



SPEECH BY

BOBS MD
MR. C.D.R. JAYAWARDENE

AT THE
LAUNCH OF THE

BOTSWANA BUREAU OF STANDARDS
WEBSITE

www.bobstandards.bw

THURSDAY 13TH OCTOBER 2005

BOBS HEAD OFFICE

WELCOME REMARKS – MD BOBS

Director of Ceremonies

Mrs Molosiwa - Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Trade and Industry,

Member of the Diplomatic Core here present,

Chairperson and Members of the Standards Council,

Chairpersons of Technical Committees of BOBS,

Senior Government Officials and Heads of Parastatals here present,

Representative of Media Institutions,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is my pleasure and privilege to welcome you to this special event that has been organized to coincide with the World Standards Day activities for 2005. Website Launch, Media Conferences, Technical seminars and the Exhibition of Certified Products, are some of the activities that we have planned and executed during this week to take the message of Standardization to length and breadth of Botswana, more importantly to the stakeholders of BOBS.

A complaint very often made by our stakeholders is that BOBS is not known beyond the city of Gaborone. There is some truth in that statement, because the type of product or service that we try to market has no immediate impact on the life of the Community, like water and electricity or Food and Beverages. Our products have Medium to Long Term benefits to its stakeholders and to the country at large. However the products are important for improvement of Quality of life of people and for diversification of economy and for sustainable development. Marketing such a Product is costly and time consuming. Launching of the Website will to some extent facilitate the flow of information from BOBS to stakeholders who are based in every part of the country, who need latest information on activities of BOBS.

Director of Ceremonies, our systems Administer will later demonstrate how the Website can be used by stakeholders from different parts of the country for their benefit.

The Website development was undertaken by BOBS in December 2004, with financial and technical assistance provided by International Standards Organization (ISO). (ISO) has a Programme for development of capacities in developing countries, for National Standards activities, under this programme ISO sent 2 experts to Botswana in December 2004, to train our staff and provided both software and hardware worth Pula P20 000 to BOBS. I wish to acknowledge with thanks the Assistance provided by ISO to BOBS to make the Website a reality in a very short time. The software provided by ISO is designed to get the Maximum Benefits both at National and International levels. It is Tailor made by ISO for National Standards Bodies, for Development of standardization activities.

Director of Ceremonies

Dissemination of information alone will not create an Impact on the BOBS activities. It is only a means to an End. BOBS mandate will only be realized when stakeholders recognize the Importance of Standardization and Quality Assurance in their day to day programmes, and invest time and money to reap the benefits from BOBS programmes. The general trend observed in developing countries is for their governments to take the lead in the implementation of National Standards, both in the government procurement programme, and in the Protection of Consumers in the country, the regulatory bodies of Botswana should recognize the national standards published by BOBS, by Reference to standards in their regulations, when this happens the Business Community will recognize the Importance of BOBS and they will be the first to knock at BOBS doors, a win-win situation to all.

The Standards Movement is over 100 years old, the 1st National Standards institution was set up in Britain in the year 1901. Since then over 150 National Standards Bodies have comp up. Most developing countries including Botswana established their standards bodies after 1990s. What is special about 1990s is the signing of the Technical Barriers to Trade Agreement by its WTO members. As at July 2005 153 standardizing bodies from 110 countries including Botswana have accepted the good code of practice for the Preparation, Adoption and Implementation of standards. According to the code each WTO member should as far as possible Adopt-International Standards to minimize Technical Barriers to Trade. I am happy to inform you that BOBS has adopted 140

ISO standards as Botswana standards so far. The code also requires each member body to be transparent in their standardization activities towards others.

The Website that we launch today will also be useful to WTO member countries, as they would be able to get the latest information on Botswana standards, for the purpose of trading with Botswana and to fulfil the transparency requirements of the code.

Director of Ceremonies, Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me conclude my welcome remarks by wishing you an enjoyable, and a memorable evening.

I thank you for your kind attention.