



WELCOME REMARKS

BY

THE ACTING MITI PERMANENT SECRETARY

MS. KEGANELE MALIKONGWA

CEDA/DBSA UNIVERSITY CHALLENGE 2019

PRIZE GIVING CEREMONY

DATE: 23 JANUARY 2020

GABORONE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE

Director of Ceremonies,

Your Honour, the Vice President of the Republic of Botswana, Mr. Slumber Tsogwane,

Cabinet Ministers;

Honourable Members of Parliament;

Your Worship the Mayor of Gaborone City, Father Maphongo;

All Permanent Secretaries;

CEDA Chairman, Dr Alfred Tsheboeng and members of the Board of Directors;

Chief Executive Officer of the Development Bank of Southern Africa, Mr Patrick Dlamini,

The Chairman of the World Federation of Development Financing

Institutions (WFDFI) and Chief Executive Officer of the Citizen

Entrepreneurial Development Agency Mr Thabo Thamane;

CEDA Senior Management;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Good Evening.

1. Standing here this evening to welcome you all to this auspicious occasion, the official prize-giving ceremony of the CEDA/DBSA University Challenge 2019, I feel a sense of excitement and joy. Let me take this opportunity to specially recognise His Honour the Vice President of the Republic of Botswana Slumber Tsogwane.

2. Tonight we put to ease all the minds that have been contemplating and assessing who the winner of the third edition of CEDA/DBSA University Challenge will be. I would like to applaud Mr Thamane & the University Challenge Team for the nerve-wracking suspense as we are here to award a 2019 competition in 2020. The University Challenge has grown from strength to strength since its inception in 2017 and this has been through perpetual commitment from various stakeholders that have made it their duty and responsibility to ensure that the youth of this nation acquiring knowledge at the various institutions of higher learning continue to derive brilliant ideas in the name of economic diversification, job creation and poverty eradication.
3. Ladies and gentlemen, this year's challenge was timeously launched in April 2019, allowing for an extensive period of six months for application acceptance, as well as any queries that may have arose from interested participants. This evening we are gathered here as key representatives, stakeholders and supporters of academic institutions to bear witness to those students that have been successful in their submissions to be considered for the coveted grand prize of up to P350 000.00.
4. In the first edition we awarded Mr. Lebogang Pule of Botswana University and Agriculture and Natural Resources (BUAN) with P200 000.00 for his innovation of producing organic fertilizer through the power of worms. Last year's competition saw Mr Samuel Ntshiwa, a former student of Botswana International University of Science & Technology (BIUST), walk away with the grand prize of Two Hundred and Fifty Thousand Pula (P250 000.00) for his idea of operating a commercial fish farming business.

5. This year's University Challenge has also grown through the addition of a further Three (3) institutions namely Mancosa, AWIL College formally AFDA Botswana and New Era College. By inclusion of these three institutions CEDA and DBSA saw the need to increase the pool of eligible institutions and challenge students of these institutions to ply their skills and be part of this competition. This brought the total of participating institutions to fifteen (15). I am looking forward to seeing that number increase with this year's competition, ensuring a vast inflow of bankable ideas from you, the young minds of this country.
6. Director of Ceremonies, I was fortunate enough to review the business ideas of the chosen Top Ten, which were presented in front of a panel of judges just last week and I have to say that it is encouraging to see the bar being raised continuously year after year. The Top Ten have submitted proposals that encompass offering assistance to graduates through capacity building, manufacturing through waste management, new-age farming techniques and efforts focused on reduced motor vehicle traffic, amongst others. This is indicative of the youth listening and understanding that there is a blatant need to diversify the economy.
7. The competition received a very positive response with over 200 entries this year. This response shows that the spirit of entrepreneurship amongst the youth is growing and is also being encouraged at various levels starting with junior schools, right through to tertiary institutions. Times have changed and we need to move with the times; youth need to be made more aware of the value of such

initiatives as the University Challenge which are at their disposal. Ladies and gentlemen, we are all aware that we are facing a shortage of employment and our youth is in dire need for employment. It must also be said that entrepreneurship is a wonderful way of self-employment and equally contribute to the growth of Botswana economies.

8. Ladies and gentlemen, it is absolutely important for youth to subdue technology, to humanise and spiritualise it, assigning it practices where the complementarity of values should be present. In turn, harnessing these technologies to adapt to the dynamic economy of which they are constantly surrounded by. Swami Vivekananda once said, "Arise, awake and do not stop until the goal is reached"- this should be the theme in which all youth of this country should live by. Entrepreneurship is not the future anymore; it forms the current landscape of employment.
9. Ladies and gentlemen, our youth and the most valuable resource when it comes to economic transformation. It has been stated and is very evident that the transition from school to work is not an easy one. However, we have young brilliant minds who managed to cope with this transition and I am of the view that it is their duty to help their fellow companions through this relatively difficult process. Issues of mental ailments such as depression and suicide may be turned around by having youth work together in the name of progression and wellness. Trained and motivated young people can themselves play a substantial role through peer education initiatives. Peers can reach out either in an organized manner or informally to other youth, imparting

information and knowledge on issues such as health, finances, business and well-being.

10. Lastly, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to congratulate all individuals who heeded the call from CEDA & DBSA by applying their minds and submitting their proposals for the competition. Even if you did not make it to the top 50, or top 10, you can stand proud and say that you made an effort. Well done to all 218 applicants. To those that have made it to the Top Ten, thank you for bringing us all together under one roof this evening and I wish you all the best not only for this prize giving ceremony but for all your future endeavours.

11. With those few remarks ladies and gentlemen, I welcome you and thank you all for being present as we take another step towards making history and building our economy.

PULA!!!