

Transcript of speech by

Mr Jacob Swartland

Chairperson of Tertiary Education Council, Botswana

at the official opening of Limkokwing University Botswana, 14 May 2007

What an excitement. This is not what I anticipated.

Your Excellency, the President of Botswana, Festus Mogae, Honorable Speaker of the National Assembly Patrick Balopi, Tan Sri Dato' Professor Dr Lim Kok Wing, the Honorable Minister for Education, Jacob Nkate, Deputy Secretary General, Mr Omar bin Abdul Rahman, Cabinet Ministers here present, Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps, Honourable Members of Parliament, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen and my fellow students.

My task is very simple. After listening to such inspired speeches, I am not going to bore you. I think I am going to be very, very brief because I don't want to dampen all your inspiration we have received from the two speeches.

First of all, let me start by thanking our President, His Excellency Festus Mogae, for agreeing to grace this occasion and perform the official opening of Limkokwing University Botswana. It is indeed, Sir, a unique opportunity for our country to be able to open the first truly private university in Botswana.

The establishment of this university has come at a significant time for Botswana. This year we are entering the second half stage of our Vision 2016. The first half saw rapid strides in many sectors of socio-economic development, for which you, Sir, have rightly been honoured by the international financial community.

Limkokwing University Botswana will contribute greatly to the foundation of our strategy to create a critical mass of innovative human capital that will take our country to the cherished goal of a Productive, Prosperous and Innovative Nation by 2016.

Secondly, I would like to express our gratitude to the Honourable Minister of Education, Mr Jacob Nkate, for not only joining us on this memorable occasion, but also for performing the launch of Limkokwing Botswana Website. We in the Tertiary Education Council value your support, Sir, in our commitment to promote a tertiary education of international standards that is globally competitive.

Sir, we have developed rigorous regulatory regimes to ensure that our registration process is thorough and that our post-registration monitoring is taken very seriously. I am pleased to inform this gathering that 24 institutions have been registered, seven of which are private, including Limkokwing University Botswana.

Thirdly, I would like to thank the Founder and President of

Limkokwing University Botswana, Tan Sri Dato' Professor Dr Lim Kok Wing, for taking the major decision to invest in this massive institution, thereby assisting us in our attempts to expand opportunities for learning and the diversification of skills needed by the country.

Your speech, Sir, inspired us, gave us hope. It made us feel that we took the right decision in registering this institution. It is like a dream but most of us believe in dreams.

In addition, I also wish to thank and congratulate Tan Sri Lim, the Limkokwing University and its staff for their dedication and impressive organizational skills in bringing this university into reality so quickly. In just a few months, you have achieved a very strong presence, as you have just said, with an enrolment of 1,400 students.

The tremendous response by Botswana students clearly proves that Limkokwing University is a highly respected brand in the education field in both Malaysia and Botswana.

We, as the Council, recognize that knowledge, innovation and creativity have become the new sources of value in an economy, and therefore the main drivers of the country's socio-economic growth. Industries and companies that have been developed through creativity and innovation drive many of the world's most successful economies today.

We look forward to cooperating with you, as well as with all other pri-



Founder President Professor Emeritus Tan Sri Dato' Dr Limkokwing is surrounded by an excited group of university freshies who were delighted to meet their mentor in person.

vate institutions, to build the intellectual infrastructure that will spur creativity and innovation among Batswana.

We believe that “people are at the heart of development, at the same time its architects and its beneficiaries.”

Before I conclude, I would like to thank the MCs – the two of you – for really running this thing wonderfully. If indeed you are the product of this institution this is what we are looking forward to.

May I also take this opportunity to thank the choir. How wonderful they are... what a choir. I hope you have spare CDs. You know, we are going to queue up for your CDs. Thank you very, very much.

In conclusion, I would like to wish Tan Sri Lim and his staff every success in this endeavour. Your success will become Botswana's success.

And once again, I thank Your Excellency, the President, and the Honourable Minister of Education, for gracing this occasion, for blessing this occasion.

I thank you all.