



## BUSINESSBOTSWANA

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### PRESS STATEMENT

**TO: All media houses**

**FROM: Chief Executive Officer, Mr Norman Moleele**

**DATE: 18<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

**SUBJECT: COVID 19: BUSINESS BOTSWANA RESPONDS**

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

As the COVID - 19 responses from Government continue to unfold, private sector has experienced a lot of anxiety and challenges which have had negative repercussions on business in many ways.

Business Botswana (BB) is represented in the Presidential Task Force on COVID 19 by the BB President.

Right at the beginning of engagements on the pandemic, Business Botswana set up a COVID Response team whose role is collate input from the business sector and continuously guide and make inputs to enable our representative in the Presidential COVID 19 Task Force to make informed contributions to the discussions.

A number of submissions in the form of position papers were presented to Government through various Ministries, particularly the Ministry of Investment Trade & Industry and directly to the Task Force.

Business Botswana is glad to advise that in most instances suggestions made were taken on board; albeit very tediously and in instances after companies have struggled, example at hand is the essential permits issuances and availability. BB had also offered its media sector expertise to beef up the work of the Task Force; however that was not to be, resulting in a communication gap which could have been avoided.

It is worth noting that, Business Botswana continues to make business and economic interventions balancing this with medical realities on the ground, decisions of the Task Force continue to be one-sided focusing on the medical nature hence failing to balance the economic survival of the country with the pandemic.

The negative impact on businesses is recognised and we hope that as the situation unfolds, due consideration will be given to address the needs of enterprises better.

Although Business Botswana continues to contribute to interventions made by Government as relief measures for private sector against the impact of COVID 19; instances of delayed implementation continues to frustrate these efforts to the detriment of the economy and in some instances to the total destruction of companies hence closures and retrenchments. Case in point is

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G. Keebine (President), O. Merafhe (Vice President- South.), H. Nawa ( Vice President- North), B.D.Phirie (Treasurer), N. Moleele (CEO)

the Government loan guarantee scheme which has been in the making for more than 3 months now.

Business Botswana continues to be fully involved in discussions around the easing of lockdown and lobbied hard for a softer approach to unlocking the economy so as to allow businesses to recover. We in that regard are currently finalising a recovery plan for the private sector post COVID 19 which will form a part of the larger national stimulus plan under consideration by Government.

Furthermore, an e-Market Place being a **SMMEs portal of COVID 19** manufacturers and suppliers has been added to the **BB Market Intelligence Information System (MIIS)** for enterprises to upload their products making it easy for procuring entities to find or locate essential supplies; this project is to be launched before the end of June 2020.

Business Botswana on behalf of the private sector will work with and support the efforts of the government to accelerate the recovery of the economy in the post COVID 19 ERA. We will continue to echo the views of business and make recommendations from the private sector as we address the challenges ahead and progress towards recovery of the economy.

For more information, please contact, Ms Patience Lebotse on 395-3459 or email: [patienec@bb.org.bw](mailto:patienec@bb.org.bw)

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