**Welcome Remarks by Mr Martin Mokgware, Chief Executive of Botswana Communications Regulatory Authority (BOBRA) on the occasion of the signing of the memorandum of understanding between BOCRA and Statistics Botswana**

Director of Ceremonies

Dr Burton Mguni and members of your team

Members of BOCRA management and staff

Members of the media

Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me a great pleasure to welcome you and your team to BOCRA this morning for the signing of a memorandum of understanding that will formalise our working relationship from today henceforth.

BOCRA has a role to regulate the communications sector that includes broadcasting, telecommunications, postal, ICTs and the internet. Needless to say, that in this day and age of information society, ICTs play a crucial role in enabling all other sectors of the economy. For Botswana to play a meaningful role in the global economy, the country should strive to become a digital society where everything happens online. However, all other countries are in the same race to attain digital society status. It is therefore critical that we are able to gauge our ICT development progress and availability of accurate statistics is key to that process. It is commonly held that what can’t be measured can’t be done.

I am glad that today we are entering into an agreement with Statistics Botswana. Botswana as a country has made notable strides in ICT development. However, the challenge lies in quantifying all these achievements so that we can correctively place ourselves on the global scale. I believe that our marriage today will address this gap to allow us to take our correct position on the world stage.

Reliable ICT statistics will enable us to compete effectively for foreign direct investment. It will also enable government to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions such as liberalization of the communications market, Nteletsa programme, Universal Access and Service etc. It will also point out specific areas that still require attention. In short the relationship we are cementing today will be critical to Botswana’s journey towards becoming a digital economy.

I therefore wish to thank you Dr Mguni for the opportunity to work with your organisation in a more structured way. I trust that you will find the relationship with BOCRA enriching to your mandate. BOCRA collects ICT statistics that it submits to the International Telecommunication Union (Union) for global comparison. While we have been able to submit timely telecommunications statistics, we have always been challenged to submit on other ICT parameters such as computer penetration and ICT literacy. This is one area that I believe this relationship could assist with.

I thank for your attention.