



REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

## **SPEECH**

**BY**

**HONOURABLE RONALD MACHANA SHAMUKUNI  
ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR PRESIDENTIAL  
AFFAIRS, GOVERNANCE AND PUBLIC  
ADMINISTRATION  
DURING THE  
AFRICA-ARAB PLATFORM ON DISASTER RISK  
REDUCTION**

***THEME: TOWARDS DISASTER RISK-INFORMED  
AND INCLUSIVE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT***

**13<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2018  
TUNISIA**

## **Salutations!**

I wish to start off by thanking the Government of Tunisia for hosting this very important African Arab Regional Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction and also for your kind hospitality. I would like to extend my heartfelt condolences to the Tunisians that were affected by the recent disaster.

Botswana like any other country experiences disasters which affect lives, livelihoods and environment. These include amongst others; drought, flooding, storms, epidemics, wildfires, pest infestations, animal diseases, sporadic transport and industrial accidents and of late geo hazards such as earthquakes and subsidence.

The Tropical Cyclone Dineo which affected Southern African in 2017 did not spare us. We incurred infrastructure damages, loss of livestock and some of our communities were displaced. The losses and costs associated with disasters are considerable and a succession of these disasters have the capacity to make Botswana more vulnerable, and eventually culminate in major disasters.

The intensity and frequency of climatological hazards is anticipated to increase due to the impact of climate change. These disasters silently and

persistently erode capacities of the citizens to survive and prosper, and the Botswana's ability to achieve the national Vision 2036, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), African Union's Agenda 2063.

It is, therefore, critical that such incidents of disaster should be addressed holistically. Failure to deal with disasters comprehensively may lead to stunted economic and social growth.

Your Excellency's, to protect the lives and livelihoods of Botswana against growing complexities of disaster occurrences in the country and in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, Botswana is currently reviewing its **National Policy on Disaster Management**. The revised Policy will not only be proactive to disaster risk but will be community driven and inclusive of cross cutting issues such as gender, youth, People Living with Disabilities (PWDs) and climate change. There is a strong need to empower and resource communities. This will encourage their full participation and commitment to building safe and secure communities through DRR initiatives.

The Policy is expected to be finalised in 2018/2019 financial year. To further strengthen Botswana's institutional framework, the country plans to enact a comprehensive legislation dedicated to DRR. The enacted

legislation will promote accountability and coordination in managing disaster risk in Botswana.

Further realising the economic impact of these disasters, Botswana, through the assistance of UNISDR established disaster data loss inventory. The establishment of this database will inform policy decisions for proactive planning to DRR.

Similarly, a National Emergency Operations Centre is planned for in the current National Development Plan Framework (NDP11).

As Government, we have availed funds for this project and the procurement process has started in earnest and is due for completion in 2023. The NEOC will not only strengthen DRR mechanisms in the country but also allow for effective coordination of emergencies and disaster response.

Botswana is committed to the implementation of the SFA. We are intensifying public awareness initiatives on reducing disaster risk and increasing resilience. The Government of Botswana also recognises the importance of private sector participation in DRR. Business Botswana forms an integral part of various DRR platforms. Botswana desires to improve bilateral and regional cooperation to address trans-boundary (cross border) disasters such as floods, fires, animal and human disease epidemics.

Your Excellency's, I wish to reiterate Botswana's commitment to the Africa-Arab Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction. Botswana sincerely believes that that the resolutions adopted by this Conference will be operationalised to reduce the impact of disasters on our communities. We need more action and involvement of communities on the ground!

In conclusion, on behalf of Botswana government, I wish like to extend my deep appreciation on the hospitality rendered to us by the Tunisian Government.

I thank you for your kind attention.