



**Ambassador Stephen J. Nolan
Remarks for SCMS Event
Thursday, March 3, 2011**

As prepared for delivery

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

- Assistant Minister of Health Hon. Gaotlhaetse Matlhabaphiri
- Deputy Permanent Secretary Dr. Khumo Seipone
- WHO Country Representative Dr. Eugene Nyarko
- SCMS Country Director Richard Mswoya
- SCMS Senior Communications Advisor Samantha Salcedo

REMARKS:

- Ladies and gentlemen, it is my pleasure to join you here today to highlight the important progress taking place to strengthen Botswana's health systems.
- In the presentations and discussions this morning, it is clear that there is much to celebrate in the work that has already taken place – and continues to take place – in laying the foundation for a healthier future throughout the country.
- Everyone in this room understands well that the health of a nation depends not only on the human element – the doctors, nurses and other health practitioners – but it also depends hugely on the systems that support those people, specifically the procurement and logistics infrastructure that put the right supplies and medicines in the right place at the right time.
- The Government of Botswana recognized the needs and the deficiencies in the supply chain management system, and sought support.
- I am extremely proud of the partnership the United States has developed with the Government to improve supply chain management of health commodities.
- Through the PEPFAR program, the United States has – in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and in-country partners SCMS, made real headway.
- Together, we have:
 - Improved commodity forecasting and quantification with tools that provide essential information;
 - Strengthened management at CMS;
 - Procured laboratory equipment that has improved access to diagnosis and treatment monitoring;
 - Strengthened human resource capacity in commodity logistics management and biomedical engineering to improve both supply chain management and accuracy of laboratory test results resulting in higher quality of care.

- These efforts and achievements may sound obscure or bureaucratic to some – but rest assured, when a patient who has traveled for hours or even days to seek treatment hears from the doctor that the necessary medicine is in stock, the payoff is real.
- And the result is a healthier nation.
- In closing this Open Day event, I note with pride the successes achieved, and the commitment that – together – we can continue to meet the challenge of putting in place the supply chain management system that will indeed build a healthier Botswana.
- Thank you.