

# REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY HIFIKEPUNYE  
POHAMBA, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
NAMIBIA, ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL  
TALKS DURING THE STATE VISIT BY HIS  
EXCELLENCY LIEUTENANT GENERAL  
SERETSE KHAMA IAN KHAMA,  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA**

**25 JUNE 2012**

**WINDHOEK**

*\*Check Against Delivery*

Your Excellency Lieutenant General Seretse Khama Ian Khama, President of the Republic of Botswana,  
Honourable Ministers,  
Your Excellencies, High Commissioners,  
Senior Government Officials,  
Members of the Media,  
Ladies and Gentleman,

It is my pleasure to welcome you, Your Excellency and your delegation to these Official Talks. This occasion provides a welcome platform for our two countries to exchange views on issues of mutual interests in the fields of both bilateral co-operation and regional integration.

As good neighbours, it is vital for our countries to engage in regular dialogue aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of policies that we pursue to develop our countries and improve the living conditions of our people. Your current State Visit provides another opportunity for such interactions and for our two delegations to review the progress made in different areas of bilateral co-operation between Botswana and Namibia.

More specifically, issues related to co-operation in the sectors of infrastructure development, telecommunications, aviation, tourism, trade and regional integration will enjoy our attention over the next three days of your presence in our country. The development of physical infrastructure is vital to the development of our countries and the economic integration of the SADC Region. In this light, Namibia commends the active involvement of the Republic of Botswana in the implementation of important projects such as the TransKalahari Railway Line, the West Africa Cable System, and the TransCaprivi Highway, among others. These projects hold immense potential to boost economic growth and industrialization, not only in our two countries, but also in the wider SADC Region.

In the field of civil aviation, we welcome the landmark commencement of direct flights by Air Namibia between Windhoek and Gaborone. This service will indeed go a long way to promote trade and commerce between our two countries and bring our two peoples more and more closer.

The ongoing co-operation between our two countries, in the field of animal health has enabled Namibia to combat the outbreaks of lung sickness and the foot-and-mouth disease. We look forward to expand co-operation in this sector, including the combating of veld to fires, which destroy grazing areas.

The promotion of a sustainable tourism industry should continue to be part of our common strategy to boost economic growth and address the challenges of unemployment and poverty.

I believe that in order to have the desired impact, tourism initiatives such as the Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA) should also enable local communities, especially those located in close proximity to the Conservation Area, to benefit from the utilization of natural resources.

We welcome the commitment of the partner states of the Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area to assist in the operationalization of this project. We also welcome the envisaged signing of a Search and Rescue Agreement by partner states in the near future.

Your Excellency,

Currently, one of the concerns occupying the attention of our Governments, is the impact of the global economic crisis, on our national economies and on our region as a whole. In order to build adaptive capacities and to successfully mitigate the impact of the global economic crisis on our economies, it is important for our countries and our region to identify strategic economic sectors that have the potential for faster growth and the resilience to help us, weather the storm.

The envisaged relocation of De Beers Diamond Trading Company from London to Gaborone is a step in the right direction, which will bring more value addition activities, development of skills and transfer of technologies to southern Africa. A number of diamond polishing factories have been established in Namibia. We, therefore, look forward to working closely with the Republic of Botswana to expand and strengthen value addition to diamonds in our two countries.

Your Excellency,

Our Government will continue to work with the Republic of Botswana to facilitate the repatriation of Namibian refugees from the Dukwe Refugee Camp. We are grateful to the people and government of Botswana and to the Gaborone Office of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees for providing the needed care and facilities to these Namibian citizens.

I take this opportunity to wish the two delegations to the Official Talks, fruitful deliberations.

I thank you.