

# Botswana National Day

## Working to diversify economy, eradicate poverty

**NKOLOI NKOLOI**  
AMBASSADOR OF BOTSWANA



Today marks 51 years of Botswana as a Republic. Once again we applaud the warm relations that exist between our country and Japan. On behalf of His Excellency President Lt. Gen. Dr. Seretse

Khama Ian Khama, and the great people of Botswana, we bring heartfelt greetings and wishes of good health, peace and prosperity to His Imperial Majesty Emperor Akihito and Her Imperial Majesty Empress Michiko, as well as Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and the government and people of Japan.

Having now passed our golden milestone marking our first half-century of democracy and development, we will continue to take full advantage of emerging opportunities on our shared journey as a united and proud nation. Indeed we celebrate our past as much as we do our future that is anchored on the pillars of our new National



**Kalahari meerkats at the Central Kalahari Game Reserve** NORTHWINDS PHOTOGRAPHY

Development Plan (NDP). The NDP outlines the short to medium-term development initiatives for Botswana.

The 11th National Development Plan (NDP 11), the theme of which is Inclusive Growth for Realization of Employment Creation and Poverty Eradication, has identified several key priorities. These include developing diversified sources of economic growth; human capital and social development; sustainable use of natural resources; consolidation of good governance; and the implementation of an effective monitoring and evaluation system. These must be pursued to address the developmental challenges of unemployment, poverty and income inequality, and these priority areas will be our road map and guiding principles for the next 10 years.

Our goal under developing diversified sources of economic growth is to see Botswana transformed into a high-income country, where continued growth is underpinned by a more inclusive, diversified and export-led economy. This calls for an environment where private sector expansion is not hampered by onerous regulation and an over-reliance on the state.

On the human capital and social development pillar we plan to build upon our legacy as a moral and tolerant society that is inclusive of all Batswana. Consistent with our long-standing traditions of mutual support, we seek a harmonious future that ensures dignity for all by contributing to the wellness and social upliftment of the whole community.

Building the sustainable use of natural resources is premised on the optimal use of our natural resources that are a gift for the past, present and future generations.

With respect to the consolidation of good governance and the implementation of an effective monitoring and evaluation system by 2036, we shall have ensured that our republic remains a bastion of freedom, security and the rule of law. This will require both continuity and evolutionary

transformation in our legal and institutional frameworks.

Overarching these pillars is also our new Vision 2036, the objective of which remains the delivery of prosperity for all through expanded educational and training opportunities for the youth and marginalized, including those living in remote rural areas, as well as targeted investment.

For my country to soundly succeed over the next 50 years, it will have to prove to the world that its history and success was not just well managed good luck as some would say. We will have to move far away from the diamond-driven economy. The 2008-09 recession undoubtedly proved to the world, and particularly to Botswana, that diamonds are not forever. In other words, we will have to diversify our economy and invest in people and projects that will create future wealth. This includes diamond beneficiation, industrialization, information technology, urban tourism and the development of financial and business services.

We will have to work closely with our development partners. Recently, Japan has been crucial in realizing these objectives, especially in the fields of human capacity building through the Japan International Cooperation Agency and the African Business Education Initiative. Japan and Botswana have enjoyed a very cordial relationship since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1966. With the setting up of resident missions in Tokyo and Gaborone in 1997 and 2008 respectively, relations have strengthened over the years in the areas of political dialogue, economic relations, capacity building and sociocultural exchanges.

These have culminated with the commencement and continuation of various joint projects undertaken. The adoption of the Japanese digital broadcasting standard by Botswana, the continuation and expansion of the Japan Oil, Gas and Metals National Corporation remote sensing center, as well as the commercial agreement



**Mokoro (dugout canoe), the iconic symbol of the delta is a popular mode of transport for tourists to explore the Okavango Delta, which is UNESCO's 1,000th World Heritage site.** NORTHWINDS PHOTOGRAPHY

on the results of joint research on Kalahari watermelon genes between the Nara Institute of Science and Technology, Japan Tobacco International and Botswana's Department of Agricultural Research and the construction of a 1.5 MW pilot PV power station in Gaborone are cases in point.

Within the Tokyo International Conference on African Development framework, we remain confident and encouraged by the strong Japanese desire and willingness to look at Africa as a development partner of choice and a continent of immense potential.

By partnering with Botswana to build

sustainable development projects, Japan will be contributing toward the achievement of a peaceful, transformed and prosperous Africa.

As we march toward the next 50 years, we invite Japanese companies and individuals to come to Botswana, to explore and experience our rich culture, partner with us in development and invest among our people.

We remain an open society, deeply rooted in our long-held traditions of an accountable democratic government based on the rule of law, strong institutions and a peaceful lifestyle.



**Lekhubu Island in the Makgadikgadi Pans** NORTHWINDS PHOTOGRAPHY

On the occasion of the 51st Anniversary of Independence of the Republic of Botswana, it is my honor to invite all to come to Botswana as investors, tourists and development partners. Pula!

In every new venture, it's best to have a partner who shares your hunger for success.

When facing the formidable, your challenges may often seem impossible. You need a partner who will approach your goals with empathy and conviction. Someone who is not afraid to debate with you and help you find the best solutions for success. Marubeni is that partner. We will stand by your side every step of the way.

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