

**Press Release**

**U.S. Embassy Dedicates Dining Facility at Childline Botswana**

The Embassy of the United States of America is pleased to announce that Ambassador Michelle D. Gavin will dedicate a new dining facility at Childline Botswana in Gaborone on November 18. The dining facility, which cost approximately BWP 2 million, was funded by the U.S. Department of Defense Africa Command.

Ambassador Gavin said, "I am proud that the United States was able to support the construction of this new dining hall because this facility expands the ability of Childline Botswana to reach out to and nurture vulnerable youth in the community, to touch those young lives, and to make a difference that can last a lifetime. Childline's vision is simple, but profound – a nation that is child safe and child friendly. Its innovative approach to assisting adolescent orphans and vulnerable children in taking charge and finding direction in their lives is truly inspiring."

Background: Childline Botswana is a non-profit and non-governmental organization that offers services to all children in need and their families. The organization was established in 1990 as a response to the escalating number of child abuse cases. Over the years, Childline has handled more than 6000 child abuse cases and gained the recognition by other organizations and the public as Botswana's lead agency addressing child abuse and children's rights.

Childline Botswana's programs target abused children up to the age of 18 and parents who were abused as children as well as those who fear that they might abuse their own children. Activities of Childline Botswana include: casework and general intervention on child abuse and related cases, counseling (Psycho-social support), research (compilation of statistics) and public education. Casework and counseling for abused children and their families are available through walk-in services and a 24-hour toll-free call line staffed by experienced social workers. Since the establishment of the toll-free line, Childline receives calls from all over Botswana.

For further details, please contact: Public Affairs Officer, John Warner (395-3982 ext. 2468), Laona Segaletsho, Information Specialist (395-3982 ext. 2419, fax: 390-6129, [SegaletshoLJ@state.gov](mailto:SegaletshoLJ@state.gov)) or Angelinah Matenanga, Public Affairs Secretary, (395-3982 ext. 2415, fax: 390-6129, [MatenangaAB@state.gov](mailto:MatenangaAB@state.gov)).