

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S WELCOME REMARKS AT THE 2009
CAREER FAIR**

11TH SEPTEMBER, 2009

1. PROTOCOL & GREETINGS

2. OPENING REMARKS

It gives us great pleasure to be hosting yet another successful career fair, this time with the generous support of our partners Botswana Innovation Hub and the Botswana Development Corporation each of whom have contributed generously to make today's event a success.

I am told that the two event sponsors will have time during today's programme to address you on the roles of their organizations and the relevance of the IFSC Career Fair to their course.

We are gathering here today at a time when the world and our own country have been experiencing unprecedented economic turbulence. This of course, creates great uncertainties among those who are employed about job security, or with entrepreneurs about the survival prospects of their business.

For those who are only starting off like some of you, you may wonder about the prospects of ever finding a suitable job or career.

It becomes important, therefore, as never before, to sharpen your competitiveness and skills to compete with others, and raise your game. Participation at a forum such as this, is one of the ways to do this and be inspired to succeed.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE IFSC AND THE SKILLS READINESS INITIATIVE

The Botswana IFSC was incorporated in April 2003 with a strong mandate from Government to establish and develop Botswana as a growing financial and business services centre. Our mandate as a company requires us to:

- Facilitate and promote development of an international financial and business services industry based in Botswana.
- Encourage skills and technology transfer in order to deepen the sophistication of Botswana's Financial Sector.

- Contribute to additional taxation income to Government from private sector corporate entities and individuals that would otherwise not have based their operations in our country.
- Encourage economic linkages including employment creation and foreign direct investment – particularly for people such as yourselves who have acquired appropriate qualifications in institutions at home and abroad.

As we engage with the business community all the time, inviting them to consider a Botswana domicile for their growth initiatives into Sub Saharan Africa, the question of the availability in Botswana, of sufficient and suitable caliber of people becomes pertinent. Investors are not only curious about the choice of location of their investments but also ask pointed questions about the sufficiency and productivity of our labour force.

They want to know whether the country has the right combination of skills and work ethics before they can make the decision to place their investments in any particular location.

The increasing sophistication of the types of operations carried out by companies seeking accreditation within the IFSC requires the country to keep up the pace in developing relevant skills that will hold key positions within these companies. Lately, the IFSC has seen increasing interest from Investment Funds and Special Purpose Vehicles, Aircraft Leasing, Commodity Exchange Operations, Banking and BPO/Call Centers inspite of the downturn. All these are specialist entities that require specialist skills which we will all need to develop and nurture within the country.

We therefore found it compelling given our mandate to play an active and facilitatory role in closing the gap between the demands for specialized financial and ICT labor Skills and the current local supply. We are excited to showcase some of the talent available both within the country and in the Botswana diaspora who are still working further afield.

THE IFSC SKILLS READINESS INITIATIVE

In seeking to address the demand supply gap mentioned above, the Botswana IFSC launched a detailed skills readiness initiative, which comprises three main streams: The Annual Career Fair, Botsjobs and the Internship Programme.

- **THE ANNUAL IFSC CAREER FAIR**

Since 2004, around September of each year, the IFSC has been holding successful Career Fairs aimed at facilitating discussions between graduates or the soon to be grandautes and their potential employers. Today marks the 6th successful career fair organized by the IFSC and its strategic partners. We have been overwhelmed by the ever growing interest and positive responses that have been generated by this event.

- **THE IFSC INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME**

We also found a need to enable private sector internship opportunities for fresh graduates and the unemployed professionals in order to equip them with practical skills and requirements of the various specialist job markets. The IFSC internship programme is geared towards matching the ambitions of the growing number of young Batswana graduates with the requirements of companies.

- **BOTSJOBS JOB PORTAL**

Botsjobs.com is an internet job portal, accessible at www.botsjobs.com, which allows subscribing companies' unlimited access to a pool of qualified job seekers. Companies can search through the extensive and growing database of registered job-seekers, or post jobs adverts that job-seekers can respond to. In addition to connecting with potential employers, job-seekers can also take advantage of valuable career guidance information.

4. ACKNOWLEDGING THE GOVERNMENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

Early this year, the government of Botswana launched an internship programme aimed at equipping unemployed graduates with the basic experience required in the wider job market. The Botswana IFSC is working very closely with the Department tasked with coordinating the Government Internship Programme with a view of exploiting the synergies of these two complimentary initiatives and exploring the possibility of the well established IFSC Internship programme becoming the gateway for placement of interns in the relevant private sector (financial and Business Services).

The Government Internship Office is one of the exhibitors at this event today, and I urge our students and graduates in attendance to utilize this opportunity to talk to them and understand this important government initiative better.

5. ACKNOWLEDGING PARTICIPANTS

- Thank the main sponsors, BIH and BDC who have each contributed P50, 000.00 to the event.
- Thank the key note speaker for sparing us his time in his busy schedule.

- Thank the companies in attendance, being:
 - BancABC
 - Air Botswana
 - Allan Gray
 - Botswana Account College
 - Botswana Development Corporation
 - BECI
 - Botswana Institute of Accounts
 - Botswana Training Authority
 - Botec
 - Botswana Innovation Hub
 - Botswana Insurance company
 - Botswana Life
 - Botswana Tourism Board
 - CEDA
 - Coronation Fund Managers
 - Deloitte
 - Department of Internship
 - Ernst and Young
 - Excell
 - Ezone
 - G4S Securities
 - Hollard Insurance Botswana
 - Kingdom Bank Africa
 - Linkokwing
 - Local Enterprise Authority
 - Mascom

- Orange
- PEEPA
- Tertiary Education Council
- Botswana IFSC
- Lastly, thank the students and graduates in attendance.

6. CONCLUSION

- Look forward to continued support in the coming years.
- Invite other companies and institutions to take part in upcoming career fairs.
- Wish everybody a wonderful day.