



REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

**SPEECH BY**

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**AT THE BIUST 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADUATION CEREMONY**

**UNDER THE THEME**

**"RE-SETTING, RE-ADJUSTING, RE-CLAIMING: DRIVING  
CHANGE THROUGH SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY &  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP"**

**DATE: 22<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023**

**VENUE: BIUST CAMPUS**

## **SALUTATIONS**

1. I am truly honoured to stand before you today as the Minister of Education and Skills Development on this momentous occasion—the 8th Graduation Ceremony of the Botswana International University of Science and Technology (BIUST).
2. Today, we gather here under the theme "**Re-setting, Re-adjusting, Re-claiming: Driving Change Through Science, Technology, and Entrepreneurship.**" This theme underscores the importance of innovation, adaptability, and entrepreneurial spirit in navigating the rapidly evolving landscape of the 21st century. As we celebrate your achievements, we also acknowledge the role you will play in driving change and shaping the future of Botswana.
3. In line with this theme, the Government of Botswana is fully committed to supporting our graduates through various initiatives and funding opportunities to embark on the path of entrepreneurship.

4. We recognise that your potential is not only in securing jobs but also in creating them and contributing to our nation's economic growth and development.

5. Through various initiatives and funding opportunities, the government of Botswana is paving the way for graduates to turn their dreams into reality. We have established programs to support startups, offering grants, mentoring, and access to resources.

6. We are investing in research and development to foster innovation that will transform our industries and create new opportunities for entrepreneurs.

7. Our Ministry recognizes the pivotal role of research, science, and technology in driving innovation and economic growth. To support graduates in these domains, we have established research grants, scholarships, and partnerships with industry leaders. This is to encourage graduates to engage in groundbreaking research and development projects that address real-world challenges, while also contributing to the growth of our nation's knowledge-based economy.

8. The Botswana Digital & Innovation Hub (BDIH) has been instrumental in fostering innovation and entrepreneurship. Through incubation programs and access to cutting-edge technology, BDIH is creating a nurturing environment for startups and innovators to thrive. I encourage all of you to explore the resources and opportunities available at BIH.

9. We have the Botswana Innovation Fund (BIF) which was established by the Government of Botswana to promote and facilitate collaborations between academia, entrepreneurs, public officials and other citizens. This initiative is used to initiate beneficial use of technology for business and society and support entrepreneurs and businesses to commercialise technology and engage the youth in the future of knowledge intensive business.

10. Additionally, the government is actively collaborating with private sector partners and international organizations to provide training, mentorship, and networking opportunities to young entrepreneurs.

11. We believe that these partnerships are crucial in nurturing a thriving ecosystem of innovation and entrepreneurship in Botswana.

12. In 2012, the Government of Botswana established the Botswana Institute for Technology Research and Innovation (BITRI) under the then Ministry of Tertiary Education, Research, Science and Technology which is mandated with 'conducting needs-based research and development in focused areas and to 'identify, develop and/or adapt appropriate technology solutions that provides sustainable innovative solutions through co-creation and collaboration in line with national priorities and needs of Botswana.'

13. I encourage you, the graduands to look into these initiatives and make use of the available resources.

14. In the midst of this celebration, I would like to draw your attention to the Botswana Reset Agenda which is a blueprint for our future, and it outlines a set of principles and actions that hold the key to the prosperity and well-being of our great nation.

15. The Botswana Reset Agenda is rooted in the values that have defined our nation for generations - values of democracy, unity, and progress. As you, the graduands, step out into the world with the knowledge and skills you have acquired during your time in BIUST, I implore you to consider the principles outlined in the

Botswana Reset Agenda. Let it be your guiding light as you navigate your careers and lives beyond BIUST.

16. As you embark on your professional journeys, remember the importance of inclusivity in your workplaces, communities, and interactions. Be champions of equality and fairness and strive to create opportunities for all. I encourage you to be Innovative.

17. As you enter various sectors, consider the impact of your actions on the environment and future generations. Strive for sustainable practices in business, technology, and everyday life. Furthermore, I encourage you to take responsibility for your actions and decisions. Hold yourselves and others accountable to ethical standards and the rule of law. In doing so, you contribute to a society built on trust and integrity.

18. In our increasingly interconnected world, be global citizens. Engage with the international community, learn from others, and represent Botswana proudly on the global stage.

19. I want to encourage and advice you to set your sights on the international job market. BIUST has equipped you with a world-

class education, cutting-edge research opportunities, and a diverse learning environment. You have gained not only technical expertise but also valuable problem-solving skills, creativity, adaptability, and a global perspective. The skills, knowledge, and values you have gained here are your keys to success wherever you choose to go. Embrace the world as your oyster, and don't hesitate to explore international career paths.

20. I challenge each one of you to not only embrace the principles of the Botswana Reset Agenda but also to embody them in your actions. By doing so, you will not only contribute to the betterment of our society but also fulfill your roles as responsible and engaged citizens.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

21. Allow me to take a moment to commend the dedicated faculty and leadership of BIUST. Your commitment to excellence, research, and innovation has not only propelled BIUST to new heights but also placed it at the forefront of the latest university rankings. Your unwavering dedication to advancing knowledge and nurturing the talents of our students is truly commendable.

23. To the graduands, as you stand on the precipice of a new chapter in your lives, armed with knowledge, skills, and the spirit of innovation, I want to assure you that the Government of Botswana stands firmly behind you. We are committed to providing the support and resources you need to succeed on this path.

24. As you embark on this new journey, remember that you are not alone. Your soon to be alma mater, BIUST, and the entire nation are here to support you every step of the way.

25. Congratulations once again, Class of 2023!