



14th World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Symposium (Gaborone, 2016)

Speeches

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Remarks by Mr Thari G. Pheko, Chief Executive, Botswana Communications Regulatory Authority (BOCRA) During the opening of the World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Symposium (WTIS 2016)

21 November 2016, Gaborone, Botswana

Your Honour, the Vice President of Botswana, Mr Mokgweetsi E. K Masisi
Honourable Ministers here present
ITU Director of Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT) Mr Brahima Sanaou
ITU Chief of Projects and Knowledge Management Dr Cosmas Zavazava
ITU Regional Director for Africa Mr Andrew Rugege
Members of Parliament here present
Your Excellency Mayor of Gaborone
Senior Government Officials here present
Distinguished Delegates
Members of the Media
Ladies and Gentlemen

Good afternoon to you all and welcome. It is a great pleasure and an honour to receive you colleagues and friends from the global ITU family here in Gaborone. Last week we met in Thailand in our collective effort to better leverage the power of ICTs to benefit humanity. We meet again today to interrogate and agree what to measure, how best to measure it in order to properly our ICT policies and regulations.

Botswana has made a steady process in terms of its communications sector development, particularly mobile penetration that has surpassed 170% mark. While this achievement is worth noting, we are acutely aware that we remain way down the world packing order of those countries that are role models in ICT development. We therefore continue to welcome opportunities such as this one that allow us to exchange notes and benefit from the success stories of others.

The International Telecommunication Union's (ITU) Measuring Information Society Global ICT Development Index is extremely helpful in providing us with a yardstick for measuring where we stand as a country relative to the world. The Index inspired us as Botswana Communications Regulatory Authority (BOCRA) to aim high in order to stake our claim in global ICT village.

When developing our Strategic Plan for period 2014-19 we espoused the desire to grow Botswana's ICT Access to 6 points and Usage to 3 points by the year 2019. When the strategy was developed in 2014, Botswana was ranked 3 in terms of Access and 1 in terms of Usage. Therefore a target of 6:3 for Access and Usage respectively was considered a stretch target or in strategy development nomenclature, a Big Hairy Audacious Goal (BHAG). During the Mid-term review of the Strategy this year, we were motivated to move the target higher to 7 for Access and 5 for Usage. This Symposium therefore holds answers to how the implementation of our Strategy is going to look like going forward.

In September 2015, as a country we began the implementation of a new and converged ICT licensing framework designed to create a more conducive environment for ICT development. The framework is intended to meet demand for real-time high quality affordable services, accommodate emerging players for increased market competition and enhance value proposition for consumers.

We will be happy to share with the Symposium the successes and challenges we meet in our journey to become part of the information society envisaged by the United Nations when it called for the hosting of the World Summit on the Information Society back in 2003.

I thank for your attention and look forward to engaging more over the next three days.

Pula.

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Opening Speech by Brahima Sanou, Director, ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau Opening Ceremony at WTIS 2016

21 November 2016, Gaborone, Botswana

Your Excellency, Mr Mokgweetsi E. K. Masisi, Vice President of the Republic of Botswana
DR. Omponye Coach representing Mr Onkokame Kitso Mokaila, Minister of Transport and Communications,
Honourable Ministers and Deputy Ministers here presents,
Mr Thari G. Pheko, Chief Executive, Botswana Communications Regulatory Authority, and Chair of WTIS-16,
Mr. Abdoukarim Sumaila, Secretary General of ATU
Director-Generals,
Representatives of ITU-D Sector Members
Distinguished guests, Ladies and gentlemen,

First of all I would like to convey to all of you the sincere apologies of Mr. Houlin Zhao, the Secretary General of ITU, who had planned to be us today but could not make it at the last moment for reasons beyond his control. On his behalf, on behalf of my other colleagues Elected Officials and on my own behalf I would like to welcome you to the World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Symposium (WTIS-16).

On behalf of all of us I would like express our deepest gratitude to the Government and the people of Botswana for hosting WTIS-16, for their legendary hospitality extended to all of us and for the excellent facilities put at our disposal.

It is not surprising for those of us who have been in Botswana before. Their sense of care and hospitality actually is reflected in one of Botswana's sayings, which is *"Do not look where the harvest is plentiful, but where the people are kind"*.

On 30th of September this year, Botswana celebrated its 50 years of independence. For those of us here who are coming from countries that have centuries of independence, 50 years may not mean a lot. But let us remember that Abraham Lincoln once said: *"In the end it is not the years in your life that count. It is the life in your years"*.

Botswana has put a lot of life in its 50 years of independence that allowed the country to graduate from being a Least Developed Country on 19 December 1994. Botswana was the first country in sub Saharan Africa to establish an independent regulatory authority.

Congratulations to you for your 50th anniversary of independence!!!

Distinguished participants Ladies and Gentlemen,

The WTIS has become a very influential forum. Our work is not limited to indicators on telecommunication networks, and ICT access and use.

Our work is highly relevant outside the ICT community, as ICTs are helping accelerate the attainment of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and their 169 targets.

While every year, every month, every week and every day, we are making progress, there are still over half of the world's population that is not using the Internet.

Our Ministerial Roundtable will discuss means of connecting 'the bottom of the pyramid' of our communities. I would to thank the ministers who have joined us today to share their views.

Tomorrow morning, we will launch the **Measuring the Information Society Report 2016**. The report has become one of the most authoritative sources for ICT data and for monitoring the development of the information society.

This year's report takes a look at the ICT indicators that will help track progress toward the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We will also announce the results of the latest ICT Development Index, the IDI. The IDI is a benchmarking tool that aims to assist you in evaluating achievements in your country.

Through the IDI, we can learn from one another, share and adopt best practices to boost the development of ICTs in our respective countries.

Last year, I commissioned an independent assessment of the IDI. The conclusion of this independent assessment was very bold on the soundness of the IDI methodology and indicators.

However, as technologies advance and more data become available, we continuously work to improve the IDI indicators and I pleased to announce that we have set up a special IDI working group to review the indicators included in the index.

During WTIS-16 we will also present the updates of the Expert Group on Household and the Expert Group Telecommunication and ICT Indicators that last met in September of this year, in Geneva.

These two groups are incredibly important to our work since they deliver the technical expertise on how to capture technological advances through new definitions and methodologies.

These groups combine the experience and perspective from the public and the private sector and provide an excellent opportunity for knowledge sharing and exchange.

I also look forward to the discussions on digital literacy, 5G and other emerging topics. We will also discuss ICT indicators to monitor disaster risk reduction. This is an area where ITU is playing a critical role in taking advantage of the opportunities of ICTs to save lives.

As in the last year, we are dedicating a session on the topic of big data, where ITU has developed a number of concrete projects.

This includes 'big data for monitoring the information society' project to overcome important data gaps. Several pilot studies are currently being carried out and countries will discuss the possibilities of using big data to provide new insights into key development issues.

Honourable Ministers, Directors generals

Although we have made great achievements in strengthening national and regional cooperation, and improving the quality and quantity of ICT statistics, we must continue to review challenges, and stay abreast of technological developments.

I take this opportunity to thank all the Member States, International Organizations, industry, and experts that support the work of ITU in the area of statistics.

We are all here today because we all agree with Lord Kelvin when he said that: *"If you cannot measure it, you cannot improve it."*

Let us use our good work and WTIS to track ICTs for sustainable development.

I thank you.

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Speech by Hon Onkakame Mokaila , Botswana Minister of Transport and Communications During the opening of the World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Symposium (WTIS 2016)

21 November 2016, Gaborone, Botswana

Your Honour, the Vice President of Botswana, Mr Mokgweetsi E. K Masisi

Ministers here present

Director, BDT (ITU)

Regional Director - ITU

Members of Parliament here present

Your Excellency Mayor of Gaborone

Senior Government Officials here present

Distinguished Delegates

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

...Good afternoon to you all!!!

It is an honour as well as distinct pleasure for me to be here this morning to welcome you all to this very special occasion, the 14th International Telecommunication Union World Telecommunication/ICT Indicator Symposium, in Gaborone, Botswana.

The Government and people of Botswana are indeed humbled by your presence in the City of Gaborone. There can never be a better time to welcome visitors to Botswana than this time of the year which marks our rainy season. This year in particular, is a special year in the history of Botswana as it marks the 50th Anniversary of our independence.

I must, from the onset, commend the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) for organizing this symposium which focuses on measuring the development and most importantly the impact of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) on our daily lives.

I am reliably informed that Botswana is the third country in Africa that has hosted this Symposium. Other countries being Mauritius and Egypt.

The Government of Botswana, remains committed to the collective implementation of the ITU's programme of action on ICTs and the development of ICT services. Measurement is key to determine whether you are achieving your goals or not.

Your Honour, the Vice President of the Republic of Botswana, Distinguished Delegates; there is broad consensus on the impact of ICT on our society in general and the continued development on this area has significantly impacted our lives.

The correlation between ICTs and development has been extensively studied and it is widely acknowledged that a positive association exists between both variables. As a result investment in ICTs is considered as an important dimension in our economic development.

The relationship between ICTs and development took an important dimension following the adoption of the United Nations 'Millennium Development Goals' (MDGs), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). It became visibly clear that successful economies are leveraging ICTs in all

sectors for development.

Botswana has made huge strides in using ICT in its development agenda. This is largely due to its massive investment in infrastructure, information systems and human capacity because we view that investment in ICT is not a luxury but a development imperative.

We are however alive to the fact that we still have a long way to go to attain our rightful status as an information society. However, significant inroads are being made to fully exploit ICTs in financial services, health, tourism, social and government services.

Director of Ceremonies, let me also hasten to say that our other challenge has been to measure the impact of ICT contribution to Gross Development Programme (GDP) as a sector. I am hopeful that this Symposium will provide a platform to define proper indicators for monitoring ICT impact to our GDP and the sustainable development goals.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I have noticed that the programme for this event is fully packed but exciting. It therefore call on our dedication and commitment as we interrogate the issues before us such that we come up with sound resolutions.

Once again, let me welcome you all to the Symposium and I wish you to feel home away from home. In our culture when visitors come in large numbers like you are here today, it can only bring us blessing and more rain. I urge all our visitors to take this opportunity to see visit our pristine environs, enjoy our hospitality and a sample of our culture.

I thank you.

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