



REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS

BY

HIS EXCELLENCY DR MOKGWEETSI E. K. MASISI

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

TO THE FIRST MEETING

OF THE FIRST SESSION

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GABORONE

INTRODUCTION

Mister Speaker, before I address this August House, I would like to request that we observe a moment of silence in remembrance of former Members of Parliament who have departed during the course of the year. Amen. I would like to thank Batswana for demonstrating a sense of political maturity and tolerance during the just ended general elections which were characterised by respect for one another, peace and transparency.

Honourable Members, this being the first time that I report on our progress in the last twelve months immediately after our general elections, it is critical for me to present my Government's achievements and priorities as we chart the way forward in terms of responding to the needs of Batswana.

Mister Speaker, during my Inauguration Speech on 1st November 2019, I made a number of policy pronouncements which are part of my development roadmap which seeks to propel this country to greater heights, chief amongst them being the National Transformation Strategy which is the blueprint for my Government's Development Agenda.

Our current National Development Plan 11 (2017– 2023) is being reviewed and it is an opportune time for us to accommodate current issues and trends that will address the many challenges that we continue to face as a developing country. It is my fervent hope that Honourable Members will work with my Government to ensure that we achieve our development objectives whose aim is to improve the welfare of Batswana and to ensure that "*No One is Left Behind*".

GLOBAL ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

1. **Mister Speaker,** According to the International Monetary Fund's World Economic Outlook update released in October 2019, global economic activity slowed down, largely due to heightened trade tensions between the United States of America (USA) and the People's Republic of China, as well as the weakening business and consumer confidence, which worsened financial market sentiments in emerging markets.
2. However, the US has since responded by implementing a flexible monetary policy stance and markets have now become more optimistic about the US-China trade deal. On the basis of the foregoing, global growth is now projected to slow from 3.6 percent in 2018 to 3.0 percent in 2019. Growth is however anticipated to revert to the 2018 level in 2020, by registering a 3.6 percent increase. The anticipated recovery in 2020 is predicated on fiscal policy stimulus that is being implemented in China.
3. For emerging markets, growth is projected to stabilise, slightly below 5 percent, whereas in Sub-Saharan Africa growth is anticipated to reach 3.2 percent in 2019 and 3.6 percent in 2020. The growth rates anticipated for both 2019 and 2020 represent slight downward revisions by 1.7 percent and 0.8 percent, respectively, owing to a decline in growth for the Republic of Angola and the Republic of Nigeria.

THE DOMESTIC ECONOMY

4. **Mister Speaker,** the domestic economic growth increased to reach 4.5 percent in 2018, following a growth of 2.9 percent recorded in 2017. This significant increase was spear-headed by the Transport and Communications, Mining and Water as well as the Electricity sectors, albeit with a decline in water and electricity value addition in the fourth quarter of 2018. The decline in the water and electricity sectors, was attributed to a plant shutdown in Morupule B, which resulted in a slowdown in domestic production which triggered an increase in demand for imported electricity.
5. On the domestic outlook, the economy is forecast to grow on average by 4.4 percent in the medium-term. Specifically, the economy is currently forecast to grow by 3.6 percent and 4.4 percent in 2019 and 2020, respectively. The positive prospects for the medium term outlook are underpinned by an anticipated increase in non-mining sectors. Within the non-mining sector, Trade, Hotels and Restaurants, Finance and Banking as well as the Transport and Communications sectors are anticipated to also contribute positively to economic growth.

Inflation

6. **Mister Speaker,** in 2018, the inflation rate fluctuated between 2.8 percent and 3.8 percent, resulting in an average inflation rate of 3.2 percent. This reflects the Bank of Botswana's ability to maintain inflation

within its objective range of 3 to 6 percent. Inflation is anticipated to continue to remain within the Bank's objective range in the medium term.

Foreign Exchange Reserves

7. **Mister Speaker,** As at December 2018, foreign exchange reserves stood at Seventy One billion, Four Hundred Million Pula (P71.4 billion), which represented a decline by 3.2 percent, compared to Seventy Three Billion, Seven Hundred million Pula (P73.7 billion) recorded in the same month in 2017. However, as at August 2019, foreign exchange reserves stood at Seventy Four Billion, Two Hundred Million Pula (P74.2 billion), an increase by 3.9 percent compared to the level attained in December, 2018. This increase was due to gains from asset price changes, exchange rate movements and income on reserves. The level of reserves in August 2019 is equivalent to 15 months of import cover of goods and services. Of the total amount of reserves of Seventy Four Billion, Two Hundred Million Pula (P74.2 billion), Nineteen Billion, Five Hundred Million Pula (P19.5 billion) or 26 percent is attributed to the Government Investment Account.

Exchange Rate Movements

8. **Mister Speaker,** the Pula nominal exchange rate appreciated by 2.4 percent against the South African Rand, while it depreciated by 1.7 percent against the Special Drawing Rights (SDR) in the twelve months to September 2019. The depreciation of the Pula against the SDR further suggests that Botswana's export competitiveness remained positive,

especially in the markets of advanced economies. Additionally, the Pula continued to show signs of a stable Real Effective Exchange Rate (REER). The REER however depreciated by 0.3 percent in the twelve months to August 2019, reflecting a lower inflation rate in Botswana compared to that of its trading partners.

BUSINESS FACILITATION

9. **Mister Speaker**, we will continuously improve the doing business environment and competitiveness of our enterprises through close monitoring and evaluation of all our processes and procedures, as well as the regulatory framework with a view to remove impediments. When I took Office, I promised to create jobs and this cannot be achieved without rolling out the red carpet for sustainable and impactful investment. We are challenged by our market size as an economy, therefore we must come up with deliberate interventions to promote export oriented businesses which will be achieved through the Botswana Export Development Programme (BEDP), the Special Economic Zones (SEZ's) and regional integration.
10. To facilitate the ease of doing business in the country, Government is reviewing both the Immigration Act to make sure that it effectively enables the employment of non-citizens and the Point Based System to make the assessment of work permits applications fair, objective and more transparent. Furthermore, the automation of the work permit

process will be carried out to improve the turnaround time for the processing of applications.

11. Moreover Government is in the process of developing a secure and integrated system that will interface the business sector with the immigration and civil registration systems to ensure service efficiency by Government. This will be achieved through facilitation of online services especially for critical functions such as VISA applications, the processing of Work and Residence Permits and the development of the electronic identity document.
12. The Online Business Registration (OBRS) which went live in June this year, has resulted in the reduction of the Starting-a-Business Indicator processes from nine to seven days, as it has combined name reservation, declaration and registration to become a single service. The OBRS has also reduced the average turnaround time for companies and business name registration as well as the Starting-a-Business sub-indicator from an average of five days to one day and from Forty eight (48) days to thirty seven (37) days, respectively.
13. Between June and September 2019, a total of fifty two thousand, three hundred and seventy (52 370) companies were registered of which forty one thousand, three hundred and sixty three (41 363) were re-registrations and eleven thousand and seven (11 007) being new registrations. The total revenue collected from registrations amounted

to Eighteen Million, Two Hundred and Forty Thousand, Four Hundred and Fifty Nine Pula and Seventy Four Thebe (P18 240 459.74).

14. The integration of the OBRS with other systems such as that of the Botswana Unified Revenue Service (BURS), the Civil and National Registration system and the Public Procurement and Asset Disposal Board (PPADB) has been completed and is operational. The last phase which will enable companies to file annual returns online has commenced and will be completed in March 2020.
15. Government is also in the process of amending the Environmental Impact Assessment Act and its Regulations with a view to reducing the turnaround time for evaluating the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) project documents. The review of the EIA legislative instruments has taken long due to the consultative and technically complex nature of the process, but it is anticipated that this will be concluded during the current financial year.
16. To further improve starting a business, Government has enacted both the Trade and Industrial Development Amendment Acts, which will go a long way in reducing the number of days for starting a business in Botswana from forty eight (48) to thirteen (13) days. This has enabled Government to do away with licensing of businesses that do not have health and safety risks. The licenses will now be issued over the counter thus enhancing the country's performance in the country's Competiveness Index. Furthermore, the Industrial Policy of 2014 will also be reviewed to align

it with the aspirations of both the National Vision 2036 as well as the dictates of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Following the approval of the Trade and Industrial Development Acts during the July sitting of Parliament, the development of the Trade Regulations and Industrial Development Regulations to facilitate implementation is ongoing and they are expected to be completed by end of the financial year.

17. Government has also reviewed the land policy that will facilitate citizens to use their land productively by enabling a mixed use of land approach. This is meant to empower Batswana and the guidelines pertaining to this policy have been distributed to members of the public approach.

ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION DRIVE (EDD)

18. **Mister Speaker,** The Economic Diversification Drive (EDD) Strategy is currently under review through the Programme on Support to Economic Diversification and Inclusive Growth (EDIG), with the collaboration of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The main aim of the review is to assess the achievements of the intended objectives of the EDD Strategy and to put in place interventions that will enhance its implementation. Government will come up with legislation to ensure compliance with the EDD provisions by all stakeholders.

Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA)

19. **Mister Speaker,** During the 2018/19 financial year, a total of Two Thousand, Four Hundred and Sixty Six (2 466) jobs were created in the

manufacturing, property, services and agricultural sectors with a total investment of Four Hundred and Sixty Six Million Pula (P466 million).

Project Facilitation Fund (PFF)

20. **Mister Speaker**, the Project Facilitation Fund which was launched in May, 2019 was set up to assist business start-ups with funding for Environmental Impact Assessment, soil tests and certification, as well as promote survival of existing business enterprises. A total of five million Pula (P5 million) has been set aside for the PFF which will be disbursed as part grant and part loan.

The Gambling Industry

21. **Mister Speaker**, the Gambling Authority (GA) has embarked on a licensing programme that will result in a National Lottery. The Lottery will transform development and financing of charities, sports and recreation which is expected to spur arts, culture and youth development. The process to appoint a National Operator is ongoing and it is expected to be concluded by the end of this financial year.

TRADE FACILITATION

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)

22. **Mister Speaker**, In February 2019, Botswana signed the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Agreement. The Agreement has

so far been signed by fifty four (54) African States and it came into force in May 2019, following ratification by the requisite twenty two African States. It is anticipated that the Agreement will earnestly become effective on 1st July 2020 following the finalisation of the tariff offers by member states. It is then that Botswana would take advantage of the One billion, Two hundred million (1.2 billion) people that is the estimated market in the African continent.

The Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA)

23. **Mister Speaker,** The Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA) comprises twenty seven (27) countries from the three Regional Economic Communities being the, Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Negotiations on the TFTA have since been concluded as the member States have finalised tariff offers. Botswana has ratified the TFTA and the process of depositing the Instrument of Ratification will be concluded by the end of this month. This will enable the private sector to access the TFTA market with a combined population of nearly Six Hundred and Twenty Five million (625 million) people and a total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of approximately One trillion US Dollars (US\$1.0 trillion).
24. So far, Government has held consultative engagements with the Botswana Meat Commission, Botswana Ash, the Botswana Vaccine Institute, and Flo-Tek on how to immediately access the East African

Community market. This has also afforded Government an opportunity to understand challenges encountered by exporting enterprises.

The African Opportunity Act (AGOA)

25. **Mister Speaker**, following the extension of the African Opportunity Act (AGOA) to 2025, Botswana developed a National Response Strategy and its implementation is ongoing. To date, work plans have been developed and some progress has been realised under the arts and crafts and meat and meat products sectors.
26. Under the Arts and Crafts sector, Botswana will collaborate with Eswatini Fair Trade to leverage on best practices and assist in developing a comprehensive strategy for the sector which will constitute external market access and local capacity building targeted at crafters in rural areas. Additionally, a storage facility, as a pilot project for Shakawe, Gumare and Etsha areas, has been set up in Gumare to ensure that various basketry weavers are accorded the opportunity to expand their market base and exhibit their products to potential international tourists.
27. Government has also commenced the establishment of an e-commerce platform or market place for purposes of availing and marketing arts and crafts while the profiling and packaging of selected products for eventual uploading on the marketplace is ongoing.

INVESTMENT PROMOTION

28. **Mister Speaker,** The Botswana Investment and Trade Centre's (BITC) promotion drive created Three Thousand, Nine Hundred and Eighty One (3 981) jobs during the 2018/2019 financial year. The Services, Agriculture and Agro-processing sectors followed by the Manufacturing Sector contributed more to realizing these jobs. The cumulative Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows amounting to Three Billion, Two Hundred and Twenty million Pula (P3.220 billion) were realized, largely attributable to the more than expected performance from the Financial Services Sector. The realised cumulative Domestic Investment and Expansions for the same period was Two billion, Six Hundred and Eight million Pula (P2.608 billion).
29. The Botswana Investment and Trade Centre continues to carry out several initiatives targeted towards expanding Botswana's export base. Exporting companies who benefited from the Botswana Export Development Programme realised Three billion, Two Hundred and Ninety Nine million Pula (P3.299 billion) of export earnings in the past year.

Special Economic Zones

30. **Mister Speaker,** you may recall that eight Special Economic Zone sites have been mapped nationally at the following locations, The Sir Seretse Khama International Airport (SSKIA), Fairgrounds, Lobatse, Pandamatenga, Palapye, Selibe Phikwe, Tuli Block, and Francistown. So far, progress is being made with regard to the development of the four

priority zones being Sir Seretse Khama International Airport whose Master plan has been approved and the process of developing detailed designs has commenced. Furthermore, a site has been identified at Pandamatenga to be used for processing and manufacturing purposes for their agriculture products. Within the same zone, more land has been identified to house twelve (12) silos each totalling Five Thousand (5000) metric tonnes steel grain storage facility.

Cluster Development

31. **Mister Speaker,** In our quest to continuously grow and diversify the economy as well as develop exports, my Government continues to implement the Cluster Development programme aimed at improving business productivity, value chains and competitiveness. The model largely focusses on promoting private sector growth, by facilitating linkages and interdependence among companies, hence improving their performance in the production of goods and services and there-by creating employment.
32. As I indicated in my inaugural address last year, the project started in February 2018 with three prioritized sectors of Beef in Molopo to Sandveld including Kweneng, south East and Kgatleng regions; Tourism in Ngamiland region; and , Finance and Knowledge Intensive Business Services in Gaborone. I am happy to indicate that export-led strategies for the three clusters have been developed and are currently being handed over to the implementing ministries. It is worth acknowledging

the key role played by the private sector as well as the academia in developing these strategies and the role they continue to play in their implementation. I wish to implore these parties to continue embracing this initiative as this will expand the domestic economy and bring to reality the shift to a private sector-led economy.

33. The Government will continue to develop more sectors, with Diamond Beneficiation in Gaborone and Small Stock in Lobu area in the Kgalagadi district coming before the end of this financial year.
34. In order to develop the indigenous expertise in Cluster-based competitiveness in Botswana, a Training of Trainers Course is ongoing at the Botswana Public Service College, in partnership with the European Foundation for Cluster Excellence. After completing the course, the Trainers will not only be qualified to train in Botswana but in the region as well.

EDUCATION

Early Childhood Education (ECE)

35. **Mister Speaker,** Government continues to expand the provision of Early Childhood Education (ECE) in public schools to improve learner readiness for school and lifelong learning. The overall objective of this programme is to ensure learner readiness at Standard One. The number of public primary schools offering the year long reception class programme has increased from One Hundred and Twenty Two (122) in 2014 when the

program started, to Five Hundred and Ninety (590) in April 2019 which translates to 78.1 percent of Public Primary schools providing Early Childhood Education.

36. The Five Hundred and Ninety (590) schools had an enrolment of Twenty Three Thousand, Six Hundred and Thirty Seven (23 637) pupils as at April 2019. This has increased the net enrolment of children in the early childhood education programme from 17 percent in 2014 to 39 percent against a target of 80 percent in 2019. The aim is to have all the Seven Hundred and Fifty Five (755) public primary schools in the country offering the programme by 2022.

Introduction of Outcome Based Education System at Senior Secondary School

37. **Mister Speaker,** As I indicated in my Inauguration speech on 1st November, 2019, Government continues to implement some critical reform programmes under the Education and Training Sector Strategic Plan (ETSSP) aimed at enhancing access and quality education in line with the local and global demands. Central to these reforms is the introduction of multiple pathways at senior secondary school level where students will pursue subjects of their interest and capability through the Outcome Based Education (OBE) Programme. The implementation of this programme is expected to commence in January 2021. Two schools have been identified for the introduction of multiple pathways being Maun Senior Secondary school for Tourism and Hospitality and a Moeng College

for Agriculture and Horticulture. Other schools are being considered for the roll out of pathways.

38. To improve curriculum delivery, continuous in-service training is offered to upgrade the competencies of teachers. Government, continues to upgrade Primary School Teacher Certificate holders to diploma level. To date 98 percent of primary school teachers hold a Diploma as a minimum teaching qualification. Furthermore, teachers are capacitated to use technology as a platform for learning.

Inclusive Education

39. **Mister Speaker,** Government continues to implement the Inclusive Education Policy of 2011 to ensure access and equity in education particularly for learners with special needs as supported by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This has resulted in an increase in the enrolment of learners with special needs from Five Thousand, Three Hundred and Forty Nine (5349) in 2017, to Five Thousand and Four Hundred (5 400) in 2018. Moreover, Government has commenced the process of developing a language policy in readiness for the introduction of other languages in schools. The establishment of the Botswana Teaching Council (BIL) which is aimed at professionalising teaching was passed by the July 2019 Parliament Meeting and preparations for its establishment are underway.

Scaling up Access to Vocational Education and Training

40. **Mister Speaker,** to align the Vocational Education and Training curriculum to modern technology and industry needs, Government has started the review of three levels of curriculum according to the National Credit Qualifications Framework (NCQF).
41. For the smooth transition and transfer of the examination function to the Botswana Examinations Council (BEC) and in order for Government to continue with the examination of artisans, the Madirelo Training and Testing Centre (MTTC) is being accredited as an awarding body whilst the Construction Industry Trust Fund (CITF) has been accredited as an Education Training Provider (ETP) by the Botswana Qualifications Authority (BQA).
42. Government has extended CITF services through the development of rapid skills centres across the country. The rapid skills centres at Tsau, Chadibe and Moreomaoto are operational, while the Thamaga centre has been completed. Plans are underway for the establishment of six (6) more rapid skills centres at Sojwe, Khakhea, Phitshane-Molopo, Bokspits, Ncojane and Shakawe. Stakeholders who included tribal leaders, civic leaders, and land board authorities have already been consulted on the projects, and sites for these centres have been identified and duly allocated.

Botswana Examinations Council Transformation (BEC)

43. **Mister Speaker,** Government intends to expand the mandate of the Botswana Examinations Council to include vocational education training (VET) assessments and align it to the National Credit and Qualifications Framework (NCQF). The objectives are to provide strong assessment systems with data to facilitate teaching and learning, monitoring and certification of learners in general education and Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET), the review of assessment programmes in order to align them to the NCQF and the review and introduction of new qualifications that meet the demands of the labour market. The Botswana Examinations Council Amendment Bill has been approved by Parliament.

HEALTH

44. **Mister Speaker,** the provision of quality health care remains one of my Government's top priorities. This is evidenced by our commitment to the global call to Universal Health Coverage and health systems strengthening, in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically Target 3.8 which talks to "Achieving Universal Health Coverage".

Maternal Health

45. **Mister Speaker**, in pursuit of the global maternal mortality ratio target of less than 70 per 100 000 live births by 2030, Botswana experienced a notable decrease from 156.6 per 100 000 live births in 2016 to 143.2 per 100 000 live births in 2017. Government intends to resuscitate intensive maternal healthcare strategies, including the appointment of a National Coordinator for Maternal Mortality reduction, and the engagement of relevant stakeholders to come up with holistic solutions to address the maternal mortality ratio in Botswana.

Child Health

46. **Mister Speaker**, according to the 2018 Botswana Demographic Survey, there is a major setback in both Infant and under five mortality rates. The Infant mortality rate increased from 17 per 1000 live births in the 2011 census compared to 38 per 1000 live births in 2018, while the under five mortality rate increased from 28 per 1000 live births in the 2011 census to 56 per 1000 live births in 2018. These figures are set against the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) targets of 12 per 1000 live births and 25 per 1000 live births for Infant and under five mortality rates, respectively. The increase in the mortality rates is mainly attributed to hygiene related issues particularly in rural areas where resources are limited. To address these challenges, Government is continuously implementing programmes that provide equitable and robust child survival mechanisms to accelerate the uptake of High Impact

Interventions including Breast feeding, Immunizations, Zinc Sulphate, Vitamin A supplementation and Oral Rehydration Salts.

Communicable and Non Communicable Diseases

47. **Mister Speaker,** Government continues to spend significant financial resources as well as deployment of human and material resources towards the fight against Communicable and Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs).
48. Having recognized the health and economic burdens of the escalating rates of non- communicable diseases (NCDs) in the country, the Botswana Multi Sectoral Strategy for the prevention and control of Non-Communicable Diseases for 2018-2023 was developed. The strategy provides an opportunity for, among other things, a focus on the Government's ability to restore the quality of life for those affected; defining prevention, primary care, holistic and multi-sectoral strategies in the fight against NCDs; as well as outlining a roadmap of critical activities that will be integrated by various stakeholders in addressing NCDs and pursuing a good lifestyle.
49. With regards to communicable diseases, Botswana faces a big challenge in that, an estimated six thousand, (6000) people per annum are affected by Tuberculosis (TB). The emergence of Drug Resistant forms of the disease threatens to hinder the gains made in combating the disease. Since the establishment of Multi-Drug Resistant TB Clinical Centres in

2007, the country has registered One Thousand, Two Hundred and Thirty Eight (1238) cases with an average of One Hundred (100) cases being registered every year.

National AIDS and Health Promotion Agency (NAHPA)

50. **Mister Speaker,** In 2018, Government expanded the mandate of the National AIDS Coordinating Agency to encompass Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs). The National AIDS and Health Promotion Agency (NAHPA) has therefore commenced implementing both the third National Strategic Framework for HIV and AIDS and the National NCDs Strategy, jointly launched in June 2019.
51. The two strategies will serve as roadmaps for the country's response to these epidemics for the next five years. Furthermore, the strategies will strengthen public awareness and community mobilization on the prevention and control of NCDs and HIV to address risk factors.
52. Botswana is on track to achieving the United Nations 90-90-90 Fast-Track targets. According to the current programme data, 86 per cent of people living with HIV had tested and knew their status. Of those who knew their status 83 per cent were on treatment and 96 per cent were virally suppressed. Botswana is a high burden country with Three Hundred and Seventy Thousand (370,000) people estimated to be living with HIV and an adult prevalence rate of more than 20 percent. UNAIDS further estimates that new HIV infections stood at Eight Thousand, Five Hundred

(8,500) in 2018. A third of such new HIV infections occurred among young people aged 15-24 years, of which 67 percent were young women indicating an even higher risk of infections among Adolescent Girls and Young Women.

53. My Government allocates resources annually through our national budget and those mobilized from partners, to the HIV programme. Like any other country that battles with issues of development, there are ineffective social systems in some areas. We are nevertheless steadfast in ensuring a legal and policy environment for all players to participate and play their part. Recently we announced the provision of free antiretroviral treatment to all, including non-citizens.

Alcohol and Substance Abuse

54. **Mister Speaker**, the number of people who require care as a result of excessive consumption of alcohol and other substances (drugs) has increased over the years and is a major source of concern to Government. Government is rehabilitating people with alcohol and other Substance Use Disorders (SUD) in collaboration with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). These clients are either referred to facilities run by NGOs or by Government health facilities to deal with their different challenges.
55. Government has identified the Old Serowe Institute of Health Sciences (IHS) as a facility that will serve as the first National Substance Use Treatment Centre. Now that the designs for this Centre are complete, the

refurbishment will commence soon and it will be completed in twenty two (22) months. Both in and outpatient services will be provided for in this facility. The facility will also improve access to emergency and trauma care services in order to reduce mortality and morbidity related to non-communicable diseases.

Availability of Drugs

56. **Mister Speaker,** national drug availability has been a challenge in our health system with worrying trends of sporadic and widespread shortages across the country. As at the end of September 2019, there is a notable improvement with availability averaging 80 percent at health facilities across the country. This is due to local micro-procurement at facilities while awaiting deliveries from the Central Medical Stores (CMS).

57. To further improve on drug supplies at CMS, Government is working on implementing other strategic interventions such as purchasing medicines through SADC Pooled Procurement Protocol which has been signed by member states, and through international pooled procurement agencies or key partners United Nations agencies such as the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Rehabilitation

58. **Mister Speaker,** in order to fully address rehabilitation needs of people with complex neurological conditions and traumas arising from among others road traffic accidents, injuries of one form or another; work is at an advanced stage to develop the National Health Rehabilitation Policy which will pave the way for the establishment of a specialised rehabilitation centre. This centre will need specialized personnel and equipment to produce the desired results.

Health Infrastructure

59. **Mister Speaker,** the construction of health facilities across the country is ongoing and projects are at different levels of completion. The upgrading of clinics is progressing satisfactorily at various villages, such as Mochudi, Sepopa, Ngarange, Toteng, D'kar, Kauxwi, Borotsi and Dibete. All these projects started in the last financial year. Staff housing units are part of these projects and will upon completion, go a long way in reducing shortage of accommodation for health workers. All these projects are scheduled for completion this financial year.
60. Primary Hospitals, particularly at the level of seventy (70) beds capacity are also under construction. These include Shakawe and Moshupa. The upgrading of the Tutume and Gumare Primary Hospitals are at the design stage levels. Other health infrastructure projects that were recently completed and handed over to Government include the Kachikau Clinic,

Rakops Operating Theatre, Old Mahalapye Hospital as well as staff houses in Mabutsane, Mathangwane and Maitengwe.

61. During this financial year, a total of Two Hundred and Sixty One Million Pula (P261, 000, 000) was set aside for the maintenance of buildings and replacement of key equipment and plants such as boilers, chillers, generators, and laundry machines.

SOCIAL PROTECTION

Ipelegeng

62. **Mister Speaker,** The Ipelegeng Programme has contributed to improved livelihoods through the provision of temporary relief to vulnerable groups in rural and urban communities. The Programme has also contributed to the development of communities through undertaking of various construction and maintenance projects of essential public facilities within the communities.

Drought Management Strategy

63. **Mister Speaker,** Government has taken a decision to develop a Drought Management Strategy which would classify drought as a permanent feature in our budget plans rather than an emergency. The strategy will be completed before the end of this financial year. In view of the prolonged dry spell period, Government has declared the 2018/19

financial year as a drought year with mitigation measures being a 35 percent subsidy on livestock feeds; emergency food baskets in the Kgalagadi, Okavango and the North East Districts and continuation of rations for children under the age of five and school feeding at primary schools.

People with Disabilities

64. **Mister Speaker**, I am pleased to inform this august house that significant progress has been made, which will pave the way for Botswana to accede to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by developing a Draft National Disability Framework.
65. Following wide public consultations, work on the Revision of the National Disability Policy of 2019, the Strategy, Implementation Plan as well as the development of a Bill relating to People with Disabilities, have been completed. The Revised Policy and the Bill will be submitted to Parliament for adoption.

Disaster Management

66. **Mister Speaker**, In order to enhance the management of disaster risk in the country, a Multi-hazard Contingency Plan is being developed with the financial support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and it is expected to be finalised next year. This Plan shifts from the single sectoral approach of managing disasters to a more systematic and collaborative disaster planning system that will enhance response

time to all types of disasters, maximise loss of life, damage to property as well as prioritise the needs of vulnerable groups in our society.

Poverty Eradication

67. **Mister Speaker,** Poverty, unemployment and inequality, , remain challenges faced by the country and both the reason that the National Vision 2036 and the National Development Plan 11 have prioritised these challenges to ensure lasting solutions are pursued to reverse the trends.
68. Since the inception of the Poverty Eradication Programme in 2011, a total of Thirty Eight Thousand, and Four Hundred and Eighteen (38,418) beneficiaries have been funded, out of which Twenty-Nine Thousand, Eight Hundred and Seventy Seven (29, 877) projects are operating. Five Thousand Six Hundred and Nine (5, 609) projects are at different stages of implementation across the country. The operating projects have created Thirty Three Thousand, Nine Hundred and Eighteen (33, 918) jobs.
69. In addressing the delays in packaging and backlogs that resulted in significant numbers waiting to be assisted, Government has so far cleared the backlog in Kgatleng, Sowa, South East, North East, North West, Boteti, Bobirwa, Lobatse and Francistown. Progress is being made to clear Palapye, and Jwaneng soon, with the ultimate results being to significantly reduce the backlog in all other districts.

70. **Mister Speaker,** the Exit strategy was developed and launched in February this year. It clearly outlines interventions that facilitate graduation of beneficiaries with excelling projects. To date Two Thousand and Ninety Four (2, 094) excelling projects have graduated from the programme. I awarded certificates of graduation to Thirty (30) of these beneficiaries during the National Poverty Eradication Expo early this year.

Provision of Breakfast at Primary Schools

71. **Mister Speaker,** Government started providing breakfast meals at Primary Schools in April 2019 with a view to promote optimal health, growth and development, prevention of nutritional deficiencies as well as align the primary school menu to that of secondary schools. The menu for primary schools will support poverty eradication and home-grown feeding initiatives to economically empower and capacitate Batswana and promote micro and small-scale entrepreneurship.

GENDER ISSUES

72. **Mister Speaker,** It is important to highlight that Government recognises gender equity as fundamental to sustainable development. To this end, Government continues to support women in accessing markets through Annual Business Expositions. In 2019, Government hosted the 20th National Women's Exposition of which a total of One Hundred and Sixty Nine (169) women entrepreneurs showcased their products including, food processing and packaging, agricultural products, leather, clothing,

caskets, cosmetics and jewellery. The Women's Economic Empowerment Programme is being reviewed and the exercise will be finalised before the end of this financial year.

73. Government has noted with concern that Gender Based Violence (GBV) is one of the critical issues that impede women, girls and men from fully enjoying their human rights and unleashing their potential. The National Relationship Study of 2018 revealed that 37 percent of women and 21 percent of men have suffered some form of violence in their lifetime which occurred within Intimate Partner Relationships. To address this problem, Government will intensify the implementation of the National Strategy Towards Ending Gender Based Violence. The Strategy focuses on the comprehensive care and support of GBV survivors; the Prevention of new GBV incidences; Strengthening national capacity to address GBV; Improving efficiency and effectiveness of the coordination and management of the national GBV response; and Strategic information and knowledge management on GBV.

REVIEW OF THE MARRIAGE ACT OF 2001

74. The Marriage Act is currently under review to provide for amongst others, the registration of religious and traditional marriages, monitoring and regulation of appointed Marriage Officers, as well as to review the age of consent for marriages.

INTRODUCTION OF THE BOTSWANA BLUE CARD (BBC)

75. **Mister Speaker,** Government has introduced the Botswana Blue Card (BBC) to allow persons who ceased to be citizens of Botswana, such as those who have renounced Botswana citizenship, to retain the right to unlimited stay in Botswana. The Botswana Blue Card holders will have the right to visit, live and work in Botswana. However, they will not be entitled to Omang and the Botswana Passport because they would have ceased to be citizens of Botswana at the time they acquired the citizenship of another country.

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

76. **Mister Speaker,** Participation in the Youth Business Exposition grew from Two Hundred and Twenty Four (224) in 2016/17 to Six hundred and Two (602) in 2018/19. The winners are offered mentorship by stakeholders and also benefit from training and mentorship. The Youth exchange platform is also a form of youth empowerment which offers young people an opportunity to benchmark best practices both locally and internationally.

Youth in Agriculture

77. **Mister Speaker,** Government is currently marketing and positioning agriculture as an attractive and financially rewarding career of choice to young people. The campaign is expected to attract talented and commercially minded young farmers into the agricultural industry.

Currently young people contribute 12 percent, 6.4 percent and 2.25 percent to rainfed arable production, beekeeping and horticulture production, respectively. Youth participation in commercial livestock production is currently at less than 4 percent.

Review of the Youth Development Fund and Botswana Youth Policy

78. The review the Youth Development Fund to identify gaps in its implementation and provide a simple model on youth economic empowerment is ongoing. The review of the Botswana National Youth Policy with technical assistance from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) will be completed by the end of this financial year. The aim is to make the policy more relevant and youth-centric to better serve their interests.

LOCAL GOVERNANCE

Development of Property Valuation and Rating Regulations

79. **Mister Speaker**, In implementing the Local Government Act of 2012, Government initiated the development of Property Valuation and Rating Regulations to ensure the application of property valuation and rates in the rural areas and this maximise local levels economic growth. The regulations have been gazetted and are ready for dissemination to stakeholders before the end of the financial year.

Formulation of the National Decentralisation Policy

80. **Mister Speaker,** The formulation of the National Decentralisation Policy is at an advanced stage. It is expected to be completed during this financial year. Upon its completion and approval, this policy will work as a tool to guide the overall service delivery, coordinate and align decision making to enhance democracy at the national and local levels and promote popular participation for sustainable national development.

Village Infrastructure

81. **Mister Speaker,** the construction work for village infrastructure projects in Gabane, Tutume and Kang commenced in 2017/2018 and will be completed by the end of the financial year. As at June 2019, progress stood at 72 percent for both the Gabane and Tutume projects and 78 percent at Kang, while Six Hundred and Eighty Seven (687) people have been employed. The completion of these infrastructure projects will not only make these villages alternative investment locations and grow local economies but will also create employment opportunities and improve user safety and reduce damage to property due to uncontrolled storm water.

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND FOOD SECURITY

82. **Mister Speaker,** The food import bill in 2018 was estimated at Seven Billion, Seven Hundred and Forty Five Million Pula (P7.745 billion) compared to Six Billion, Eight Hundred and Sixty Three million Pula

(P6.863 billion) in 2017. The bulk of food items imported are dairy and dairy products followed by fruits and vegetables.

Dairy Sector

83. The dairy sector has a well-organized value chain compared to other agricultural commodities and has clear linkages regarding production, processing, distribution and marketing. Since milk processing plants such as Clover Botswana and Parmalat are already established, Government is leveraging on these to promote the establishment of commercial dairy farms, to produce adequate raw milk and feed the value chain. The annual national demand for milk was Sixty Five Million (65 million) litres during the 2018/19 financial year. However, Nine million, Five Hundred and Eighty Two Thousand, Nine Hundred and Eighty Five and a Half (9 582 985.5) litres of milk was produced locally, compared to Eight million, Six Hundred and Fifty Seven Thousand, Seven Hundred and Eighty One and a half (8 657 781. 5) litres produced in 2017/18. This increase in liquid milk is attributable to the implementation of the dairy strategy.
84. The upcoming Milk Afric Dairy farm in Lobatse is expected to milk five hundred (500) cows which will significantly increase milk production in the next financial year. This farm is expected to gradually grow the number of milking cows to Two thousand (2,000) by adding five hundred (500) cows every year. Sunnyside Dairy Farm which is the major supplier of liquid milk is continuing to expand and to date it produces Five Hundred Thousand (500 000) litres of milk per month.

85. Government is also establishing marketing infrastructure to facilitate market access. The Pitsane Milk Collection Plant has been renovated. Efforts are also ongoing to assist farmers to manage the Serowe Milk Pasteurizing Plant which is not operating at full capacity, producing only Eight Thousand (8 000) litres of milk per day. There are other smaller milk collection plants in Maun, Selebi Phikwe, Ghanzi and Molepolole that have been assisted to supply milk to Government institutions in their respective districts.

Beef Production

86. **Mister Speaker,** During the 2018/19 financial year, a total of Two Hundred and Seventy One Thousand, Two Hundred and Ten (271 210) cattle were slaughtered both at the Botswana Meat Commission (BMC) and private slaughter facilities, against the annual target of Three Hundred and Ten Thousand and Nine hundred (310 900) animals.
87. There has been a recorded decline of the national cattle population from three million, one hundred thousand (3.1 million) in the last seven (7) years to an estimated two (2) million in 2018. This is a worrisome trend which Government is responding to in a number of ways to increase the national herd. As a way of responding to this situation, Government has adopted a Beef Cluster Strategy which has identified areas of improvement which include; ways of upgrading production, research and technology transfer and promotion and marketing of beef.

88. This is done in partnership with the Government of New Zealand through the Beef Productivity Training Programme at Ramatlabama Ranches. The programme offers training to farmers and herdsman on best farm practices and animal production initiatives and is meant to equip farmers with industry led, livestock management and increase on calving rate on an annual basis.
89. Furthermore, the strategy to liberalise the Botswana Beef Export market has been completed and will guide the future of the beef industry in Botswana. The implementation of the strategy will include amongst other things the establishment of a Meat Regulator, a liberalized, competitive and open market for beef products and live cattle, harmonized legislation and regulations across the beef sub sector in compliance with health and sanitation standards.
90. Moreover the implementation of the strategy calls for the restructuring of the Botswana Meat Commission (BMC), separation of the linked abattoirs of Lobatse, Maun and Francistown, and the privatization of the organisation. It has been necessary to review the sales and marketing of the BMC Beef and removal of its export monopoly as well as its distribution to various regional and international markets to ensure value for money and the sustainability of the company. This will yield a competitive price structure and an improved turnaround time for payment of farmers. The Botswana Meat Commission Transition Bill has been

passed in Parliament as part of the initiatives to effect some of these changes.

Small Stock Development

91. **Mister Speaker,** In 2018/2019, Over Six Hundred and Twenty One (621) and about Three Hundred and Nineteen (319) tonnes of goat meat and mutton were produced in the country respectively, while the demand for the goat meat and mutton stands at, One thousand, Seven Hundred (1700) and Five Hundred and Fifty (550) tonnes. Therefore there is a need to develop the commodity value chains to increase production.
92. To transform the smallstock sub-sector, Government developed a smallstock farm at Lobu, which will later be replicated in other areas. A total of Five Hundred and Fifty Six (556) stud animals, Dorper sheep and Boer goat have been acquired to improve the quality of the national stock. The long-term objectives are to improve productivity and commercialize operations, strengthen centres of excellence at strategic areas for farmers to benchmark and support upstream infrastructure development while securing markets locally and internationally through available trade agreements.

Aquaculture

93. **Mister Speaker,** Government is in the process of developing an Aquaculture Development Policy and Strategy for Botswana which will

guide the country on how to grow this sub sector. Currently, Government is operating a Fish Hatchery Rehabilitation in Mmadinare which produces fingerlings. To further promote fish utilization by communities, five (5) community projects are at different stages of development. These are the, Thito Village Development Committee (VDC) Integrated Fish farming Project, Toteng Fish Farming Project, Kareng Project and the Shakawe Region Development Support Society (SRDSS).

Livestock Management and Infrastructure Development Programme (LIMID)

94. **Mister Speaker,** The LIMID programme is progressing well and in the 2018/19 financial year, Six Thousand, Nine Hundred and Nine (6 909) applicants benefited from the programme, of which Three Thousand Seven Hundred and Eighteen (3 718) were youth.

The Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme

95. **Mister Speaker,** In an effort to promote agriculture, food production and security in Botswana, Government continues to implement the Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme. The main objective of the Scheme is to assist farmers to repay part of their loans in cases of crop failure due to drought, floods, frost and hailstorm.
96. Following the declaration of 2018/2019 as a drought year, Government has paid One Hundred and Thirty Four Million, Three Hundred and

Sixteen Thousand , Five Hundred and Seventy Six Pula, (P134 316 576) to assist farmers who received arable loans from CEDA and the NDB. This amount is equivalent to 85 percent of the farmer's instalments in 2018/2019. The Scheme is in the process of being reviewed to align it with developments in the agricultural sub-sector and to establish the feasibility and sustainability of extending it to cover additional agricultural subsectors and other causes of loss other than drought, floods, frost and hailstorm, as well as to include other financing institutions.

Horticulture

97. **Mister Speaker**, in horticulture, domestic production has registered consistent growth in the past years due to increased production of potatoes and tomatoes. Current production stands at Sixty Three Thousand, Four Hundred and Eighty Seven (63 487) tonnes, accounting for 42.4 percent of the national demand of One Hundred and Twelve Thousand (112 000) tonnes. The restriction on the importation of horticulture products such as border closures has helped in developing the local horticulture sector, particularly the fresh vegetables production.
98. As a result, local production of fresh vegetables has shown steady growth over the last ten (10) years in terms of production and the number of farmers taking part in this sector. The total number of horticulture farmers increased by 61 percent from Four Hundred (400) in 2008 to One Thousand and Eighteen (1018) in 2018. Output of the

sector also registered impressive growth over the same period, increasing from Thirty Seven Thousand, Eight Hundred and Ninety (37 890) tonnes to Sixty Five Thousand Six Hundred and Ninety Eight (65 698) tonnes in the same period.

99. A notable development in this sector has been the significant increase in the domestic production of non-traditional products such as potatoes. Potato production increased from Two Thousand, Five Hundred (2 500) tonnes in 2010 to Eighteen Thousand, and Fifty Nine (18 059) tonnes in 2018.

Foot and Mouth Disease

100. **Mister Speaker,** Disease pressure on cattle is high particularly Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD). FMD outbreaks limit the movement of cattle resulting in temporary closure of export markets in the affected areas. The high occurrence of measles also has had adverse effects on the beef exports. However, the Measles Control Strategy is beginning to bear fruit as the prevalence of this disease has dropped to 6.5 percent from 8 percent reported during the launch of the strategy in August 2018.
101. Government has made improvements in the control of FMD due to the successful implementation of the vaccination strategy. As a result, The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) has approved Botswana's application for the reinstatement of the FMD free status for Zone 7, which was lost on account of the outbreak of FMD in May 2011. This

listing is expected to expand the Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) green zone thus increasing the number of cattle illegible for lucrative markets.

102. Government continues to rehabilitate cordon fences with priority given to frontier fences bordering FMD affected zones. These fences are barriers for FMD control. However, constant damage of cordon fences by elephants especially in the North West and Central Districts puts severe strain on resources and it is unsustainable in the long term.

Drought Mitigations in Agriculture

103. Following the declaration of 2018/19 as a drought year, Government introduced drought subsidies on livestock feeds, vaccines and deworming drugs. The initial 25 percent drought subsidy elapsed in June 2019 and was preceded by a further 35 percent up to June 2020. The subsidy is expected to act as a relief measure for livestock farmers. Since its inception a total of Fourteen Thousand, Five Hundred and Ninety Nine (14 599) livestock farmers participated in the drought subsidy, of which Thirteen Thousand, Two Hundred and Twenty (13 220) were males and One Thousand, Three Hundred and Seventy Nine (1 379) females while youth beneficiaries were One Thousand, Three Hundred and Seventy Eight (1 378).
104. Moreover, a slaughter price incentive of three Pula per kilogram (P3/kg) on direct slaughter across all meat grades at the Botswana Meat Commission (BMC) was also introduced from June to September 2019 to help mitigate direct drought impact to farmers. A total of thirty nine

thousand, seven hundred and forty eight (39 748) cattle received the price incentive amounting to Twenty Nine Million, Nine Hundred and Eighty Three Thousand, Five Hundred and Fifty Three Pula (P29 983 553) which directly benefited one thousand, one hundred and forty people (1140) who supplied the BMC over that period.

105. Government further granted a temporary window for export of live cattle for immediate slaughter from June 2019 to March 2020 as a drought intervention measure. A total of One Thousand Six Hundred and Sixty Two (1662) cattle have so far been exported. These combined drought interventions have had a positive effect on farmers and private sector stakeholders' incomes, increased off-take and prevention of losses of animals that could have perished in the deteriorated pastures due to drought.
106. As a long term intervention, Government intends to establish fodder banks and fodder reserves in a way such that there will be adequate livestock feeds during the dry periods including the production of Napier grass.

Botswana Animal Information and Traceability System (BAITS)

107. **Mister Speaker**, the Botswana Animal Information and Traceability System (BAITS) is undergoing upgrade to enhance its functionality and facilitate offline access by farmers and extension officers. This is expected to enable registration of communal holdings and geo-

referencing thus giving communal farmers' direct access to the European Union (EU) market. At least sixty (60) BAITs cafes have been established around the country to improve animal information capturing and permit issuance especially in rural areas.

108. Government has successfully controlled the outbreak of Bont tick in the Tubu and Gumare area. The tick transmits several diseases including dermatophylosis, locally known as Senkobo, a very debilitating condition in livestock. About twenty four thousand (24 000) cattle, three thousand nine hundred (3 900) small stock and three hundred and eight five (385) donkeys and horses were dipped and treated. This intervention has significantly reduced mortality and infestation levels.

TOURISM

Tourism Development

109. **Mister Speaker,** In an effort to empower citizens, Government has made strides in the privatisation and management of campsites by citizens in protected areas especially National Parks to generate income and create employment. To date out of a total of Two Thousand, One Hundred and Seven (2 107) licensed tourism enterprises, One Thousand, Five Hundred Seventy Seven (1 577) are wholly citizen owned, Two Hundred and Sixty Nine (269) are joint ventures while Two Hundred and Sixty One (261) are non-citizen owned.

110. The development of the tourism cluster has started with Ngamiland Tourism Cluster as a pilot project. The implementation of this cluster is critical to provide learnings for rolling out clusters in other parts of the country.
111. In September 2019, Government reviewed Tourism Policy. The Policy highlights several critical success factors necessary to support its vision which include efficient management of National Parks, Forests and Game Reserves and other Wildlife Management Areas; Mainstreaming of tourism in Government planning process; Improvement of access and infrastructure; Meaningful citizen and community participation in the industry; Enhanced Public/Private Sector Partnerships and Product Diversification.
112. The tourism sector is narrowly focused on wildlife and wilderness tourism. The development, diversification and expansion of tourism attractions and experiences are pre-requisites for Botswana to expand its market reach and share. To achieve this, the policy intervention for Product Development and Diversification will cover various strategies including:
- i. Broadening the tourism base by adding new product
 - ii. Pursuing tourism linkages such as mining, diamond tours, diamond shopping, game ranching and farming and arts and crafts.

- iii. Identifying underdeveloped cultural/natural attractions and sites with tourism potential and initiate a programme for upgrading and improving visitor access, interpretation and amenities at such locations;

113. Government has made significant efforts in empowering of citizens through privatization and management of campsites in protected areas especially the National Parks. In order to increase access and benefits to communities for sustainable livelihood improvement, Government will engage various strategies including;

- i. Increasing the level of community and citizen participation, partnerships and involvement in the tourism sector by solely reserving the existing vacant concessions for allocation to citizen companies or consortia or joint ventures or community trusts;
- ii. Agreeing on clear and transparent criteria for foreign concessionaires and local business owners pertaining to local community participation and benefits including persuading existing concession operators to issue part of shareholding to citizens;
- iii. Subdividing existing larger concessions with a view to establishing new ones for the allocation of citizens;
- iv. Allowing that land allocated to citizens through tourism citizen economic empowerment model be used as collateral by allottees to secure shareholding and or partnership;

114. Government has embarked on the development of site museums, interpretation centres and heritage sites. Heritage is being used to grow our tourism as the modern tourist is interested in the history and people's culture. A Master Plan for the development of heritage tourism in the south of Botswana is underway. Botswana, Namibia and Angola are engaged in a trans-boundary project to list Okavango as a World Heritage site in the riparian states.
115. These undertakings will ensure that the country's Cultural Property is protected and avails the opportunity to recover items that may or might have found themselves illegally on foreign countries.

Wildlife Management

116. Human-wildlife conflict has escalated due to the current drought conditions. Additional funds have been approved for the Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources Conservation and Tourism to provide water for wildlife to alleviate the impact of water shortages and augment water points in game reserves and wildlife management areas. To date, eighteen (18) additional boreholes have been drilled in Chobe National Park, Central Kgalagadi Game Reserve and Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park. In addition, two (2) boreholes have been equipped and ten (10) wells drilled in Okavango (Nxaraga/Qubu) for watering wildlife. Government will also review the alignment of the Makgadikgadi Fence to ensure its effectiveness in reducing human-wildlife conflict around Boteti area.

117. The Government continues to build capacity to counter the growing threat of wildlife poaching and trafficking. The construction of the Kang anti-poaching and training facility is at 95 percent and will be complete before the end of 2019-20 financial year. Sniffer dogs to detect wildlife contraband at ports of entry and exit and along identified smuggling routes have become a key component of the arsenal to combat wildlife crime. Efforts are being stepped up to improve stakeholder participation in combating wildlife crime. To this end a public awareness strategy has been developed and approved under the Government and GEF jointly funded Kgalagadi and Ghanzi Dryland Ecosystem Project. It is anticipated that the strategy will improve understanding of stakeholders' roles in reducing human-wildlife conflict and combating wildlife crime in the project area.
118. Following the decision to re-instate hunting in April 2019, Government is currently working on developing Hunting Guidelines to provide direction on hunting. Citizen hunting resumed in 2019 and it is anticipated that the same will be extended to community trust areas and concessions in April 2020. In preparation for community hunting, quotas will be issued by December 2019 to allow for marketing ahead of the 2020 hunting season.
119. A major lesson learnt from the 2014 hunting moratorium is the unintended alienation of communities who felt that they were not benefitting from the natural resources around them. The lifting of the moratorium will mitigate the negative impacts of the moratorium in

communities which include perceived alteration of communities from deriving benefits from natural resources around them, collapse of civil society organisations due to reduced incomes and reduced employment opportunities and income-generation activities. It is expected that hunting will contribute significantly to reducing the human/wildlife conflict by creating viable and balanced populations.

120. Botswana participated in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) in wild fauna and flora 18th Conference of Parties (CoP) held in Geneva, Switzerland. A proposal to trade in ivory jointly submitted by Botswana and other elephant range states whose populations are on CITES Appendix II was rejected by the Conference of Parties. The failure by the international community to recognise that elephant conservation and management comes at great cost in terms of impacts on community livelihoods and protection of elephants from poaching has the potential to undermine the sterling conservation efforts by the southern African region. Botswana hosted the Kasane Elephant Summit and committed to working with Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area partner countries to identify sustainable solution to the challenges present by our elephant population.

Community Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM)

121. Government acknowledges the importance of natural resources such as wildlife to the wellbeing and livelihoods of communities living in rural areas. This is the reason why the CBNRM program has been revitalized

for communities to improve their livelihoods, create job opportunities and diversify local economies, while sustainably managing natural resources. To this end, legislation is being drafted to provide a framework within which Community Trusts operate, while keeping regulatory requirements in check and also providing clarity on standards and accountability.

122. Some of the bottlenecks that had been impeding the growth of the then CBNRM programme, including moratoriums on export of dried fish and the moratorium on tourism licenses in NG 41 & NG 19 have been lifted in order to provide an opportunity for communities to invest in tourism enterprises which will lead to employment creation, increased income and investment in social projects within those communities.

Environmental Protection

123. Government continues to ensure that all stakeholders, especially Non-Governmental Organizations, are involved in environmental protection. Government continues to use the National Environmental Fund (NEF) as a grant to ensure sustainable stakeholder participation. Since its establishment in 2010, the NEF has provided financial support to a total of forty two (42) projects with a total of Thirty Four million, Five Hundred and Eighty Two Thousand, One Hundred and Ninety One Pula (P34, 582,191). The NEF will continue to contribute positively to Government efforts towards sustainable community livelihoods and conservation.

124. The Global Environmental Facility (GEF) has since establishment financed 23 National projects at a cost of Thirty Four Million, Eight Hundred and Thirty Seven, One Hundred and Seventy US Dollars (USD34, 837, 170) and One Hundred and Eighty Eight (188) community projects through the Small Grant Program amounting to Five Million, Three Hundred and Thirty Eight Thousand, Six Hundred and Eighteen US Dollars (USD5, 338, 618). These funds were mainly used to pilot environmental management best practices and community based approaches to environmental governance in different thematic areas such as Land Management, Climate Change and Bio-Diversity. Our major successes have been on implementation of sustainable land management, restoration of degraded land, climate smart agriculture and livelihoods improvements in the Central, Chobe and Ngamiland Districts.
125. Botswana intends to replicate these successes across the country whilst strategically utilising GEF resources to enhance CBNRM through a capacity building programme for our communities to explore bio-diversity economy to create employment. This will mainly be financed from Seven Million, Three Hundred and Ten Thousand US Dollars (USD 7,310,000) already allocated to Botswana and Twenty Million, Eight Hundred and Sixteen Thousand, Six Hundred and Forty Two US Dollars (USD20, 816,642) for regional projects.

Clean and Safe Environment

126. Treated effluent discharged from our waste treatment facilities into the receiving environment remains a challenge as most of the wastewater treatment plants generate effluent of poor quality that does not meet acceptable discharge standards. Data generated from air pollution monitoring stations on the other hand is generally of acceptable standards.
127. As a way of ensuring environmental performance compliance, the Government continues to conduct audits and inspections of pollution generating entities, and indications from these monitoring activities suggest that most of these activities are non-compliant to environmental statutes and we are doing all we can to correct the situation.

Biodiversity and Ecosystem Conservation

128. The pressure of demand for natural resources as inputs for developmental initiatives is stretching ecosystems beyond their regenerative abilities. Therefore, these resources require appropriate management measures be implemented.
129. Government, in its effort to sustainably manage forest resources for socio-economic and environmental benefits, has undertaken various conservation initiatives. These include protection, restoration, rehabilitation, maintenance, sustainable utilisation and enhancement of the natural state.

130. Forest and range resources continue to play a significant role in rural livelihoods and poverty reduction. During the current financial year the sector has created Nine Thousand, Five Hundred and Twelve (9 512) jobs and accrued revenue amounting to Two Million, Eight Thousand, One Hundred and Ninety One Pula (P2, 008, 191.00)
131. Government continues to drive alternative poverty eradication packages namely, backyard tree nurseries, landscaping, phane harvesting, grass harvesting and manufacturing of fire beaters, all of which are implemented by communities in the rural areas.

Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

132. The Climate Change Policy has been developed by Government and will be tabled in the next Parliament for debate. Other policy instruments and strategies intended to support the implementation of this policy are currently undergoing development or review. These include the National Energy Policy; the National Agricultural Development Policy; the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan and the National Transport Policy. Additionally, a National Designated Authority and Energy Regulatory Authority have been established, while a National Adaptation Framework is being developed to guide the country in coordinating and implementing approaches for adaptation planning, the Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) programme is being implemented with a specific focus

to increase resilient production systems and improve livelihoods amidst climate changes.

133. Considering the global success of the Montreal Protocol on substances that deplete the Ozone Layer, there is an agreement by countries to reduce Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) which are friendly to the Ozone layer but still have a global warming potential as agreed under the Kigali Agreement. Botswana will be ratifying the Amendment to ensure that the country benefits from available support mechanisms.

Safe and Secure Use of Nuclear Technology

134. **Mister Speaker**, with regard to strengthening of public safety and security in the country, Botswana has developed an Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan (INSSP) to ensure security of radioactive sources. The plan was reviewed in March 2019, with the facilitation by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Furthermore, the amendment of the current law to incorporate issues of nuclear security is in progress. Other activities such as authorisations, inspections and enforcements are undertaken to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements and to provide assurance to the general public that safety and security of sources is maintained.

135. Government continues to sustain the implementation of environmental monitoring strategies aimed at managing public exposure to radiation material. To ensure that the public, radiation workers and the

environment are protected from adverse effects of radiation exposure, Government established a fully functional dosimetry and environmental laboratories. Several environmental monitoring sites have also been established countrywide and are indicating normal exposure levels. Furthermore, collection and analysis of environmental samples and foodstuffs in Serule and Gojwane areas, are ongoing in preparation for the envisioned uranium mining and milling in the area.

PUBLIC BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE

Regulation of the Construction Industry

136. **Mister Speaker,** The transformation of the local construction industry remains a priority to Government as it will not only improve performance of the sector but will also encourage competitiveness in the industry. The introduction of three regulatory bodies that cover the professions of Engineering, Quantity Surveying and Architects is expected to bring about professionalism and therefore improve service delivery in the sector. To this end, registration of professionals is progressing well under the three regulatory bodies.
137. Besides the registration of professionals in the construction industry, Government continues to work on the legislation in an attempt to close the gaps which may hinder the intended reform of the construction sector. To this end, Government will review the Engineers Registration

Act and the Architects Registration Act in order to close the gaps which have been identified so far during their implementation.

Housing Delivery

138. **Mister Speaker,** Government recognises access to housing as a basic human need and essential to quality of life. In line with the objectives of the National Policy on Housing of 2000, Government gives priority to low income housing programme such as the Self Help Housing Agency, commonly known as SHHA. This programme has played a very important role in ensuring home ownership through what is now called SHHA Turnkey and Home Improvement programme.
139. Decent housing leads to social upliftment and promotes good livelihoods. Furthermore, Government continues to explore the use of environmentally sustainable alternative building technologies and promote partnerships for exchange of ideas on international and national fronts such as the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda.
140. The Botswana Institute for Technology Research and Innovation (BITRI), through Nano fibre technology, has produced prototypes of industrial surgical masks. These masks can be used in mines to prevent inhalation of dust particles as well as in the health industry for protection from viruses. The masks have passed the universal certification tests. Pilot deployment has commenced and will be done at four (4) mines in

Botswana during this financial year. The organization has also developed and completed a foot and mouth disease test kit and the kits are currently being processed for commercialization.

141. The Botswana Innovation Hub has successfully completed two projects. The first one is a solar-powered water purification plant installed in Sojwe in the Kweneng District. The result of this intervention is that the community now has access to potable water. The second is a carrier-neutral data centre that creates data hosting and storage facilities by the Botswana Innovation Hub. This has enhanced hosting capabilities for BIH, innovators and other stakeholders. All the projects have been executed in collaboration with the private sector and Government will, through its institutions, continue to promote the growth of the national innovation ecosystem in partnership with the private sector.
142. In response to the dictates of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and the desire to ensure that Botswana acquire skills that would enable them to be active and productive participants in the digitised world, the Botswana Open University (BOU) has established an academy in partnership with Huawei Technologies Botswana. The academy is aimed at delivering industry standard training leading to professional certification for different Information Technology (IT) levels and specialisations.
143. In order to give impetus to nurturing a culture of research and innovation in Botswana, Government introduced the Botswana

Innovation Fund in 2017. The Fund avails grants to assist start-ups to close innovation gaps in the development cycle. To date, twelve companies owned by young Batswana innovators have been funded to the tune of Thirteen Million Pula. This is a modest start as we need to have more investment, especially from the private sector. We need to have our own Venture Capitalists and Angel Investors who will complement Government's efforts in growing our research and innovation capabilities.

144. I am happy to say that some investors have already come on board to support our research and innovation agenda. As indicated in my Inauguration Speech, Liquid Telecom has partnered with the Botswana Innovation Hub to train one thousand five hundred (1 500) youth in coding or software development. I also indicated, that a country wide internet access programme for students will see the development of Edu-zones providing a dedicated platform that will drive research, innovation and digital learning around the country. These initiatives provide a strong foundation which we can build upon.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The Use of ICT as a Platform for Learning

145. **Mister Speaker**, Government is in partnership with numerous organisations to support school connections and installation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) gadgets in schools.

This includes the provision of Wi-Fi and upgrading of band-width to a minimum of two megabytes per second (2Mbps) in schools as well as teacher capacitation. Video streaming of lessons have been introduced in three (3) secondary schools. The plan is to add another five (5) schools in 2020 and an additional two (2) in 2021.

146. ICT Infrastructure Development which includes integrating ICT in teaching and learning has been availed to all secondary schools; even though it requires upgrading. About 41 percent of primary schools have ICT infrastructure. In Ghanzi, Kgalagadi and Mabutsane, all primary schools have been provided with internet, Local Area Network and ICT officers. Plans are afoot to cover the whole of the Kweneng District in the next financial year. However, there are bandwidth limitations across all schools, hence the need to upgrade bandwidth to high speed internet. Government is collaborating with the Botswana Communications Regulatory Authority (BOCRA), the Botswana Fibre networks (BOFINET) and other telecommunication service providers that assist schools in the enhancement of ICT infrastructure and the provision of high speed internet as well as ICT gadgets to promote the integration of ICT in teaching and learning.
147. Twenty thousand (20 000) tablets and computers have been supplied to four hundred and sixteen (416) Primary and Secondary Schools through the Economic Stimulus Programme (ESP) and assistance from other stakeholders such as Botswana Communication regulatory Authority and the Universal Access and Service Fund (BOCRA-UASF), Orange

Botswana, Human Resource Development Council (HRDC), the Embassy of Japan and the Embassy of the Republic of South Korea.

148. **Mister Speaker,** Digitization is an important mechanism to support sustainability. In an effort to make learning flexible, convenient and lifelong, the Botswana Accountancy College has introduced an online learning platform to widen access to education by students in the field of professional accountancy and in business management. Across the country and the region, it is now possible for prospective students to study professional accounting qualifications online.
149. In pursuit of promoting access to information, libraries have become community resource centres for fostering lifelong-learning and knowledge enhancement. In general the number of people who visit libraries is about Eight Hundred and Fifty Thousand (850, 000) annually. A total of (Seventy Four) 74 out of One Hundred and Five (105) public libraries offer public access to computers and internet services and over Seventy Four Thousand (74,000) people have been trained on basic ICT skills since the inception of the programme in 2009. All these positive results demonstrate the potential that libraries have to champion efforts towards driving the economy from a resource based to information and knowledge based economy.
150. To date, sixteen (16) technology libraries have been constructed and are fully operational under Government's partnership with the Robert and Sara Rothschild Family Foundation. The seventeenth library is under

construction at Masunga and it is scheduled to start operation by March 2020.

151. **Mister Speaker,** Botswana Post continues to play a vital role in the delivery of ICT services through its increased service bouquet and delivery channels. The recent development resulted in the introduction of PosoMoney; an easy accessible, interoperable mobile money solution that allows customers to conveniently access a wide range of financial products and services. This service leverages on technology to address the challenges faced by the unbanked and the under banked. It works on any phone and any network.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Sector

152. **Mister Speaker,** there is no doubt, that the Government continues to undertake various initiatives geared towards the promotion, uptake and usage of reliable and affordable communication services across various segments of the population. These initiatives are implemented through both government funding and in collaboration with our partners in the private sector, leveraging on the existing mechanisms such as the Universal Access and Service Fund (UASF). The USAF has facilitated the provision of services to areas that would otherwise be considered not commercially viable by the network operators and service providers.
153. **Mister Speaker,** I am particularly delighted to inform you that these initiatives have started to bear fruit. As at March 2019, the mobile

money subscription was standing at One Million, One Hundred and Forty Nine Thousand, Six Hundred and Seventy Three (1,149,673). This has enabled people who would otherwise not have banking accounts, such as domestic workers, the elderly and school going children, to have access to banking services.

154. The upgrading of the telecommunication coverage in Mabutsane sub district, Kgalagadi and Ghanzi District covering sixty eight (68) villages, has enabled an estimated Seventy Thousand (70 000) citizens living in these villages to have access to broadband services.
155. As result of the continued investment in rolling out broadcasting infrastructure by Government and the installation of an integrated FM transmitter system for use by commercial radio broadcasters covering the areas of Hukuntsi, Tshane, Lokgwabe and Lehututu villages, more than 70 percent of the population has access to commercial radio stations. The continued call for the reduction in mobile broadband prices has borne fruit as now all the mobile operators have equated their Off-Net and On Net call charges thus reducing the cost on citizens.
156. Our continued efforts to reduce transit call costs by co-construction of backhaul links projects with our neighbouring countries being Namibia and South Africa, has led to an average reduction of 53 percent on the wholesale of internet price in the last twelve months. Whilst this reduction may have not yet trickled down to the consumers,

Government is working with concerned stakeholders to ensure that the same benefit is transferred to customers.

The National Backbone Network

157. **Mister Speaker**, as I have already highlighted, Two Hundred and Eleven (211) out of the four hundred (400) targeted localities are connected to the national backbone broadband infrastructure. In 2020/2021, Zhutshwa, Maake, Monong, Ngwatle, Ncaang, Ukhwi, Kole, Ncojane and Makunda will be connected through the microwave backhaul radio technologies to bring the number to Two Hundred and Twenty (220). The remaining villages will be connected by 2023.
158. My Government has made significant ICT investments through the Botswana Fibre Networks (BOFINET). Today Botswana has in excess of Ten Thousand (10 000km) Kilometres of optical fibre across the length and breadth of our country.
159. BOFINET also offers video-on-demand on the Internet through optical fibre. More is being done to increase fibre connectivity to our homes and develop Data Centres that will host our data in-country. BOFINET recently launched an optical fibre connectivity programme to our homes initially targeting sixteen thousand (16,000) homes in Gaborone and it is expected to be completed in 2020.

160. More than five thousand (5,000) businesses are already connected through the optical fibre network. It is only through the optical fibre infrastructure that we can meet the requirements of the Fourth Industrial Revolution technologies such as Internet-of-Things, Artificial Intelligence, Robotics and Big Data.

HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Botswana's Human Capital and the Knowledge Based Economy

161. **Mister Speaker,** The development of a knowledge based economy is dependent upon building synergies across the different sectors of our economy. It is within this context that our education quality assurance system will be closely aligned to those of professional bodies. In simple terms, we are going to witness closer collaboration between the Botswana Qualifications Authority and professional bodies like the Botswana Health Professionals Council, the Engineers Registration Board and the Architects Registration Council. This will go a long way towards engendering quality and relevance of our education to the job market. Most importantly, this endeavour will enhance the global competitiveness of our citizens.
162. **Mister Speaker,** Due to the ever evolving needs and expectations by the public on the nature and manner of how services should be delivered, Government continues to look for ways and means that will facilitate and enable public officers to deliver efficient and consistent service to the nation. To ensure that this happens, Government has

developed a Productivity Improvement Blue Print to tackle the most problematic areas of poor work ethic, inefficient government bureaucracy, inadequately educated workforce, restrictive labour laws and corruption. In addition, Government has developed an action plan to respond to the challenges outlined in the 2018 Global Competitiveness Report. The implementation of this action plan is ongoing.

163. Government is also in the process of formulating the Public Service Human Resources Framework whose intention is to enable the Botswana Public Service to manage their human resources effectively by providing a linkage between human resource policies and procedures. This will form the backbone which will enable the Public Service to anticipate future service delivery needs and equip it to plan and cater for addressing those needs in a seamless manner.
164. The Botswana Public Service College (BPSC) continues to deliver diverse programmes that are targeted at closing competency gaps for Public officers. This involves, amongst others the review of current programmes as well as building effective collaborations. Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey is one of the institutions which, through its experience will assist the BPSC to enrich its programmes as well as introduce the use of e-learning to reach an extensive client base.
165. Deliberate efforts are also being made to ensure the creation of a succession pool through the development of a talent management and succession planning framework. Furthermore, Government will progress

the implementation of a development based Assessment process as well as assess the impact of programmes to respond to current needs. The operationalization of the Botswana Public Service Assessment/Development Centre (AC/DC) is at an advanced stage with sourcing for key personnel and other logistical arrangements being done to have the Centre piloted by April 2020.

Industrial Relations

166. **Mister Speaker,** Social dialogue remains the pillar of good industrial relations in the country. To this end, there are Sixty (60) registered Trade Unions, two Trade Union Federations and one Employers' Organisation. The number of Trade Unions has gone down as a result of the cancellation of three (3) Trade Unions in May 2019 due to non-compliance with the Trade Unions and Employers' Organisations Act and the dissolution of one (1) Trade Union.

Labour Relations

167. **Mister Speaker,** Tripartite partners comprising representatives of Government, employers and workers are finalising the Botswana Decent Work Country Programme (BDWCP) for 2019–2023. Priorities for the Programme are Employment creation, Social Dialogue, Social Protection and Compliance with International Standards.
168. Government in collaboration with representatives of employers and workers continues to make progress in the review of labour laws in order

to close the gaps in the laws and align them with the provisions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions that have been ratified by Botswana. The consultation process in this regard has resulted in the adoption of the revised list of essential services which is deemed to be in compliance with ILO Convention No. 87.

169. All these underline the commitment of the Government to promote workers' rights and doing business. It is critical that the outcome of the consultation process in this regard should be in the best interest of Botswana. Consequently, the implementation of the outcome of this process requires full consultation between the relevant Ministry and all stakeholders.
170. As Botswana continues to strive for decent work, minimum wage rates were increased by 17 percent for all sectors with the exception of Agriculture and Domestic sectors which were increased to One Thousand Pula (P1000) per month with effect from the 1st July 2019.
171. To foster and strengthen work place Occupational Health and Safety compliance, it has become necessary that the Factories and Workers Compensation Acts be reviewed in line with international standards. The review of the laws is expected to help reduce accidents and occupational diseases affecting the workforce which have a negative impact on compensation claims. Furthermore, a draft Occupational Health and Safety Policy has been developed. The review of the Acts and

finalisation of the Policy are expected to be completed in this financial year.

172. To maintain good industrial relations in the country, Government has committed to strengthening the Labour Inspection function. The strengthening of the function seeks to promote social dialogue at the workplace which in turn would reduce the number of trade disputes referred for mediation. A Labour Inspection Policy is being developed to provide a framework for the function. The Development of the Policy is expected to be completed in December 2019.
173. Government is determined to improve its relationship with Public Sector Unions, and it is working towards the resuscitation of the Public Service Bargaining Council (PSBC), which collapsed in 2017 due to misunderstandings between both parties. The PSBC remains the legal platform through which issues of employment relations ought to be negotiated and agreed upon, thereby promoting a harmonious relationship between the Government as the employer and employee organisations. It therefore calls for each concerned party to commit to the Council's resuscitation.
174. **Mister Speaker,** Government is committed to building constructive employer/employee relations and transforming Botswana into a high performing nation that leverages on the Fourth Industrial Revolution to improve public service delivery and citizen participation to fast track employment generation and socio economic development.

175. In our pursuit of Public Service efficiency and effectiveness, Government and Public Service Unions, as partners, have been working hard to foster good employee relations in the Public Service. So far, some notable milestones have been achieved, which include the successful conclusion of salary negotiations between Government and Public Service Unions,
176. In August 2019, Government and Public Service Unions concluded a monumental agreement on PEMANDU and other conditions of service for Public Service employees. Some of the key issues that the parties were able to agree on are; Remuneration Policy for the Public Service, the Development of a Fan shaped salary structure, the increase of Medical Aid Contributions by Government for employees on salary Grades A and B, as well as an increase of the monthly Salaries of Public Service employees on grades A to D.
177. Government is currently working on the development of a Public Service remuneration policy, the development of a new salary structure with an inter grade differential to facilitate pay for performance and reduce stagnation.
178. Furthermore, in October 2019, my Government took a decision on the re-employment of former Public Service employees who were dismissed as a direct result of having participated in the Public Service National industrial strike of 2011. So far two hundred and twenty nine (229) former employees have submitted requests for reemployment.

179. It is also worth noting **Mister Speaker** that following the completion of work by the Commission led by Honourable Justice Monametsi, Government has adopted most of the recommendations by the Commission to improve the conditions of service for the Members of Parliament, Councillors, Ntlo Ya Dikgosi and the Judiciary.
180. **Mister Speaker**, although some milestones have been achieved, there is still more that needs to be done. The focus now should be on the critical outstanding issues relating to the resuscitation of the Public Service Bargaining Council and the Review of Labour Laws. I wish to urge relevant parties to speed up the process of concluding this important task.
181. That notwithstanding, Government and recognized Public Service Trade Unions successfully negotiated salary adjustments for the financial years 2019/20 and 2020/21 in February 2019. Government shall continue to promote the relationship with the Public Sector Unions to ensure that any animosity between the two parties is permanently dealt with.
182. Employee Safety at the workplace continues to be a challenge, and therefore, the Government through its structures, is committed to reducing work related injuries and diseases at all cost. The Safety Health and Environment Unit at the Directorate of Public Service Management was established solely to ensure safety at the workplace and to drive the program across Government.

SPORT AND CULTURE DEVELOPMENT

Sport Development

183. As part of Government's initiative to promote Botswana as a destination of choice for major conferences and international events, Botswana hosted two major sporting events, being the African Union Sports Council Region 5 Youth Games and the Africa Karate Championships. Botswana will strive to host more international sporting events not only to attract foreign direct investment, but also to develop the capacity of our people and create jobs. In addition to hosting, our National teams continue to achieve encouraging results with a total of Two Hundred and Thirty Two (232) medals won, Eighty One (81) of which are gold, in international sporting events over the last twelve months.
184. Government continues to develop sport infrastructure across the country to promote participation in sports and recreation. A project aimed at providing basic sporting facilities to the rural and semi-urban communities where there is shortage of such facilities is currently underway. The project is being implemented in the following localities; Bobonong, Goodhope, Kanye, Kasane, Mmadinare, Moshupa, Rakops, Tonota, Tsabong and Tutume. Over Fifty million Pula (P50 million) has been allocated for the ten (10) projects, and it is expected that during construction jobs will be created in all the localities.

Cultural and Creative Industries

185. In recognition of the talent of our people and the potential of the cultural and creative industries to create jobs, my Government has initiated processes to improve legislation and policy frameworks for the sector. This includes the review of the Cinematography Act, the development of the National Arts Council Act and the accession to the UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

TRANSPORT SECTOR

Aviation Sector

186. **Mister Speaker**, the development of facilities and improvement of business for the aviation industry is expected to contribute immensely towards the growth of tourism, mining as well as various business and trade opportunities; which will subsequently contribute to the growth of the country's Gross Domestic Product.
187. Government will continue to develop our transport infrastructure in order to attract investors and tourists. Considering the importance of Maun in the growth of tourism, efforts to decongest its airport terminal are underway. A decongestion Terminal project was started in April 2019. This project is anticipated to be completed within twelve (12) months.

188. The Civil Aviation Authority of Botswana (CAAB) in partnership with SEZA will also develop the landside at Sir Seretse Khama International Airport as a way to maximize the non-aeronautical revenue space. The idea behind this partnership is to create value from the Sir Seretse Khama International Airport landside, which is approximately Five Hundred and Seventy Three hectares (573Ha) and further achieve the expectations of the Civil Aviation Authority of Botswana (CAAB) Act of 2011 of becoming financially viable.

The Open Skies Policy

189. **Mister Speaker** Botswana, upon the implementation of the Open skies policy, will add significantly to the growth of the Aviation Industry. A total of six main airports are operational in Botswana in addition to twenty (20) secondary airfields designed for the operation of aircraft to a maximum all up weight (MAUW) of Five Thousand, Seven Hundred kilograms (5700kg). The overall connectivity of Botswana to the African region is mainly driven through the four major airports being; the Sir Seretse Khama International Airport, the Maun International Airport, the Kasane International Airport and the Phillip Matante International Airport in Francistown.
190. Scheduled international movements are offered by five carriers, which are Air Botswana, Air Namibia, Ethiopian Airlines, SA Airlink and South African Express. These airlines offer direct connections between Botswana, South Africa, Namibia and Ethiopia. The new scheduled

services will expand our connectivity to three more destinations being; Victoria Falls, Harare and Lusaka. Qatar Airways will add to the operators by starting to fly into the country in mid-December 2019.

191. Furthermore, Air Botswana will also commence operations to Harare and Lusaka, exercising fifth Freedom traffic rights between Lusaka and Harare. Over and above these, another airline, Mack Airline, has been licensed by CAAB to carry out scheduled services between Maun and Windhoek and between Kasane and Victoria Falls. The operation is anticipated to commence during the last quarter of this financial year.
192. Air Botswana with the assistance of Government, procured three of the four aircraft it needs to effectively operate and deliver on its mandate, as per its current 2016-2021 turnaround strategy. The three aircraft, namely the two ATR72-600 and the Embraer E170 jet have been integrated into operation. The airline is still awaiting the Foreign Operators Permit (FOP) from the Governments of South Africa, Zimbabwe and Zambia to facilitate jet operation.

Road Development

193. **Mister Speaker,** Road infrastructure development remains a fundamental aspect of sustainable economic growth and thus Government will continue to view it as one of the country's priority areas.

194. During the 2019/20 financial year, a number of construction projects have commenced, and are at various stages of completion. One of the most significant is the Kazungula Bridge Project – a bilateral project between Botswana and Zambia which includes the development of a One Stop Border Post (OSBP) facility straddling the bridge.
195. Other projects and their expected completion dates are; the Mohebo Bridge Project due for completion in October 2020 according to the revised programme, the upgrading of the Gaborone-Boatle twenty kilometre (20km) dual carriage way due for completion in February 2020, the Dibete-Mookane-Machaneng One Hundred and Thirty Two Kilometre (132km) road due for completion in August 2020, the Tshesebe-Masunga fifty one kilometre (51km) road due for completion in August 2021, the Charleshill-Ncojane One Hundred and Nine kilometre (109km) road due for completion in April 2020, the Mabeleapudi-Serule, Sixty One and a half kilometre (61.5km) road due for completion in July 2020, and the Mosu-Tlhalamabele twenty eight kilometre (28km) road due for completion in July 2020.
196. Other construction works being implemented under the Output and Performance-based Road Contracts along the A10 and A2 roads, are the Mmankgodi Junction-Kanye-Jwaneng and the B101 road Rakhuna-Tlhareseleele-Pitsane-Phitshane Molopo-Mabule road which is due for completion in December 2019.

197. **Mister Speaker,** following the agreement between the Government of Botswana and the Government of the People's Republic of China, a Feasibility study is being conducted for the reconstruction of the dilapidated Nata-Maun road. This will pave the way for the upgrading of the road, which is planned for in the next financial year.
198. Government will also design and reconstruct the A3 road from Francistown to Nata and Maun-Mohembo, some sections of the Nata-Kazungula road and the Palapye-Martin's Drift road. The A3 road plays an important role in linking Botswana with Central Africa as we anticipate the increase in freight transport upon the completion of the Kazungula Bridge.

Road Maintenance

199. **Mister Speaker,** Government is aware of the status of some of the roads in the country which require urgent attention with regard to maintenance interventions. Government intends to ensure that these roads become acceptable for use.
200. Road sections that have been completed through periodic maintenance during the 2018/19 financial year are: the Sehithwa-Kuke Eighty Six kilometre (86km) Road, the Gantsi Junction-Tsootsha Road Section A, Forty kilometre (40km) road, the Artesia-Dibete Forty Seven (47km) Road, the Makalamabedi-Maun, Sixty One kilometre (61km) Road, the

A3 Mathangwane Road section, the A2 Junction 44-Mmamuno Road, and the Molepolole-Lephephe Ninety Four kilometre (94km) road.

Road Safety

201. **Mister Speaker**, road safety remains a public safety challenge as witnessed by the number of lives lost on our roads. Collaborative efforts with all relevant stakeholders in reducing road traffic accidents that result in fatal and serious injuries are being pursued. To this end, the Botswana Police Service, the Roads Department and the Health Services sector will continue to take a leading role in reducing the number of accidents on our roads.

Botswana Integrated Transport Project (BITP)

202. **Mister Speaker**, The supply and installation of equipment for the New Greater Gaborone Traffic Signals System Modernization and Provision of a Centralized Traffic Control (CTC) project, was launched in August 2019 and onsite installation is currently in progress. This project will modernise the traffic signals system in Greater Gaborone to be responsive to peak and off-peak traffic changes. It will also be centrally controlled, resulting in overall improvement in traffic flow. The construction of three (3) Interchanges along the K T Motsete Drive ("Western Bypass") was launched in October 2019 and site clearance works commenced this past Friday, on 15 November 2019.

203. Meanwhile, the design for Layout Improvements of Selected Intersections associated with the new Traffic Signals system is underway (due for completion by March 2020) and construction is expected to commence in the coming financial year. Under the Botswana Integrated Transport Project, Government will also complete the National Multi-modal Transport Master Plan and the Greater Gaborone Transport Master Plan, during the coming financial year. These will guide future transport development nationally and within the Greater Gaborone context.

Rail Transport

204. **Mister Speaker,** Botswana Railways has identified key infrastructural projects which need to be undertaken during NDP 11. These projects will promote economic diversification and international trade. Amongst these projects are conducting the feasibility of the Mmamabula – Lephalale Rail Line. The proposed new rail link would start at Mmamabula Coal Fields and end at Lephalale, where it will connect with the South African railway network.

205. The other project by Botswana Railways is to carry out a feasibility study for an estimated Three Hundred and Sixty Seven kilometre (367 km) railway line from Mosetse to Kazungula. The Mosetse – Kazungula Railway Line will link the Botswana and Zambian rail network creating a direct north-south corridor from Botswana through to the Republic of South Africa.

The Commuter Train Service

206. **Mister Speaker,** Government intends to reduce traffic congestion and road accidents particularly in the greater Gaborone area. In order to realise this, the Botswana Railways has introduced a commuter service train from Lobatse to Gaborone. This service is currently using mainline locomotives and coaches which are expensive to maintain. Therefore, Government is considering introducing Diesel Multiple Units (DMU's) which are fit for purpose, to run this service. As soon as the DMUs are purchased, the Commuter Train Service will also be extended to areas between Pilane and Gaborone and will include stops such as Morwa, Mmamashia, Phakalane and Sebele.

LAND

Land Use Planning and Management

207. **Mister Speaker,** Government has identified land use as a critical factor in the development of the economy and empowerment of citizens of this country. As one of the facilitative initiatives for improved land use planning, Government approved the National Spatial Plan (NSP) in June 2019. The NSP is a framework that provides guidance for planning future development and investment in the country. This plan is currently in the process of being mainstreamed into other processes, such as the national development planning process, in order to facilitate optimal developmental outcomes for Botswana.

208. In an endeavour to create vibrant urban centres with capabilities to unlock opportunities for development and the promotion of innovative economic activities, Government has prepared revitalization plans for strategic areas in Francistown, Lobatse, Selebi Phikwe, Kasane and Kazungula. These plans once fully adopted and implemented, will play a pivotal role in leading the transformation and revitalisation of these towns and cities, making them more attractive to investors.
209. Government has significantly invested in the land registration system and improvements on land administration, through the Land Administration Procedures Capacity and Systems (LAPCAS) project. This project was conceived with a view to develop efficient, effective and transparent land administration by devising a system through which all land rights in the country would be surveyed and registered.

WATER

210. **Mister Speaker,** the Government of Botswana remains committed to the provision of potable water and sanitation services. Several governance and legislative instruments geared towards the provision of clean water and safely managed sanitation, are currently being developed. In support of this endeavour, the 1968 Water Act and its related pieces of legislation, are being reviewed.

National Water Security

211. **Mister Speaker,** the total water demand currently stands at two hundred and forty - five million cubic meters (245Mm³). The demand is expected to increase to three hundred and forty million cubic meters (340Mm³) by 2035. The main water sources are surface water, groundwater and wastewater reuse. The water supply status is at two hundred and twenty-five Million Cubic Metre (225Mm³)
212. Botswana is consistently experiencing hydrological droughts that lead to challenges in water security. Climate change uncertainty calls for the need to put in place a water security strategy. The strategy would include water conservation, reclamation and recycling, groundwater exploration; wellfields expansion and mega-transfer schemes such as Chobe-Zambezi, Lesotho Highlands and the utilization of sea water from the Atlantic Ocean are the potential sources for water security. At present there are a number of water and sanitation infrastructure development projects that are being implemented. These are network rehabilitation; upgrade and refurbishment of systems; and water conveyance pipelines from already existing resources to demand areas.
213. The optimisation of the North South Water Carrier was completed in June 2019. The objective of the project was to improve water supply for the Greater Gaborone area by increasing the water flows to the Mmamashia Water Treatment Plant from seven hundred (700) liters per second to a minimum of one thousand (1000) liters per second and a maximum of one thousand, three hundred and fifty (1350) liters per

second. Currently the pump station is delivering one thousand, two hundred (1200) liters per second.

214. Efforts towards wastewater reuse are done through the rehabilitation of the Glen Valley Treatment Plant and the Glen Valley Reclamation projects. The rehabilitation of the Glen Valley Wastewater Treatment Plant is to ensure compliance of treated sewage with the requirements for reclamation. The project will bring back the Glen Valley Wastewater Treatment Plant to a treatment capacity of ninety million litres per day (90ML/day). The Rehabilitation project commenced in May 2019 and is to be completed by April 2020. Meanwhile the Glen Valley Water Reclamation is at feasibility stage. The project is intended to reclaim sixty (60) million litres a day to augment water supply in the greater Gaborone area.
215. Sustainable groundwater supply capacity stands at ninety six million cubic metres (96Mm³) but presently the amount of groundwater use is twenty eight million cubic metres (28Mm³), which is approximately 30 percent of sustainable supply capacity. Efforts to optimize the utilization of groundwater resources are done through projects such as the construction of the one hundred kilometres (100km) pipeline from Masama Wellfields to Mmamashia, which is meant to increase water supply to the Southern part of Botswana by sixty four million litres per day (64ML/day). The project is intended to mitigate the existing deficit in the greater Gaborone area, and address the imminent severe supply

deficit following the connection of Thamaga, Moshupa and Kanye to the North South Carrier.

ENERGY

Regulation of the Energy Industry

216. **Mister Speaker,** Government continues to undertake organizational reforms to align its mandate to promote economic inclusion and green technology. Government is currently reviewing and developing appropriate regulations to create an enabling environment for wealth creation in the energy sector. In this regard Government is reviewing the Botswana Energy Regulatory Authority (BERA) Act and Draft Regulations, the Draft Petroleum Products Bill as well as the Gas Bill to regulate and facilitate the private sector.
217. Therefore the coming into operation of such an Act will provide for the manufacturing, supply, storage, distribution retail and use of the petroleum products. The Act will also facilitate the operation of Botswana Oil Limited. The existence of the Act will provide for the development and operation of upstream and downstream activities such as exploration, production, supply, storage, distribution, retail and the use of gas products.
218. BERA continues to monitor the activities, conduct and compliance of industry players to ensure that there is increased economic contribution

in the trading of petroleum products. As a result of the effective monitoring, the Regulator has confiscated about Three Hundred and Ten Thousand (310 000) litres of fuel worth Two Million, Nine Hundred and Forty Five thousand Pula (P2.945 million).

Security of Supply of Petroleum Products

219. **Mister Speaker**, to further ensure national security of fuel supply, the Government is developing additional strategic fuel storage facilities through Botswana Oil Limited (BOL). These are the one hundred and Eighty Six (186) million litres Tshele Hills storage to be implemented through Public Private Partnership (PPP). The project is at the inception stage and will pave way for the procurement of the developer.
220. In promoting access to petroleum products in remote areas, which are traditionally not serviced by the International Oil Companies (IOCs), Botswana Oil is working on introducing Remote Area Energy Centres (RAECs) which are effectively small containerized mobile filling stations that are aimed at promoting access to petroleum products in remote areas.

The Solar Energy Programme

221. **Mister Speaker**, Solar Energy is going to be promoted vigorously so that it becomes a significant contributor to the energy sector. Government is also developing Solar Guidelines to enable Botswana to

generate electricity for their own use while selling any excess to the Botswana Power Corporation up to a limit that will be defined by the Regulator. These guidelines, are envisaged to be completed by the end of this financial year. This will help to diversify power generation away from dependence on thermal generation and further economically empower Botswana.

Electricity Generation, Transmission and Distribution Infrastructure

222. **Mister Speaker,** the main power infrastructure development projects being undertaken by Government through the Botswana Power Corporation (BPC) include the refurbishment of Morupule A, a One Hundred and Thirty Two Megawatt (132MW) Power Station, Morupule B, a Six Hundred Megawatt (600MW) Power Station, defects remediation, extension, reinforcement and refurbishment of the transmission and distribution network as well as the electrification of villages.
223. Significant progress is being made to achieve self-sufficiency in power generation with the return to service of the Morupule A Power Station before the end of this financial year.
224. The Morupule B defects remediation project which is meant to address the ensuing plant performance challenges, is now at the implementation stage with the remedial works having commenced on the first Unit in June 2019. All construction and equipment defects which are impacting

on the Morupule B plant viability, should be addressed in the next four (4) years. This plant will thereafter be expected to operate reliably, generating Six Hundred Megawatts (600MW) of power. A study to determine future generation requirements beyond 2024 is underway and is expected to be completed before the end of this financial year.

225. **Mister Speaker,** the North West Transmission Grid extension project is at an advanced stage, with the grid switch on scheduled for the end of March 2020. This project will stimulate mining activities in the North West region.

226. Another initiative being the Rural Electrification Project, is currently ongoing. As at October 2019, sixty (60) villages have been completed from the planned one hundred and fifteen (115) villages. The ongoing electrification of villages provides access to clean energy to rural communities, which is fundamental for socio economic development and poverty eradication.

MINING

Minerals Sector

227. **Mister Speaker,** a combination of factors have contributed to widespread uncertainty and a global downturn in the diamond industry during the first half of 2019. Economic uncertainty generated by an unstable geopolitical climate has also fostered a heightened sense of

caution among the banks that finance the trade, as well as diamond brokers and consumers of luxury goods.

228. The execution of the Jwaneng Mine Cut 9 commenced in April 2019 and will extend the life of the mine from 2028 to 2035. The project is envisaged to employ One Thousand One Hundred and Fifty Three (1153) people at peak production, of which 98 percent will be citizens. The Jwaneng Cut 9 project will bring about benefits including the establishment of a Mining Equipment Component Rebuild Centre in Botswana. The Debswana Mining Company is also planning to reopen the Apprentice and Artisan Training Centre. The Company aims to develop citizen suppliers in key areas of the diamond value chain. Jwaneng mine currently employs Four Thousand, seven Hundred and Fifty Six (4756) people of which Four Thousand, Six Hundred and Seventy One (4671) or 98.2 percent are citizens.
229. The Letlhakane Mine Tailings Treatment project started in 2016 and the Company is doing a feasibility study to evaluate options of going underground. Lucara Botswana is doing a feasibility study at the Karowe mine with a strategic plan to go underground in 2023 to increase the life span of the mine to 2041. Karowe Mine currently employs Eight Hundred and Sixty Two (862) people of which Eight Hundred and Fifty (850) or 98.6 percent are citizens.
230. Khoemacau Copper Mining, in the North West has started the construction of the boxcuts at Zone 5 mining concession with

anticipation to start concentrate exportation during the first quarter of 2021. Three boxcuts whose ground breaking ceremony was performed in June 2019 are being constructed. The Construction of the haul road from Zone 5 to the Bosetu plant in Toteng has commenced and will be used to transport ore from the mine to the plant. The mine currently employs Eight Hundred and Fourteen (814) people of which Seven Hundred and Eighty One (781) or 95.9 percent are citizens.

231. Minergy Coal has completed the boxcut and exposed the coal and the plant is operational and the mine has started to export coal to the Republic of South Africa. Ghaghoo Mine in the Central Kgalagadi Game Reserve which has been under the Care and Maintenance of a liquidator since the first quarter of 2017 has found an investor who is considering its acquisition. The mine currently employs ninety five (95) people of whom ninety four (94) or 98.9 percent are citizens.

Bamangwato Concessions Limited (BCL)

232. **Mister Speaker,** the Task team setup to carry out an evaluation to delineate the BCL assets completed their work at the end of June 2019. The report from the Task Team was submitted to the new liquidators to consider the findings and facilitate decision making on the next stage. Since taking over the liquidation process in August this year, the new Liquidator has given seven (7) companies permission to carryout due diligence reviews on the BCL and Tati Mining assets, to inform themselves if they can invest in the assets. Government continues to

support the liquidation process by funding care and maintenance costs to preserve the assets while investors are still doing their due diligence. It must be appreciated that this is a delicate and complex exercise that will take time to evaluate and implement.

Diamonds Industry Performance

233. The global diamond industry in the first half of 2019 has faced a variety of challenges leading to widespread uncertainty and declining commerce across all segments of the diamond value chain. Sales for the first seven (7) months of 2019 were Two billion, Two Hundred million US Dollars (2.2 billion USD) as compared to Two billion, Eight Hundred million US Dollars (2.8 billion USD) during the same period last year, signifying a reduction in sales of 21 percent. Over the first seven (7) months of 2019, an array of interrelated developments across the entire value chain have exerted pressure on Botswana's diamond production and sales. One of the key drivers of the first-half slowdown was the over stocking of polished diamonds by the retailer thus reducing the demand for rough diamonds.
234. Despite the prevailing challenges in the sector, Botswana remained the single largest contributor to the increase in the value of the world's diamond production in 2018, as we increased our output by Six (6) percent to twenty four point four (24.4) million carats while the average price earned for our rough diamonds remained steady at, One Hundred and forty five US Dollars per carat (\$145/ct).

235. Government has developed a diamond beneficiation strategy in order to enable citizen participation in the diamond value chain. Among other things, the strategy is expected to equip citizens with appropriate industry skills, general management and leadership skills as well as incubation of citizen businesses.

GOVERNANCE

Democracy and Good Governance

236. **Mister Speaker,** Botswana remains committed to uphold the shared values of democracy, good governance, the rule of law and the respect for human rights. These universal ideals are, undoubtedly, the foundation for any sustainable development, peace, unity and prosperity, of which my Government is steadfast in their preservation and advancement.
237. As I stated in my Inaugural Speech recently my Government intends to conduct a comprehensive review of the Constitution of Botswana. This critical exercise, aims to remove any provisions that may be deemed discriminatory as well as strengthen the functions of oversight institutions thus improving Botswana's functional democracy. The envisaged review will be conducted in accordance with one of our fundamental national principles of consultation for inclusiveness.

238. The adoption of the Declaration of Assets and Liabilities Bill by the 11th Parliament, in August this year, is a commendable milestone in our resolve as a nation to intensify our efforts to fight corruption. It also demonstrates my Government's commitment to fulfil our international obligations contained in multilateral instruments such as the United Nations Convention Against Corruption. The establishment of the Ethics and Integrity Directorate, which will be responsible for administering the law on the Declaration of Assets and Liabilities as well as conflict of interest, is currently underway. The Office is expected to be operational by December 2019.
239. We are enhancing the transparency and maturity of our democracy through the reinforcement of the foundations of good governance. The constitutional review and the strengthening of the functions of oversight institutions as well as declarations of assets and liabilities are measures that ensure that justice is not just done, but seen to be done. These measures will speak to the conviction that upholding of the rule of law is sacrosanct and not negotiable. We are taking these steps to entrench the ideal that no one is above the law.
240. When our forebears laid these foundations, they bestowed upon us the legacy of continuity through the fortification of the pillars of our democracy so that they can stand the test of time. We are steadfast in the determination to ensure that Botswana remains clean of contaminants that can steer us away from the path of democracy and good governance that we so proudly inherited from our forefathers.

241. In February this year, Botswana acceded to the Africa Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), whose overarching objective is to promote political and economic governance with a view to achieve political stability, accelerated continental integration as well as sustainable development. Botswana's membership to this Continental self-assessment mechanism will further enrich her strong democratic culture.
242. In an effort to bring services closer to the public, as well as increasing accessibility, the Office of the Ombudsman has decentralised its services which are now available in Gaborone, Francistown, Maun and more recently Tsabong. The Tsabong office is at the initial stage of operation whilst the other three are fully functional.

Public Sector Reforms

243. **Mister Speaker,** in order to improve public service efficiency, my Government has embarked upon a rationalization exercise of ministerial portfolio responsibilities and functions. To this end, Government is considering the rationalisation of Government Ministries to improve service delivery, eliminating any duplication and overlaps of responsibilities across sectors, closing any existing structural gaps as well as identifying obsolete functions. Moreover, Government will consider a re-labelling exercise of Government Ministries to make their names, easy, relevant and more meaningful to people.

244. The National Transformation Strategy is key to the turnaround of Botswana's economic fortunes. In this regard, the National Transformation Task Team's functions will be aligned with the National Vision 2036 Council for delivering our national objectives. The alignment will encompass our local government structures as well as Village Development Committees, thereby enabling ownership and responsibility to deliver on our National Vision to Botswana.

The National Monitoring and Evaluation System

245. Botswana continues to strengthen public sector management implementation of the National Monitoring and Evaluation System (NMES). The main purpose of this System is to promote the use of performance information for evidence-based policy and decision making to improve public sector performance. The ongoing Mid-Term Review process of NDP 11 provides an opportunity for Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) to use the indicators and their targets, as contained in the NDP 11 Performance Framework, to objectively review the implementation of NDP 11.

Legislative Review

246. **Mister Speaker,** The Ombudsman Act of 1995 is currently being amended to broaden its mandate by conferring on it the responsibility to protect and promote human rights. In that respect, the new law shall give the Office of the Ombudsman enough powers to effectively execute its functions.

247. In the last financial year the office recorded a high reduction of backlog cases as it attained a 91.8 percent backlog resolution rate. The achievement was made possible by closer engagement of the Ombudsman with Accounting Officers to deepen understanding of the process of complaint resolution. Furthermore, the formalisation of the preparation of annual case lists to Government has had a positive impact on the case resolution rate.
248. In 2018, Parliament enacted a total of Twenty Five (25) Acts in order to comply with FATF Recommendations on the prevention and control of the laundering of the proceeds of crime, the financing of terrorism and the financing of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The Twenty five (25) Acts referred to have similarly met the Sustainable Development Goal 16 on Just, Peaceful and Inclusive Societies. The targets for SDG 16 include significant reduction of illicit financial and arms flows; to strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and to combat all forms of organized crime; to reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms; and to develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels by preventing violence and combatting terrorism and crime.
249. In this respect, in October 2018, Botswana made a request for the re-rating of the twenty five (25) Anti Money Laundering and Combating Financing of Terrorism legislation enacted in 2018 for its compliance with the FATF standards. The re-rating of Botswana laws was undertaken by

ESAAMLG at their 37th Meeting of Senior Officials held in Tanzania on April 2019. The outcome of the request was that, of thirty eight (38) FATF Recommendations requested for re-rating, only thirty two (32) were granted.

250. In order to ensure full compliance of Botswana's laws with FATF standards, the Financial Intelligence Act, the Trust Property Act, the Counter-Terrorism Regulations and the Financial Intelligence Regulations are being amended to close the gaps identified during the re-rating of Botswana's laws. Botswana will submit a second request for re-rating for consideration by ESAAMLG at their April 2020 meeting.

Access to Justice and the Rule of Law

251. **Mister Speaker,** the core mandate of the Judiciary is to interpret the law and resolve disputes. The focus and priority this year is on restructuring the Judiciary to make it more relevant and responsive to the emerging trends of the 21st century. A major milestone in the judicial history of this country is that, the Judiciary has been fully localized. As a result, the judicial interpretation of the laws is relevant to the customs and norms of the nation.
252. **Mister Speaker,** Government has established a Corruption Court to deal solely with all forms of corruption. This is also intended to enhance the disposal of these cases which tend to take long to prosecute. The

Court will be rolled out to other High Court divisions since it has been operating at only one High Court.

Office of the Receiver

253. **Mister Speaker,** the Office of the Receiver was established by the Proceeds and Instruments of Crime Act (PICA), with a mandate to seize, manage and preserve the value of property in its possession until the Court decides how the property should be dealt with. As at July 2019, the Receiver had been served with twenty-one (21) Court Orders directing him to take over the management of immovable and movable property including residential and industrial plots, vehicles, furniture, farms, cattle and cash.

Refugee Management

254. **Mister Speaker,** As of October 2019, there were two thousand nine hundred and ninety nine (2999) refugees in Botswana. This number has significantly declined as seven hundred and seventy (770) Namibian nationals whose refugee status in Botswana had ceased, were successfully and cordially returned to Namibia. This exercise was conducted under the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) guidance and supervision.

NATIONAL SECURITY

The Botswana Defence Force

255. **Mister Speaker**, a strong and prosperous Botswana is premised on the assurance of national security. Botswana as an independent and sovereign state has to ensure the security of its people and its territorial integrity. To this effect, the Botswana Defence Force is being re-capacitated to effectively carry out its mandate.
256. Beyond national defence and our frontiers, Botswana as a responsible member of the international community has obligations through organizations such as the United Nations, the African Union and Southern African Development Community to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security. For this reason, the BDF is undergoing relevant restructuring and training to enable it to take part in peacekeeping and other security operations.

The Botswana Police Service

257. In the quest to ensure public safety and protection the Botswana Police Service has actively adopted Community Policing Strategy, which allows the police and the community to work closely to combat crime, with notable success. The determination of the Police Service to reduce crime has enhanced public confidence in the police locally, and placed Botswana as a country in good standing in the international arena.

258. The Police Service investigation capacity has also been enhanced to appropriately deal with drug and human trafficking, fraud, money laundering and cyber - attacks through the establishment of International Relations and Cyber Forensics Departments.

Prisons and Rehabilitation

259. **Mister Speaker**, the daily average population in Prisons is 7.6 percent below the authorized holding capacity due to a reduction in the number of offenders incarcerated and successful rehabilitation programmes. This effort will be complemented by finalization of a National Prisoner Rehabilitation Policy in 2020.

FOREIGN POLICY

260. **Mister Speaker**, as I stated in my last State of the Nation address, Botswana continues to nurture friendly relations with other countries and forge strategic partnerships with the international community for her benefit and the greater good of humanity. In this context, I am pleased to note that in the last year, relations between Botswana and other countries, as well as international organisations, has continued to mature and assume a more strategic significance.

261. This has been evidently illustrated by the number of high level exchanges undertaken with other countries, bilateral engagements at various levels of Government, people to people interactions, the number

of international conferences we hosted and the leadership roles we assumed in regional as well as international organisations.

262. As you may be aware, in terms of engagements, I had the honour to undertake State Visits to the Republic of Kenya and Qatar during this period, while I also had the pleasure to host high level visits by the Heads of State of the Republic of Rwanda and the Republic of Namibia. I further undertook working visits to the United States of America, Poland, Switzerland, and South Africa.
263. Regionally, I have engaged extensively with my counterparts through structured bilateral mechanisms, such as the Bi-National Commissions (BNC). We thus held a Bi-National Commission with Zimbabwe in February 2019. I also participated at the 32nd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government Summit held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in February, this year.
264. I note with satisfaction that in recognition of Botswana's commitment towards the regional agenda, she was assigned the following leadership roles in the international system;
265. At the last SADC Summit held in Tanzania in August this year, Botswana was elected to Chair **the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation**, a tenure that will commence in August 2020 until August 2021. This means the region has bestowed a huge

responsibility and honour on Botswana, to spearhead the regional peace agenda.

266. Botswana also holds membership in the following critical Committees at both the United Nations and the African Union, the United Nations Economic and Social Council, the United Nations Committee of Conferences, the United Nations Committee on Programmes and Coordination as well as the African Unions Committee of Finance Ministers.
267. We have also made headway in placing Botswana in strategic positions in international organisations. In this regard, we remain deeply appreciative of the support extended to us by SADC and the African Union in the re-election of Dr. Matshidiso Moeti, to the position of Africa Regional Director and the election of Justice Sanji Monageng as Judge of the SADC Administrative Dispute Tribunal (SADCAT).
268. For the first time ever, Botswana participated at the highest political level in the World Economic Forum, both in Davos, Switzerland and in Cape Town, South Africa. Our participation at these high level fora enabled us to meaningfully engage the international community to secure favourable outcomes from bodies such as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS and the Office of the United Nations Secretary General. I must say, these engagements are bearing fruit. A case in point was the invaluable support we received from UNCTAD in devising innovative

strategies for Botswana's transformation to a knowledge based economy.

CONCLUSION

269. Mister Speaker, I wish to conclude my speech by reiterating the fact that my Government places its citizens at the epicentre of its national development agenda. Therefore, we have to ensure that all our citizens are involved in the development process.

270. The achievements we have made over the past twelve months give confidence to our national aspirations as we embark on our economic transformation. I would like to highlight some of these achievements that give impetus to my government's commitment to transform the lives of our people. These include;

- Record passing of legislation relating to anti-terrorism and anti-money laundering ;
- The review of the land policy for mixed use by citizens;
- The relaxation of immigration laws to facilitate foreign investment;
- The improvement of relations with the labour movement;
- The Presidential Initiatives targeted towards generating youth employment in the ICT and the creative industry sectors;
- The passing of the Declaration of Assets and Liabilities Act;
- The signing of African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement;
- The privatisation and management of campsites by citizens in protected areas especially National Parks;

- The review of the hunting ban to facilitate wildlife management strategies and;
- The re-introduction of Community Based Natural Resources Management.

271. The mandate bestowed upon us through the recent general election is without doubt a refreshing and rejuvenating breeze as we strive forth to develop our country and its people. It is a mandate that we uphold with the utmost respect, and one that will not be returned with complacency. Instead, we are even more resolute as Batswana, and full of gratitude for the solid mandate. We aim to deliver, and in so doing, we shall take it upon ourselves to ensure that we take everyone on board.

272. There is spring in the air; we are ushering in an airflow of media freedom; there is a discernible current of business confidence in the country; we are assured of the freedoms guaranteed in our Bill of Rights, and the atmosphere that permits individual freedoms devoid of fear or anxiety.

273. Batswana betsho, since this is the ploughing season, I urge all of you to take advantage of the recent rains to plough.

274. I thank you all for your attention.

PULA