



BOTSWANA BUREAU OF STANDARDS

SPEECH BY

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**World Standards Day Message
14 October 2007**

Theme: Standards and the Citizen - Contributing to Society

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Bagaetsho, Botswana joins other members of the International Organisation for Standardization (ISO), the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEU) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), in celebrating the World Standards Day which is celebrated on the 14th of October every year. The message for this year focuses on the theme “Standards and the Citizen - Contributing to Society”

To better understand how standards contribute to the citizen one has to consider and appreciate that the Global Village, which Botswana is a part of, brings with it a need for Governments to appreciate the rights and obligations of its citizens. These include rights to safety, security, health, and access to information. Such obligations include protecting the environment and respecting the safety, property, and privacy of others. Standards set the minimum specifications and requirements for products and services, and therefore provide the framework upon which the desired quality and safety of products and services can be based. Standards therefore assist the citizen to exercise its rights and recognise its obligations by providing consumers with information related to goods and services procured, and accessed by the citizenry.

Being part of the global village, the Government of Botswana is a signatory to trade agreements which implies that our goods and services are subject to International Standards, as such our ability to defining requirements or giving guidance in the form of standards contribute in enabling our products and services to readily be accepted in the international markets.

Bagaetsho, you will appreciate that a world without standards would be a difficult one to function as they affect all facets of our lives, for example, our railway wagons would not be polled through different countries to deliver our goods and services. Butchers would not provide the same kilogram of meat to their customers if the unit of measure is not defined through a standard. Our ability to communicate through electronic media would not be possible if different countries operated to different standards. The society to a large extent would suffer from incompatible systems which would render economic development and growth close to impossible.

Standards therefore play a key role in ensuring that the global village is both functional and accessible. Therefore the citizen benefits from ease of access of goods and services in pursuit economic growth and wellbeing.

The work that the Botswana Bureau of Standards does in its association with ISO, IEC, and ITU in contributing to the development of international standards serve not only to open up markets, but also brings environmental protection, safety, security, health and access to information and knowledge to the citizen. Increasingly international standards are helping to break down the barriers to trade between the rich and poor nations thereby contributing in the uplifting the economic standing of the citizenry.

As we move into the future, the work of the Botswana Bureau of Standards in its association with ISO, IEC, and ITU will continue to facilitate the development of new technologies which should propel our economy thereby contributing to the well being of all Batswana.

This year marks ten years of Botswana Bureau of Standards in operation. It is pleasing to note that over 27 companies/organizations have been certified by BOBS for compliance to BOS ISO 9001:2000, a quality management systems standard that if implemented by organisations and businesses would go along way to contributing to their productivity and output. Over 20 product certification licenses for compliance with Botswana Standards have been awarded to locally based and foreign-based companies. BOBS has developed over 500 standards covering a wide range of products and services.

As Botswana once more celebrates the World Standards Day, I challenge all businesses, small, medium and large to take advantage of Botswana Bureau of Standards and utilise services it provides in order to improve the quality of goods and services produced and to ensure increased market access to the international market. The benefit of this will mean increased employment and therefore improved livelihoods of the citizenry.

let us all have a fruitful world standards day.

PULA! PULA! PULA!