



JOINT COMMUNIQUE

**OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA
BY THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE SAMUEL NTSOKOANE MATEKANE**

AND THE

**INAUGURAL SESSION OF THE
BOTSWANA-LESOTHO BI-NATIONAL COMMISSION (BNC)**

**15 – 18 JUNE 2026
GABORONE, BOTSWANA**

1. At the invitation of Advocate Duma Gideon Boko, President of the Republic of Botswana, The Right Honourable Samuel Ntsokoane Matekane, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho, undertook an Official Visit to the Republic of Botswana from 17th to 18th June 2026.
2. During the Official Visit, the two Leaders presided over the Inaugural Session of the Botswana-Lesotho Bi-National Commission (BNC), marking a historic milestone in the evolution of bilateral relations between the two sister nations. The Inaugural Session was preceded by the Ministerial Meeting held on 17 June 2026, the Senior Officials Meeting from 15th to 16th June 2026, and the Botswana-Lesotho Business Forum convened on 17th June 2026.
3. On Politics and Diplomatic Relations, the two Leaders reaffirmed the warm, cordial, and longstanding cooperation between the Republic of Botswana and the Kingdom of Lesotho, anchored on a shared history, cultural heritage, linguistic affinities, and enduring kinship ties between Batswana and Basotho. They underscored that these bonds have been strengthened over generations through social interaction, marriage, migration, and shared traditions, fostering deep solidarity and fraternity between the peoples of the two countries.
4. President Boko acknowledged the progress made in the Kingdom of Lesotho's constitutional reform process and commended Prime Minister Matekane for his steadfast leadership in consolidating democratic governance, strengthening institutions, and advancing political stability. Prime Minister Matekane expressed his sincere gratitude to President Boko, and to the Government and people of the Republic of Botswana for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements accorded to him and the delegation of the Kingdom of Lesotho.
5. The two Leaders recalled the signing of the Agreement establishing the Botswana-Lesotho Bi-National Commission in Maseru, in July 2025, which elevated bilateral cooperation from the Joint Commission on Economic and Technical Cooperation signed in 2003. They also welcomed the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on Trade and Investment between the Botswana Investment and Trade Centre

(BITC) and Lesotho National Development Corporation (LNDC) during the Inaugural Session of the BNC. They also noted progress made on negotiations to conclude 38 Memoranda of Understanding/Agreements in key sectors.

6. The two Leaders celebrated the sustained high-level exchange visits between the two countries. These include: President Boko's working visit to the Kingdom of Lesotho in July 2025 and his participation in celebrations marking the 62nd birthday anniversary of His Majesty King Letsie III; Prime Minister Matekane's working visits to Botswana in November 2025 on the occasion of the regional commemorations of World's Children's Day, and in July 2023 on the occasion of the U.S.-Africa Business Forum. Most recently in May 2026, Former Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho, The Right Honourable Dr. Pakalitha Mosisili, attended as Special Envoy, the State Funeral of Former President of the Republic of Botswana, H.E. Dr. Festus Gontebanye Mogae, in Gaborone.
7. President Boko and Prime Minister Matekane underscored that the BNC serves as an effective platform for deepening cooperation in key sectors including trade and investment, energy, water, agriculture and livestock development, natural resource management, education and training, youth empowerment, environment, tourism, sport, culture and creative industries, as well as good governance, law enforcement, defence and security, among others. They highlighted that strengthening sectoral cooperation would accelerate economic transformation and inclusive growth.
8. The Commission welcomed the critical role played by the private sector in enriching and advancing the agenda of the Bi-National Commission through the Botswana-Lesotho Business Forum. In this connection, the Leaders emphasised the importance of business-to-business partnerships, trade expansion, investment promotion, and industrial collaboration in pursuit of shared prosperity, inclusive growth, and sustainable development. The two Leaders underscored that people-to-people linkages remain a defining feature of the enduring bonds that subsist between the two countries. These connections were cemented during the Official Visit.

9. At the regional level, the Leaders reaffirmed their unwavering commitment to regional integration under the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Southern African Customs Union (SACU), African Union, and the active implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). In this context, they committed to intensify coordination and align positions in regional, continental, and multilateral fora, to safeguard shared interests and advance regional integration, market diversification, and value addition.
10. The Leaders appreciated Botswana's contribution of 100,000 doses of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) vaccine to Lesotho in support of regional efforts to contain and eradicate the disease. They reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening cooperation in animal health, veterinary services, and disease surveillance to safeguard agricultural production, facilitate trade, and enhance food security in the region.
11. The Leaders reaffirmed commitment to the Lesotho-Botswana Water Transfer Project and underscored its strategic importance in enhancing regional water security, food security, energy security, hydropower generation, climate resilience, and socio-economic development. The two Leaders further agreed in principle, and subject to further consultation with the Orange-Senqu River Commission (ORASECOM), to rename the Project the Lesotho-South Africa-Botswana (LESABO) Water Transfer Project, in view of its unique tripartite nature.
12. The two Leaders noted that the Bi-National Commission was held in an atmosphere of warmth, cordiality, and mutual understanding, reflecting the strong bonds of friendship, fraternity, and cooperation between the two countries and peoples.
13. Furthermore, during his Official Visit, The Right Honourable the Prime Minister Matekane undertook a tour of the Diamond Trading Company Botswana (DTCB), to explore opportunities for enhanced collaboration between Botswana and Lesotho in the areas of mining governance, value-addition, and mineral beneficiation.
14. At the conclusion of the Bi-National Commission, The Right Honourable Samuel Ntsokoane Matekane, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of

Lesotho, extended an invitation to Advocate Duma Gideon Boko, President of the Republic of Botswana to undertake a visit to the Kingdom of Lesotho for the 2nd Session of the BNC. The 2nd Session will be held in Lesotho, in 2027, on a date to be mutually agreed through diplomatic channels.

Issued at Gaborone, Botswana, on 18th June 2026