**Welcome Remarks by Martin Mokgware, Chief Executive of Botswana Communications Regulatory Authority (BOCRA) on the occasion of the stakeholder consultation for development of QoS/QoE for communications services**

Director of Ceremonies

Delegates

BOCRA Staff

Members of the Media

Mobile telephony grew exponentially since award of the first mobile licences in February 1998. With mobile subscribers in excess of 3.3 million and mobile broadband users in excess of 1.7 million, Botswana counts as one of the African success stories in ICT development. Botswana ranks among the top ten countries in Africa and top five in Sub-Saharan Africa when it comes to mobile telephony development.

With 165% teledensity comes challenges of Quality of Service and Quality of Experience. Typically, there are stablished international standards which telecommunications networks are expected to follow. Such parameters include, but are not limited to, Network Availability Rates, Congestion Rates, Drop Call Rates, Call Set-up Success Rates, Call Hand-Over Success Rates. Similarly, there are established parameters that guide delivery of Internet Service such as speed, capacity and the like. The same goes for broadcasting services and postal services. It is these ICT parameters that we are gathered here to develop and agree for our own national environment.

Among its many responsibilities, BOCRA has a mandate to protect and promote the interests of consumers, purchasers and other users of the services in respect of the prices charged for, as well as quality and variety of services and products. BOCRA is also required to monitor the performance of the regulated sectors in relation to levels of investment, availability, quantity, quality and standards of services, competition and the costs of services to ensure compliance.

Therefore, while there is existence of international standards, it is important that there are also national standards that take into account our own peculiar business environment. It is important that we recognise that communications services are supported by broader suite of other services available within our economy, such as water, electricity, labour, inflation, transport networks etc. Therefore, how well or bad our communications services fare, cannot be isolated from how well or bad the rest of other sectors of the economy are doing.

Be that as it may, Quality of Service and Quality of Experience are critical in supporting the economy of Botswana and most importantly in enhancing the country’s competitive edge of attracting Foreign Direct Investment.

The reality is that all of us here, without exception, have experience, negative or positive about the performance our various communications services. The Guidelines that we seek to develop and for which your input is sort today, are intended to standardise quality of services that we all receive. Equally, they are intended to provide minimum standards against which the public can evaluate the performance of operators and hold them accountable.

We are therefore looking forward to your valuable contributions to the guidelines and believe that from here we will have a document which will help improve our quality of services. Quality communications services are crucial to our vision of becoming a digital economy.

I thank you for your attention.