

— *Transcript of speech by* —

Professor Emeritus Tan Sri Dato' Dr Limkokwing
Founder President of Limkokwing University of Creative Technology

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

May I begin by thanking each and everyone of you for being with us this morning.

We are deeply honoured by the presence of His Excellency The President and members of his Cabinet.

This is indeed a very special occasion - we are here to mark the start of a new University. Many of us will carry memories of this day as long as we live.

It is certainly true that the setting up of Limkokwing University in Botswana marks a particularly high point in my own career. This day will stay forever as one of great significance in my life.

For this, I must express my gratitude to His Excellency The President. If not for his encouragement and unwavering support, this day simply would not have taken place.

The establishment of Limkokwing Botswana also marks a pioneering

endeavour; a fusion that brings together Asian energy, African creativity and Western technology.

I will take this opportunity to thank everyone who has assisted us one way or another, in particular the Minister of Education and officials of TEC.

I must also thank our Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister for their encouragement. Our Prime Minister has in fact written a personal letter to thank the President. I am very pleased that the letter has arrived just in time.

Everyone here has been very receptive. No one could have been more supportive.

The building of this campus might have taken just 3 months, but the journey to Botswana has taken 16 years. That is how long we have been established in Kuala Lumpur.

Today, we operate 6 campuses across three continents and have created a collegial network of 160 universities and colleges across 65 countries.

Today on campus in Kuala Lumpur, we have students from a hundred countries.

Today on campus here we have 1400 students from 9 countries, although a vast majority are Batswana.

To ensure more students from the rest of Africa, we have been in contact with every country in Africa. We envisage that students from many African countries will be here.

Botswana has become a prominent country to many Malaysians in recent years. Besides the strong bond of friendship that exists between our two countries, new bonds are being forged by the many Batswana students sent by the Government to study in Malaysia. There can be no one more charming than these young Ambassadors for Botswana.

Mr President, you will be pleased to know that the hippos you presented to Malaysia some years ago are doing well, although they have not reproduced. The weather could have affected their mood or performance.

Our campus in Kuala Lumpur is currently home to some 400 Batswana students. Those who have graduated and returned to Botswana are doing very well in their careers.

I am proud to say that most of our staff on campus here are alumni of the university.



The university is well-equipped with hi-tech facilities that enable Botswana's next generation to pick up the digital skills and creative knowledge they need to transform their nation into a knowledge-based economy.

In time to come, I anticipate there will be Malaysian and other Asian students coming to this University in Botswana to further their studies.

To our students here, and at our Malaysian campus, and to all Batswana, I dedicate this University.

Botswana has much to be proud of. Botswana is one of those rare gems in Africa - a multi-party democracy built on a solid foundation since independence in 1966.

Botswana is one of Africa's most progressive and wealthy economies. Botswana is also one of the continent's most peaceful and stable countries.

Botswana's commitment to education and human resources development is second to none in Africa.

Since independence, Botswana has had one of the fastest economic growth rates in the world. Besides that, the negligible level of foreign debt testifies to the country's impressive economic governance.

The World Economic Forum rates Botswana as one of the two most economically competitive nations in Africa.

Without doubt, Botswana is leading the way for most of Africa and for most of the developing world as well - in economic management, political stability and educational development.

This country is a beacon in a troubled continent.

If the rest of the world knows about Botswana, the world will change the way they see Africa.

In the promotion of Botswana, we have given ourselves the role of a global connector. Making use of the collegial network we have built, we shall work to bring the world to Botswana and Botswana to the world.

By designing this University as a creative destination for the developing world, we bring Botswana to their world.

By bringing the world's latest in creative technology, we will build human capital essential for the transformation of Botswana into an innovative nation.

By empowering young Botswana with the knowledge and the skills that will enable them to effectively drive the process of transformation. We believe this University can play a significant role and make a meaningful contribution.

Limkokwing Botswana will work closely with the Government to implement plans that will make this country a centre for education and innovation.

Limkokwing Botswana will stand side by side with the University of Botswana, the new Botswana International University of Science & Technology and other institutions of higher learning to help propel this country to the goal of Vision 2016.

The establishment of this University is in response to Botswana's Vision. We have now adopted the Vision as our mission. And this mission that we have embarked on has received an amazing response from the people of Botswana. Some 5,000 students signed up for 1,400 places last month. We hope to be able to receive the rest during our second intake in July.

By then, a new facility will be made ready. New faculties will be introduced. The latest in digital technology will be in use. The most advanced in ICT will be in place.

All that must be done will be done. The new campus will be a high-tech environment.

It is our plan to enrol 5,000 students each year to reach our target of 15,000 students in three years, which is a crucial number to ensure the success of our long-term plan for this University. At that level, we will succeed in retaining 600 million pula in Botswana and create a collec-

tive value that could reach 2.7 billion pula for the economy.

By 2016, our objective is to have 30,000 students at our campus in Botswana and 150,000 students via satellite campuses set up throughout Africa, and a million students via on-line delivery to a hundred countries.

By then, we would have become a global delivery centre and Botswana a global education hub, moving from being a net importer to a net exporter of education.

To our students, let me say how pleased we are that you have come on board.

In joining us, you are now part of a globalised University. You are now part of a student community of more than a hundred countries.

You will learn new skills in the use of new technology which in turn will empower you with new knowledge.

In the course of learning, you will empower yourself with the latest in digital visualization and multimedia publication, in design innovation and creativity in broadcasting and television. You will empower yourself to be the most dynamic, enterprising young people this country has ever seen.

You will discover that you have more creative talents than you have ever imagined. You will be the generation that will change the way people

think, and bring about changes that will set the pace of progress in this country. You will become a driving force of this country's transformation.

You will learn that the future has always been about making possible the impossible, that the future has always been driven by the power of creativity, and by people with the drive to go where no one has been and do things that no one has done.

Those who choose not do ordinary things are always the ones to achieve extraordinary success. This is my advice to you, whenever challenged, no matter how difficult and how much it has taken out of you, stay on the track. Stay the course. Stay on till it is done. Stay on and it will be done.

Nothing will make me happier than to see every student of this University succeed the way you want to succeed; to see you become the people other people would want to emulate; to see you sparkle like the precious stone that this country is famous for.

On that note, and on behalf of the faculty and all our students, may I thank you once again for honouring us with your presence.