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TESTIMONIAL

Sir Ketumile Masire
Former President of the Republic of Botswana
20 July 2006

As a Motswana who has seen first hand the good that diamonds can do for my country, I would like to testify to the good that diamonds have done for my country. Since diamonds were discovered in Botswana some 40 years ago, we have carefully managed our mineral wealth to ensure that it benefits the people of Botswana. Based on our economic goals and strategies, a large share of our public sector resources is devoted to providing infrastructure (services and facilities that support day to day economic activity, including roads, electricity, telephone service, and public transportation). The overwhelming majority of Batswana (citizens of Botswana) participate in our economic development through access to employment, access to clean water and health care, education, as well as in the management of programmes designed for the mitigation of HIV/AIDS. For us in Botswana, the discovery of diamonds has been a blessing rather than a curse. We learned from the experience of others that processing minerals didn't automatically lead to economic development. We have thus secured the benefits of our underground wealth (diamonds) for our people.