



REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

SPEECH

BY

THE MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

HONOURABLE D N MOROKA

AT THE OFFICIAL VISIT

**TO THE BOTSWANA BUREAU OF STANDARDS
HEADQUARTERS**

THURSDAY 22ND FEBRUARY 2007



Director of Ceremonies;
Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Patrick Balopi;
Honourable Cabinet Ministers;
Deputy Speaker Hon. Gladys Kokorwe;
Honourable Members of Parliament;
BOBS Standards Council, Vice Chairperson and Members of the
Council here present;
Chairperson of the Small Business Council and Members of the
Council here present;
Members of the Media;
Distinguished Guests;
Ladies and Gentlemen;

- 1. Good Morning! It is my pleasure to introduce the Botswana Bureau of Standards (BOBS) and the Small Business Council (SBC) to you this morning. I will first give you a brief on BOBS and later talk about SBC. The Botswana Bureau of Standards was established by the Standards Act of 1995, as a strategy for improving the quality of goods and services produced in Botswana and their competitiveness in regional and international markets as well as protection of consumers. BOBS became operational as a parastatal organization in 1997.**

- 2. The mandate of BOBS is to establish national standards, provide facilities for testing and calibration of measuring instruments and for the examination and testing of commodities as well as to support health, safety, and protection of the environmental framework of standardization and quality assurance.**

- 3. In 2002, the then Weights and Measures Division in the then Ministry of Commerce and Industry was transferred to BOBS and is now operating as the Trade Metrology Unit under the Directorate of Regulatory Compliance. As you may be aware, the Weights and Measures Act was repealed and re – acted in 2006. This Act provides for the enforcement, through verification of length measuring devices, weight determining instruments, as well as fuel pump and bulk meters used in trade.**

- 4. I am delighted to inform you, Honourable Members, that BOBS became a full member of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) in 1999 and is Botswana’s Enquiry Point to the World Trade Organization’s Technical Barriers to Trade Agreement. BOBS is also an active member of the SADC Standardization, Quality Assurance, Accreditation and Metrology (SQAM) Programme, which is a critical component of the facilitation of the implementation of the SADC Trade Protocol. BOBS has to – date developed over 450 standards that add value to the**

quality of locally produced goods and services. Of these, seven (7) are compulsory because they deal with health, safety and environmental issues.

5. **BOBS attained certification of its Quality Management System in 2003 and has continued to maintain this certificate. Since it started implementing its Quality Management System Certification Scheme in 2001, BOBS has certified 28 organizations for compliance with the ISO 9001:2000 standard on Quality Management Systems. In addition, BOBS has issued 18 standards mark licenses for compliance with product standards.**

6. **In 2004, BOBS, in conjunction with the Centre for the Development of Enterprise (CDE) and Botswana Export Development and Investment Promotion Authority (BEDIA), launched a programme for developing Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The programme is part of its ongoing effort to promote the adoption and use of product standardization and quality assurance. The programme is aimed at assisting SMEs manufacturers and service providers to improve the quality of their products and also meet the quality requirement stipulated in the Presidential Directive on the Use of Locally Manufactured Goods and Services. This directive requires procurement entities of government, Local Authorities and Parastatals to purchase locally**

produced goods and services if they are available in the required quantities, meet quality standards certified by BOBS or other similar organizations recognized by BOBS.

- 7. I, therefore, wish to take this opportunity to appeal to you, Honourable Members to encourage local manufacturers and service providers to come forward in large numbers and take full advantage of the product quality certification services BOBS offers. It is in the best interest of our companies to adopt and apply acceptable product quality standards. In this regard, BOBS' Product Certification Scheme and the Standards Mark can be used to assure all concerned that indeed the said products meet the set standards. To consumers, as we all are, I implore you to demand good quality products and services from your suppliers. BOBS is there to specifically assist businesses to meet your demands, enhance trade and contribute to the sustainable economic development of Botswana.**

- 8. Regarding the Small Business Council (SBC), it was established by the Small Business Act of 2003 and serves as an advisory body on matters pertaining to the development of the Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) sector. SBC commenced operations in August, 2004.**

- 9. The core business of SBC is to assess the environment in which small enterprises operate and advise the Minister as appropriate, monitor the growth of the SMME sector and play an advocacy role in the removal of impediments to the sustainable development and growth of SMMEs.**

- 10. In conclusion, I also wish to appeal to you, Honourable Members, to encourage small business owners, countrywide to fully utilize the services SBC provides and to also urge other Government and Local Authorities structures to continuously review their policy and regulatory frameworks with a view to making them more small business friendly.**

- 11. I thank you for your attention.**

- 12. PULA!**