

## **CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME REMARKS – MR PETER HIKHWA**

Thank you director of ceremonies for that introduction.

**Let me acknowledge the presence of;**

- 1. Deputy Secretary for Financial Mrs Elaina Gonsalves, who will open the conference for us**
- 2. Mrs Ann-Marie D'Alton – CEO of Batseta – Council of Retirement Funds of South Africa**
- 3. Manager – Retirement Funds at NBFIRA – Mrs Bontle Ndlovu,**
- 4. Acting Product Development Manager Botswana Stock Exchange - Kopano Bolokwe;**
- 5. Principal Officers, Chairman and Trustees of the various Pension Funds here present**
- 6. Our Distinguished Sponsors and their selected presenters**
- 7. Ladies and Gentlemen**

On behalf of the Botswana Pensions Society (BPS) Management Committee, I wish to welcome you to the 2016 Botswana Pensions Society's Annual Conference, held outside Gaborone for the first time in the long history of The Society and more profoundly is held here in Kasane. We therefore termed the conference historic because;

Firstly, the BPS was registered in 1994, which means it has been in existence for two decades and this year is a year of new beginnings being the beginning of our third decade of existence.

Secondly, the annual conference has always been held in the capital city (that is, Gaborone) and this is the first time it is being held outside Gaborone, in a marquee tent. Having said this, I do not see why we may in future, after every few years; we can hold our annual conference in say Francistown or any other venue outside Gaborone.

Thirdly, this is the first time we hold the conference over a two day period, thus allowing more topics to be covered and empowering the trustees for onerous roles which are getting more and more sophisticated by the day. This challenges the Society to more proactive in providing standards for the industry to follow

It is appropriate to mention that last year, no annual conference was held, for reasons that were communicated to you and all our stakeholders. It is pleasing after a year when there was no conference, to have such a historic event.

Allow me to say a few words about the attraction to as well as the advantages of holding the annual conference in Kasane. Kasane as we all know is a tourist destination and holding a conference in such a place enables delegates to engage in leisure activities

after the official plenary sessions of the conference. Further, by being away from their homes, the delegates are able to focus on the conference programme, without any distractions from their routine duties and responsibilities such as picking children from school, attending PTA meetings and supervising personal projects. Needless, to say, holding the conference here, is in line with the government policy of encouraging development in areas which are less privileged. Can you imagine the revenue that has been generated here simply through payment for accommodation, meals and recreational activities.

Moving on to the theme of this year's conference, **“Retirement Funds and the Economic Development of Botswana”**,

it couldn't have been more appropriate. This annual conference coincides the dispensation of economic stimulus package (ESP), whereby the government has taken an initiative to stimulate the economic growth of Botswana.

Is it not biffitting that this conference is deliberating on how pension funds can play a developmental role in our country's economic growth?, while providing the grow of Members final retirement benefits. NBFIRA has also made this call.

In this regard, we have an array of speakers and presenters on different topics but all within and covering our theme. With topics such as investing for your goals”, “the DNA of a modern retirement fund” and the like, I can assure you that all delegates will not

leave this place disappointed. And for those who have been having questions on the Prudential Rule – PFR2, our panel discussion on this topic will definitely help you to have a better understanding of the requirements of this document.

I am aware of the fact that most of you having attended a BPS annual conference before and hence I will not bore you with the generic information on who the BPS are and what they do. However, please allow me a brief moment to mention the following for the sake of those who are here for the first time or are not familiar with this industry event.

Established in 1994, the Botswana Pensions Society is a non-profit independent organization, whose main objective is to promote retirement industry knowledge amongst pension members, trustees, service providers and the general public; through the following activities:

- **Member Awareness Seminar** – an event fully sponsored by the Society provides core education on retirement planning and the Botswana industry. It is aimed at members of pension funds whose access to generic information on pensions is limited by their remoteness to major centers. Since its inception in 2008, regions covered are Francistown, Maun, Ghanzi, Palapye, Gaborone, Selibe Phikwe, Kang, Hukuntse and Tsabong.
- **We will in due cause approach sponsors to enable us to televise some of these sessions**

- **Topical Trustee Seminar** – an event introduced in 2011, is aimed at improving the technical knowledge of pension fund trustees. Topics covered lean more towards compliance requirements of funds and are presented by technical experts from within the region.
- **Annual Conference** – being the key event of the year for the Society provides a forum for the whole industry to come together and share information of varying topics, including regulatory updates. This further offers the trustees an opportunity to interact with the experts and increase their knowledge, which they then pass to the general membership of their pension funds.

In conclusion, I would like to encourage all of us to maximize on our being here, that is, the two days of intensive presentations and together with the opportunity to interact and benchmark with other countries standards and practices. When all is done, you may relax and enjoy the abundant recreational activities, of course to the ability of your pocket.

May this historic annual conference of the BPS leave behind significant mental pictures and memories that cannot be erased and continue to be celebrated.

I would not have done justice, if I do not give credit to those who deserve it.

My gratitude goes to our sponsors,

**first to our lead sponsor Afena Capital** and all the other sponsors who rallied behind them and made it possible for us to have this momentous occasion.

This year marks the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference of the Botswana Pensions Society proudly sponsored by

1. Afena Capital (lead sponsor),
2. Alexander Forbes,
3. BIFM & Botswana Life,
4. Fleming Asset Management,
5. Allan Gray,
6. Investec,
7. Stanlib Investment Management,
8. AON Botswana,
9. African Alliance Asset Management,
10. Stanbic Bank Sponsoring the Dinner
11. NBFIRA.
12. BITC
13. UB DC Pension Fund
14. The Botswana Pension Society Committee  
and
15. The secretariat

However, my appreciation and thanks goes to you the Trustees and other participants. Without you we will not have the conference.

In all that, all wanted to say was welcome to Kasane.