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EMBASSY OF JAPAN AND BOTSWANA INVESTMENT & TRADE
CENTRE

Japan and Botswana joins hands to unlock opportunities for new growth in the private sector.

Gaborone, June 1 – The Embassy of Japan, in cooperation with the Botswana Investment and Trade Centre (BITC), organized a Botswana – Japan Business Seminar. The Business Seminar was aimed at promoting private sector exchanges between Botswana and Japan in the areas of power, health, construction, manufacturing, mining, and others. About 30 participants from 21 entities based in Botswana and South Africa participated.

Ambassador HOSHIYAMA Takashi welcomed the delegates to the seminar stating that “the seminar is not just an opportunity for individual businesses to understand and connect with each other but as an impetus for a broader and active cooperation between the two countries as we move forward to the upcoming Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 8) which is scheduled to be held this August.” TICAD is the flagship of Japan’s diplomacy towards Africa. The Government of Japan has been leading this conference since 1993 to promote Africa’s development, peace and security, in partnership with United Nations, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank and African Union Commission (AUC).

Mr. Keletsositse Olebile, the BITC Chief Executive Officer applauded the joint initiative, which attracted both private sectors. Mr. Moshie Ratsebe, Director Investment Promotion of BITC gave a presentation on the geographical advantage of Botswana. He stated that the country being located in the Centre of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) serves as a regional hub to promote investment from Japan to Botswana and the rest of the region.

During the seminar, Mr. Yoshiaki Ishihara, Executive Director from Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) in South Africa explained the economic environment that would attract Japanese investment, and also mentioned that Japanese based companies, not only those based in South Africa, but also those based in Japan are interested in expanding their business in Africa.



In closing, Mr. Norman Moleele, Chief Executive Officer of Business Botswana in Gaborone recommitted himself to engage with BITC using JETRO's data and information that he acquired during the seminar, to promote business between Botswana and Japan.

The day before the seminar (31st May), Ambassador Hoshiyama paid a courtesy call on Honourable Mmusi Kgafela, Minister of Trade and Industry, accompanied by 4 Japanese entities visiting from South Africa. During the meeting, they exchanged views on how to further promote private-sector engagement between the two countries. The Minister, in particular, expressed the need by Botswana to learn from Japan's experience in fostering and diversifying industries and value chain such as in the areas of automobiles and pharmaceuticals. Ambassador Hoshiyama in return pointed out the importance of attracting Japanese companies to invest in Botswana.

The Japanese companies also visited the Photovoltaic Solar Power Plant in Phakalane implemented by Botswana Power Corporation, which was constructed through a Japanese Grant and the Special Economic Zones Authority.

The participating Japanese entities were:

- JETRO Johannesburg and Africa Region Office
- Dimension Data, Botswana
- Fujufilm South Africa (Pty) Ltd
- Hitachi Europe Ltd, Johannesburg Office
- Kansai Plascon Botswana (Pty) Ltd
- Komatsu Botswana (Pty) Ltd
- Mitsubishi Electric Europe B.V. African Representative Office
- Toshiba Africa (Pty) Ltd/Toshiba Africa Kenya Branch

(Listed in alphabetical order)



Ambassador Hoshiyama



Mr. Olebile, CEO, BITC



Mr. Moleele, CEO, Business Botswana



Mr. Ishihara, Executive Director, JETRO Johannesburg



Mr. Ratsebe, Director, BITC

