

**Ambassador Michelle D. Gavin**  
**Remarks for Opening Ceremony of Rainbow School E-Library**  
**Gaborone**  
**Thursday, September 8, 2011**

**As prepared for delivery**

---

REMARKS:

- *Dumelang, bomma le borra*
- *Le tsogile jang*
- It is a great pleasure and a real honor to join you here to celebrate the opening of your E-library, and to kick off Read a Book Week.
- Your invitation to include me in this event is very kind. I appreciate any opportunity I have to join a roomful of young people.
- I have learned a bit about what goes on here at Rainbow and it is truly inspiring.
- Growing from just 75 students 13 years ago to over 600 now, and offering a broad and challenging junior and senior secondary curriculum along the wide variety of trips, excursions and extra-curricular activities – Rainbow High School is indeed a very special place.
- Everyone in this room – the Directors, the Principal and Deputy Principals, management staff, faculty, parents, and especially the students – you all have much to be proud of.

- Houshang and Jaleh Mazidi have clearly devoted much energy and support – and a love of education – to this school, and it shows.
- So, I am particularly pleased to be with you this morning.
- I want to talk to you today about how important reading is to your future and the windows of opportunity it can open.
- I also want to say few words about how you can use your talents to create a better life for yourselves and a better country for all Batswana.
- When it comes to reading, you may not have known this when you invited me, but you have hit on one of my favorite things – celebrating the value and the pleasure of reading.
- I know how important reading is. It is something truly special that every person should have the opportunity for.
- On a personal level, my love for books is something I share with my three-year old daughter, as we read every night before she goes to sleep.
- I admit, at this point, with a three-year old, I am doing most of the reading, but the day will come soon when she will join in.
- But even before my daughter can actually read the words on the pages, she will understand the immense power of books.
- We know
  - books can educate,
  - they can entertain,
  - they can stretch the imagination and vastly expand our horizon, and

- they can challenge and enlighten our thinking in ways that not only benefit us individually, but can benefit families, the community, and the entire country.
- Simply put, books can change lives.
- When people have books in their hands, and they can read them, a world of opportunity opens.
- That is true for my daughter – and it is true for every Rainbow student.
- As I said, reading is an important part of who we are – and who we can be. But I’m not the only person that believes that. Let me share with you what some others have said about reading.
  - Famous movie maker Walt Disney said, “There is more treasure in books than in all the pirate's loot on Treasure Island.”
  - Renowned academic and American politician, Samuel Hiyakawa said, “It is not true we have only one life to live, if we can read, we can live as many lives and as many kinds of lives as we wish.”
  - And you included on today’s program a quote from perhaps the most quoted American, Abraham Lincoln said, “The things I want to know are in books. My best friend is the man who'll get me a book I ain’t read.”
  - This one is for the teachers in the room. It’s from the bumper sticker that says, “If you can read this, thank a teacher.”

- I hope you all know Dr. Seuss. In *I Can Read With My Eyes Shut!*, he wrote, “The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more you learn, the more places you'll go.”
  - And this, sung by the Oompa-Loompas in Roald Dahl’s *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, “So please, oh please, we beg, we pray, Go throw your TV set away, and in its place you can install a lovely bookshelf on the wall.”
  - Of course, Dahl was British, but even as the U.S. Ambassador, I try to quote the Oompa-Loompas every chance I get.
  - Last but not least, I’ll leave you with Groucho Marx who said, “I find television very educating. Every time somebody turns on the set, I go into the other room and read a book.”
  - But he also said, “Outside of a dog, a book is a man's best friend. Inside of a dog, it's too dark to read.”
- Anyway, I think we can all agree – reading is important and it opens windows that otherwise may stay closed.
  - I want to talk to you very briefly about one window that can open for you – and this too is something I feel very strongly about.
  - Young people – that’s you – are the leaders of tomorrow. What are the challenges you will have to face?
  - One of them is the fact that what has been so instrumental in Botswana’s development since independence – diamonds – may not last forever. What will replace diamonds?

- I don't think any of us can say for sure, except for one thing – whatever will drive your success in tomorrow's economy will require motivation, innovation, and an unyielding will to succeed.
- What I am talking about is entrepreneurial spirit.
- The dictionary tells us an entrepreneur is a person who owns a company, enterprise, or venture, and assumes significant accountability for the inherent risks and the outcome.
- Entrepreneurship is widely regarded as an engine for job creation and economic growth.
- What does an entrepreneur look like?
- Entrepreneurs have an enthusiastic vision, and they are the driving force of an enterprise.
- Entrepreneurs promote their vision with passion, persistence and determination, and they develop strategies to change the vision into reality.
- They take the initial responsibility to cause a vision to become a success. And they are risk takers.
- They tend to be positive thinkers and decision makers. They are inspired, motivated, and sensible.
- So, what is so good about being an entrepreneur?
- Successful entrepreneurs bring about benefits not only for themselves, but for those around them.

- Entrepreneurs create jobs – they make others around them successful and satisfied.
- They encourage healthy competition thus generating higher quality products.
- They encourage more research and development and they promote the use of modern technology, which enhances productivity.
- How many of you have thought about starting your own business sometime down the road?
- I suspect some of you will take classes in accountancy and management and marketing, among many others. You may even have a class that addresses entrepreneurship.
- But I can assure, teaching entrepreneurship is a far trickier task than teaching bookkeeping. That is because entrepreneurship is less about skills than it is about culture and imagination and the willingness to take risks.
- That's one reason reading is so important – it lets you explore, have adventures, fail and succeed in your imagination – so that you might learn from those internal journeys and private expeditions and apply what you've learned to the real world.
- Indeed, as senior secondary school students, you are at the point in your lives where the choices you make stick with you.
- Never doubt that you can be a leader – that you will be a leader – and start now to make that a reality.
- Start now,

- with study that builds your ability,
  - with hard work that adds value to every endeavor,
  - with behavior that preserves your health, and
  - with a vision of success that extends beyond your personal comfort to better your community and take this great country forward.
- 
- So, as the United States Ambassador to Botswana, I challenge you to build for yourselves and for all Botswana a better future.
  
  - You do it one step – one smart step – at a time.
  
  - And one of those steps? READ!!
  
  - And don't just listen to me – your parents and your teachers have your interests at heart, and they say the same thing.
  
  - CHOOSE ... TO ... READ!!
  
  - Even the Oompa-Loompas agree.
  
  - Thank you.