

**SPEECH BY
THE HON. DATO' SERI ABDULLAH AHMAD BADAWI
AT THE WELCOMING DINNER OF GLOBAL 2005 SMART PARTNERSHIP
INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE AT MASERU, LESOTHO
8 NOVEMBER 2005**

HIS MAJESTY KING LETSIE III

THE HON. BETHUEL MOSISILI
PRIME MINISTER OF THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO

EXCELLENCIES, FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES

FELLOW SMART PARTNERS

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

1. I AM PLEASED TO BE HERE IN LESOTHO, THE SKY MOUNTAIN KINGDOM. LET ME BEGIN BY THANKING THE GOVERNMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO FOR GRACIOUSLY HOSTING GLOBAL 2005. THE HOSTING OF SUCH A SIGNIFICANT EVENT ATTENDED BY THE TOP LEADERSHIP OF MANY COUNTRIES IS A TESTAMENT TO THE COMMITMENT THAT THE PEOPLE OF LESOTHO AND OTHER COUNTRIES HAVE IN PUSHING FORWARD THE SMART PARTNERSHIP MOVEMENT AND THEREBY SECURING ITS CONTINUITY.

2. THE SMART PARTNERSHIP MOVEMENT HAS ACHIEVED YET ANOTHER MILESTONE WHEN C.P.T.M. TURNED 10 EARLIER THIS YEAR. AS YOU ALL ARE AWARE, C.P.T.M. HAS PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN FACILITATING, ENCOURAGING AND PROMOTING SMART PARTNERSHIP. FOR MUCH OF THE PAST DECADE, C.P.T.M. HAS PLAYED AN INTEGRAL ROLE IN DEVELOPING A WIDE NETWORK CONNECTING INDIVIDUALS IN GOVERNMENT AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR ACROSS CONTINENTS. NOW IS INDEED A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO REFLECT ON WHERE AND WHAT THE SMART PARTNERSHIP MOVEMENT SHOULD DELIVER IN THE NEXT TEN YEARS AND BEYOND.

3. ON ITS PART, MALAYSIA HAS BEEN FULLY COMMITTED TO THE SMART PARTNERSHIP MOVEMENT AND THE INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE PROCESS. THUS FAR, WE HAVE HOSTED SEVEN INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUES OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS, AS WELL AS COMPREHENSIVELY PARTICIPATED IN ALL GATHERINGS SINCE 1995. MALAYSIA'S COMMITMENT TO AND PARTICIPATION IN THE SMART PARTNERSHIP MOVEMENT IS SET TO CONTINUE, TO UNLOCK THE SIGNIFICANT POTENTIAL THAT REMAINS UNTAPPED, ESPECIALLY VIS-A-VIS INCREASING THE LEVEL OF MEANINGFUL AND TANGIBLE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE PEOPLES OF MEMBER NATIONS. THIS DIRECTLY RELATES TO THE THEME OF THIS YEAR'S DIALOGUE – "RESOURCING FOR GROWTH THROUGH SMART PARTNERSHIP".

4. WHILE WE HAVE ENJOYED SOME SUCCESS IN CREATING STRONG TIES OF FRIENDSHIP AND TRUST AMONG WORLD LEADERS PARTICIPATING IN THE DIALOGUES, WE MUST UNDERSTAND THAT IN ORDER TO SUSTAIN SMART PARTNERSHIP, PEOPLE MUST BE FULLY ENGAGED. AND THEY WILL BE, IF TANGIBLE RESULTS BEGIN TO FOLLOW THE IMPORTANT PROCESSES OF DIALOGUING AND INTERACTING. THIS EMPHASIS ON REALLY BRINGING SMART PARTNERSHIP TO THE PEOPLE, OF GOING BEYOND SLOGANS AND MEETINGS, WILL UNDOUBTEDLY SERVE TO DEEPEN AND THEREFORE STRENGTHEN THE SMART PARTNERSHIP MOVEMENT.

5. THIS PROCESS THAT WE ARE ALL HERE TO ENGAGE IN ALSO CANNOT BE SIMPLY LIMITED TO THE ANNUAL DIALOGUES. IT MUST BEGIN TO ENGAGE CRITICAL MASSES OF PEOPLE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND OTHER MEMBER COUNTRIES IN THE YEAR LONG PERIODS IN BETWEEN DIALOGUES. WE SHOULD DEVELOP NOTEWORTHY EXCHANGES BETWEEN OUR PEOPLES THAT WILL RESULT IN CONSTRUCTIVE OUTCOMES FOR MEMBER COUNTRIES. THESE INTERACTIONS AND COOPERATION IN AS MANY FOCUSED FIELDS AS POSSIBLE WILL ALSO SERVE TO DEVELOP SINCERE AND LONG TERM GOODWILL THAT TRANSCEND BORDERS AND INTERMEDIARIES AND THEREBY CREATE DIRECT PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE LINKS AND NETWORKS.

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6. WE SHOULD REALISE THAT DIALOGUE, WHILE BEING A FUNDAMENTAL COMPONENT IN DEVELOPING STRONG AND MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL GLOBAL RELATIONSHIPS, CANNOT BE AN END IN ITSELF. WE OWE IT TO THE PROCESS WE ALL HAVE COMMITTED TOWARDS TO RECOGNISE DEFICIENCIES AND REINVENT OURSELVES, ESPECIALLY GIVEN THE RAPIDLY EVOLVING GLOBAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT, IN ORDER TO REMAIN RELEVANT.

7. THIS IN TURN BEGS THE NEXT QUESTION; WHAT IS IT THAT THE SMART PARTNERSHIP MOVEMENT SHOULD TRY AND DELIVER?. THE ANSWER TO THIS MUST RECOGNISE THE FACT THAT THE DIALOGUES NEED FOCUS IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT IT CREATES A SUSTAINABLE CORE TO WHICH MEMBER COUNTRIES CAN IDENTIFY AS THE COMMON GROUND THAT BINDS THEM TOGETHER. FURTHERMORE, WHILE THE DIALOGUES' INITIAL FOCUS WAS ON TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT, IT HAS SINCE EVOLVED IN WAYS IN WHICH SOME MIGHT TERM NATURAL AND OTHERS WOULD LABEL DIRECTIONLESS. IT HAS NOW BECOME A GLOBAL FORUM OF SORTS DISCUSSING A MULTITUDE OF NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES.

8. HEREIN LIES THE FUTURE CHALLENGES THAT THE SMART PARTNERSHIP MOVEMENT AS A WHOLE MUST ADDRESS IN ORDER TO ENSURE ITS CONTINUED RELEVANCE AND THEREBY, TO BUILDING A RESILIENT AND ROBUST NETWORK. IN REINVENTING ITSELF, I FEEL THAT THE SMART PARTNERSHIP MOVEMENT MUST GENERATE A GENUINE CONSENSUS IN DEVELOPING A CLEAR AGENDA FOR DEVELOPMENT. THIS AGENDA SHOULD ENCOMPASS POVERTY ERADICATION, CAPACITY BUILDING AND HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AS A TRIPARTITE PLAN IN

ENGENDERING SUSTAINABLE PROGRESS AND IN INCREASING INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS.

9. THIS DIALOGUE AND THOSE TO COME SHOULD SERVE NOT ONLY TO DEVELOP THE INTELLECTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THIS AGENDA BUT ALSO TO MAP OUT HOW THIS AGENDA MIGHT BE ACHIEVED VIS-À-VIS SMART PARTNERSHIPS AND JOINT COOPERATIVE EFFORTS BETWEEN THE PEOPLES OF MEMBER COUNTRIES. WE SHOULD HONESTLY AND GENUINELY DISCUSS WAYS TO MOBILISE OUR RESOURCES AND BRING TOGETHER OUR PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS ACROSS BORDERS INTO A GRAND PARTNERSHIP THAT DELIVERS SPECIFIC INTERVENTIONS BORNE OUT OF STRATEGIC ROADMAPS, WITH THE ULTIMATE RESULT FOCUSED ON ENHANCING THE WELFARE OF OUR PEOPLES.

10. THAT INDEED MUST BE THE RAISON DE'TRE OF SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION AND THE LIFEBLOOD OF THE SMART PARTNERSHIP MOVEMENT. IT MUST NECESSARILY GO BEYOND STRENGTHENING DIPLOMATIC AND POLITICAL TIES BETWEEN COUNTRIES OF THE SOUTH – TO ALSO ENCOMPASSING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE AND SECURITY FOR OUR NATIONS. WE NEED TO DISCUSS ACTION PLANS FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESS – BY THIS I MEAN THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESS; HOW TO ACHIEVE IT, HOW TO NURTURE IT, AND HOW TO SUSTAIN IT – TO TRULY RAISE THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF ALL OUR PEOPLES.

11. WHILE WE MUST OF COURSE DRAW UP STRATEGIES AND PLANS THAT ARE UNIQUE TO OUR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES, WE CAN DRAW UPON THE SMART PARTNERSHIP MOVEMENT TO ENHANCE OUR EFFORTS BY FILLING IN THE GAPS, OR BY POOLING OUR RESOURCES AND EXPERTISE IN CERTAIN AREAS. I CONTINUE TO SEE MUCH SCOPE FOR COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF AGRICULTURE INCLUDING BIOTECHNOLOGY, FOR EXAMPLE, OR IN THE UPGRADING OF EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGES BETWEEN MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE MOVEMENT. WE MUST GO BEYOND SCRATCHING THE SURFACE OF OUR COOPERATION EFFORTS, TO ENGENDERING DEEPER AND MORE MEANINGFUL PARTNERSHIPS IN THE AREAS IDENTIFIED. WE MUST IDENTIFY CONCRETE WAYS FOR ACHIEVING TANGIBLE COOPERATION. IF THERE IS A NEED TO REVIEW OUR METHODOLOGIES INCLUDING THE FORMAT AND STRUCTURE OF THIS DIALOGUE PROCESS, LET US DO SO. ONLY THEN ARE WE ABLE TO BETTER REALISE THE TREMENDOUS POTENTIAL AND PROMISE OF THE SMART PARTNERSHIP MOVEMENT.

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12. WHILE THERE IS MUCH TO BE PROUD OF IN THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE LAST TEN YEARS, THERE IS MUCH MORE TO ACHIEVE IN THE YEARS TO COME. THE SMART PARTNERSHIP MOVEMENT MUST PROVE ITS WORTH IN AN INCREASINGLY CHALLENGING AND COMPLEX ENVIRONMENT. IT MUST STAND READY TO OFFER ASSISTANCE AND SOUND ADVICE ON A MULTITUDE OF ISSUES AND CONCERNS. IT MUST BE ABLE TO PROVIDE NEW IDEAS AND GENERATE NEW PERSPECTIVES ON PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENT. IT MUST BE PREPARED TO BE THE FOCAL POINT FOR THE FORMATION OF PARTNERSHIPS AND ALLIANCES IN THE DEVELOPING

WORLD, TO FACE OFF AGAINST COMPETITION FROM ALL SIDES. IT MUST BRING ABOUT CONCRETE AND RAPID OUTCOMES FROM THE COOPERATION PROJECTS IT UNDERTAKES. ULTIMATELY, AND MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL, IT MUST BRING TOGETHER RESOURCES AND EXPERTISE TO HELP MEMBER COUNTRIES GROW AND DEVELOP, TO NOT ONLY ENHANCE THE WELLBEING OF OUR PEOPLES, BUT TO ALSO CONTRIBUTE TO THE LARGER PEACE, SECURITY AND PROSPERITY IN THE WORLD.

THANK YOU.