



**20
24**

**NATIONAL BUSINESS
CONFERENCE**
HIGHLIGHTS FOR DAY 2

NATIONAL BUSINESS CONFERENCE KICKS OFF WITH STRATEGIC VISION

Business Botswana President, Mr. Neo Nwako

The 17th National Business Conference, hosted by Business Botswana, has officially commenced with a powerful focus on transforming Botswana into an export-led economy. Held under the theme "**Invigorating Economic Transformation Through the Private Sector**," this year's conference has assembled 500 key figures from government and the private sector. The goal is to critically assess Botswana's ease of doing business frameworks and develop strategies that will foster growth and enable the private sector to flourish.

In his opening remarks, Business Botswana President Mr. Nwako emphasized the necessity of an open and robust dialogue to enhance private sector engagement and contribution to the economy. He stressed that for the conference to have a meaningful impact, an implementation matrix must be put in place. This includes the development of a monitoring application, in collaboration with the U.S. Embassy, to track the progress of the proposed initiatives.

Mr. Nwako also highlighted the importance of strengthening existing platforms within Business Botswana to facilitate effective public-private dialogue between government and industry leaders. He called for renewed efforts to advocate for policies and regulations that will improve the ease of doing business.

In line with this renewed commitment, Business Botswana has adopted a new strategy focused on inclusivity and stakeholder engagement. This approach aims to drive economic growth, create job opportunities, and support smaller sector players. As part of this initiative, the organization has sponsored at least 100 informal sector, youth-owned, and small business owners to attend the conference.

In closing, Mr. Nwako urged all participants to act with urgency, underscoring that timely action is crucial to achieving the conference's goals and milestones.



VICE PRESIDENT OPENS THE 17TH NATIONAL BUSINESS CONFERENCE



The 17th edition of the National Business Conference, themed "Invigorating Economic Transformation through the Private Sector," was officially opened on August 26, 2024, by His Honour the Vice President of Botswana, Honourable Slumber Tsogwane. In his opening remarks, Vice President Honourable Tsogwane expressed two main objectives of the conference for the Government of Botswana:

1. Fostering Collaboration: Bringing together businesses from all sectors of the economy to advise the government on policies and strategies that promote a business-friendly environment.

2. Creating Connections: Providing a platform for businesses to network, form strategic alliances, and leverage innovative solutions to enhance growth opportunities.

Vice President Tsogwane expressed his appreciation for the longevity of the National Business Conference (NBC), noting that its continued success reflects the government's commitment to a consultative approach in policymaking. He emphasized that evaluating progress on resolutions should not be about assigning blame but rather using the outcomes as a guide to boosting the nation's GDP and addressing the challenges posed by the global economy.

He further emphasized the government's dedication to prioritizing business environment reforms in line with the 2nd Transitional Development Plan, aligning these efforts with the conference theme inspired by Vision 2036.

The Vice President also highlighted Botswana's commitment to expanding market opportunities through initiatives such as the ratification of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) and a focus on enhancing manufacturing while reducing dependence on the mining sector. Citing Botswana's improved ranking in the IMD Competitiveness Report—from 59th in 2023 to 55th in 2024—he connected these achievements to the goals outlined in the Presidential Reset Agenda, the National Transformation Strategy, and the upcoming National Development Plan 12.

He concluded by emphasizing the desired outcome of the conference: a decisive shift toward an export-oriented, private-sector-led economy by effectively leveraging value-chain development. He urged participants to focus on finding practical solutions rather than dwelling on the challenges facing the nation.

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS: DRIVING ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION



The conference featured several key sessions:

- **Digital Transformation and Private Sector Growth:** Exploring how digital technologies can fuel growth.
- **Towards an Export-Led Economy:** Strategies for empowering Botswana firms for global expansion.
- **Young Executives - Leadership:** Fostering leadership among the next generation of business leaders.
- **Enhancing Private Sector Growth Through Value Chain Development:** Practical strategies for leveraging value chains to boost growth.

For further details, presentations, and updates from the conference, participants are encouraged to use the conference app and follow Business Botswana pages.

Stay tuned for more updates as the conference continues to unfold, with a focus on actionable insights and strategic planning aimed at propelling Botswana towards a dynamic, export-oriented, and private-sector-led economy.



Enhancing Private Sector Growth Through Value Chain Development Panelists



Digital Transformation and Private Sector Growth Panelists



BB President, Mr. Neo Nwako and Mayor of Francistown, His worship Godisang Radisigo