

**BOTSWANA DEMOCRATIC PARTY  
WOMEN'S WING FUNDRAISING DINNER**

**SPEECH BY  
HIS EXCELLENCY LIEUTENANT GENERAL  
SERETSE KHAMA IAN KHAMA**

**MOGODITSHANE – 21<sup>ST</sup> MAY 2010**

Programme Director

Chairman of the BDP Hon Daniel Kwelagobe

The Vice President His Honour Lt. Gen. Mompoti Merafhe

Cabinet Ministers

Members of the Central Committee

Members of Parliament

Chairperson of the Womens Wing and your Committee

Chairperson of the youth Wing and your Committee

Chairpersons and secretaries of Regions and Branches

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

1. It gives me great pleasure to have been invited on the occasion of this dinner hosted by the Women's Wing of the Botswana Democratic Party. It is most gratifying to note that you are engaging in this fundraising event for the benefit of the disadvantaged.

2. Fellow Democrats, women have never been spectators in our efforts to bring about unity within the BDP. That is why they addressed a big rally this afternoon in support of the party. Such moves have enriched our party. Today, women have proved themselves as formidable and fearless participants in our efforts to build our Party as we prepare for another victory in 2014. Besides nurturing the young and mothering the nation, they took their rightful position in the fight for the supremacy of the Botswana Democratic Party.

3. I urge you to help the Party in disseminating proper information to the public. We need the voice of Women to help us end this growing attitude of Democrats of putting self interest before the Party.

4. Although we are a Party whose membership covers the entire spectrum of our population and whose spread on the ground extends to all parts of our country, we must acknowledge that women are the most numerous group in our membership. As such it would not be far-fetched to attribute our successes as a party and as a Government to the support we receive from Batswana women. Of course, men also play their part, but we do owe a debt of gratitude to you Bo Mme.

5. Empowerment of women has emerged as a defining feature of our democracy as evidenced by the visible number of women entrusted with positions of leadership in the public sector. Our democratic government has brought advances of many kinds for our women folk. We now have the first woman speaker at the top of our democratic institution – Parliament. Our various departments and local government have heads and deputy mayors as women.

6. Sadly, more needs to be done within our party, where lip service and intransigence rules the day. Women still occupy very few positions for example in parliament. Women as pillars of families, communities and the nation have to take positions at the forefront.

7. In the absence of legal measures to ensure better representation of women in elective bodies it is voluntary for parties to put up women candidates and hopefully provide the best prospect for gains to be made. I particularly encouraged Women to campaign for executive positions in the Central Committee and backed them in their campaign.

8. Fellow Democrats, the leadership of the Party acknowledges the challenges faced by women. However, we all need to be proactive. Women should not expect to be given leadership positions on a silver platter. They need to work hard to earn these positions. As women you are very influential, you therefore need to use your voice to be heard and drive to deliver on both the mandate of the Women's Wing and the policies of our Party.

9. Your motto as the BDP Women's Wing is **RE A BONALA, LE KA RE TSHEPHA, RE TENG**. It is high time you walked the talk. You can only be accorded the due recognition when you are publicly defending the Party, advocating for Batswana to know and accept Party and Government policies. I urge you to stand up and be heard.

10. I would like to thank all of you for participating at this important dinner and supporting the Botswana Democratic Party Women's Wing. I would also like to thank all those who helped organize this event, all those who kindly donated money or in kind. My appreciation also goes to our sponsors. Their act of kindness and generosity made this event possible, and will ensure that our Women's Wing continues to grow from strength to strength.

***Tsholetsa!***

***Tsholetsa!***