



REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA



INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC
ENERGY AGENCY

**TALKING NOTES FOR THE HONOURABLE ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR THE
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND FOOD SECURITY
(REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA)**

**MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY,
INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY (IAEA) HEAD QUARTERS
VIENNA, AUSTRIA (28-30 NOVEMBER, 2018)**

Master of Ceremonies

Director General of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

Fellow Honourable Ministers

Distinguished ladies and Gentleman.

1. I feel honoured and privileged to address you today on this very important event. I take this opportunity to express, on behalf of Government of the Republic of Botswana and indeed on my own behalf, our thanks and gratitude to the IAEA for this opportunity.
2. Botswana is very proud of her association with the IAEA. Our relationship goes way back in 2002, when we joined the Organisation. As a nation we embrace peaceful use of the nuclear technology for sustainable development.

3. My government recognise the huge role nuclear technology could play in supporting our national development strategies, including in particular, enhancement of agricultural productivity, promoting food security and rural livelihoods, and human health. In this respect, the IAEA is our key development partner.
4. We are particularly proud of the achievements of our technical cooperation projects with the IAEA in the areas of public health, animal production, animal health, crop protection, food safety and nutrition.
5. Through these projects our institutions have acquired substantial technical expertise through scientific fellowships, symposiums, expert and scientific visits.
6. These projects have greatly increased capacity to provide quality laboratory testing to promote Animal Health, Public Health, food safety and International trade, especially for animal products including our much valued beef exports.
7. For example, we now have access to state of the art liquid chromatography mass spectrometry/mass spectrometry (LCMS/MS) equipment which is much needed for the testing of chemical residues in food.
8. We have also acquired on cost sharing basis with the agency, latest version of the Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy which is used to assess body composition: an important indicator of health status and provides crucial information that can be used in the evaluation of nutrition intervention programmes. Under the technical cooperation programme work has been done on the measurement of iron status including more markers other than just haemoglobin. Data generated is valuable in that it will inform government on nutritional intervention programmes.
9. We have been able to set up 2 satellite laboratories which will significantly fast-track delivery of animal diagnostic services, especially on Transboundary Animal Diseases (TADS), in the rural areas.
10. We are also very happy with the ongoing project to establish capacity to use the sterile insect technique to control the fruit fly. The project has made significant strides

including training of experts, mapping of project areas, monitoring and characterising the fly population.

11. I want to end by reaffirming my government's strong commitment to non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. We are particularly concerned that the deteriorating global security situation may well make radioactive materials and nuclear technologies more accessible and attractive to terrorists.
12. In this connection, my government has put in place several strategies including accession and signing of international instruments such as;
 - a. Accession to the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident (Nov 2011);
 - b. Accession to the Convention on Assistance in Case of a Nuclear Accident or a Radiological Emergency (Nov 2011);
 - c. Acceptance of Botswana's Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan (INSSP) (Nov 2011);
 - d. Joining of the International Atomic Energy Agency Illicit Trafficking Database (2009);
 - e. Ratification of the 2005 amendment of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, which was signed in November 2014;
13. In the current National Development Plan (NDP 11) we will put in place measures to enhance detection and surveillance of nuclear materials particularly at ports of entry.
14. Safe storage and security of nuclear and radioactive materials will continue to be accorded priority during NDP 11.
15. The Radiation Protection Act of 2006 and its Regulations will be fully reviewed to incorporate elements of nuclear security and enforcement.
16. Furthermore, regional and international partnerships and networks will be strengthened through the proposed Southern African Development Community (SADC) protocol on Nuclear and Radiation safety.
17. I thank you