding experience and I would like to thank the nation and the Government for giving me an opportunity to serve the country for 33 years and 8 months in the government and at BTA. I had a dedicated team of professionals to work with. The Board, Management and Staff have been excellent. One could not have wished for a better team. During the time, we have lost only five members of staff, two of whom are now very successful consultants

in the ICT field – thanks to our training. Such a low turnover must indicate that perhaps BTA is a good employer.

I thank my darling wife who has supported me all these years – she is the only one who knows what I have had to go through all these years – Ke a leboga Kwena yame. I am also grateful to my children and other member of my family as well as my friends. Some of them have travelled from Hukuntsi and Ncojane to be here with us today. Most importantly and above everyone, I thank the Lord who gave me all the wherewithal to perform satisfactorily. It was not a smooth sailing but I normally treat problems as challenges which have to be faced and resolved. I find my solace in the St Vincent de Paul Society prayer “Help us to bear our crosses and trials with courage and patience” It is indeed a powerful prayer

As I finally hang up my boots partly, I once again wish to reassure you of my continued support and participation in this industry that I have come to love so much. Where I can be of assistance, you can always count on me to back you up. I am retiring but not **TIRED**.

Merry Christmas and a prosperous future and have safe journeys back to your respective countries and indeed to your homes. Enjoy the sumptuous cuisine that we have selected for you and join us in our joyous moment.

Pula!

Pula!

Pula!