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For immediate release

NEWS RELEASE

Vice President Masisi to Officially Open the 9th International Conference of the African Materials Research Society

His Honour the Vice President of the Republic of Botswana, Mr. Mokgweetsi Masisi will on 11th December, officially open the **9th International Conference of the African Materials Research Society** scheduled to be held in Gaborone from 9th to 14th December 2017.

Held under the theme **“Addressing Africa’s Challenges through Nanomaterials Development,”** the conference will create a platform for collaboration in order to promote the focusing of research efforts on manipulating materials at the nanoscale to add value to Africa’s abundant materials/natural resources, solve Africa’s problems through materials science research by developing superior nanoscale materials as well as to create an innovative environment through a fundamental understanding of nanoscience/nanotechnology.

The Botswana AMRS2017 will draw participants from around the world and all African countries, with an anticipated attendance of approximately four hundred delegates, amongst them academics, industry power players, policymakers and students.

The conference will run parallel sessions under the topics of Materials for Health, Materials for Water, Materials for Agriculture/Environment, Materials for Energy, Materials for Mining/Construction, Nanoscience/Nanotechnology, Materials for Education/Networking and Computational Materials Science. These topics reflect both the needs of the global research community such as energy and health, as well as the needs that are specific to Africa.

The Pre-Conference is scheduled to be held from 9th to 10th December 2017, at Maranyane House, while the Main Conference will held at the Gaborone International Conference Centre from 11th to 14th December.

The Keynote Speaker, Professor Jean-Marie Lehn, who in 1987 was awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry, together with Donald Cram and Charles J.

Pedersen, following Vice President Masisi's Official Opening Keynote Address, will present on the topic "***Dynamic Materials Towards Functional Adaptive***". Other Plenary Speakers include amongst others the founding BITRI Chief Executive Officer and current Executive Director of the African Academy of Sciences Governing Council, Professor Nelson Torto, and other acclaimed Scientists such as Prof Paul S. Weiss, Prof Sossina Haile, as well as Prof Tobin J. Marks and will chair various plenary discussions under different sub-themes.

The conference will feature plenary discussions, breakaway sessions, workshops and poster presentation by students. This conference will also serve as platform for BITRI to demonstrate the capabilities of the Centre for Material Science (CMS) which boasts some of the state-of -art instruments envisaged to enable BITRI to become a significant player in the international research arena in materials production and characterization.

At its heart, the AMRS series of conferences allows the scientific and research communities to build knowledge, foster relationships and promote action for further understanding and collaborations in the broad fields associated with materials science and technology.

The formation of the AMRS, has its origins in the August 2000 'US-Africa Materials Workshop', held in Pretoria, South Africa. The workshop was co-organized and sponsored by the United States National Science Foundation (NSF) and the South African National Research Foundation (NRF) and sought to explore opportunities for collaboration between the USA and Africa with an overarching objective of developing the materials research capacity in Africa. It brought together over 70 leading scientists, industry researchers and Government representatives from the USA and 15 African countries, and they sculpted a forward-looking sustainable framework for driving materials research in Africa.

Two years later, building on this initiative, on 12 December, 2002, the African-MRS was officially launched in Dakar, Senegal. The Dakar meeting, was attended by various world experts in the different facets of materials science, engineering and research, thus becoming the 1st AMRS International Conference. Subsequent biennial International Conferences were held in South Africa (2003), Morocco (2005), Tanzania (2007), Nigeria (2009) Zimbabwe, (2011), Ethiopia (2013), Ghana (2015) and Botswana (2017).

The Conference has been organised by Botswana Institute for Technology Research and Innovation (BITRI) in collaboration with African Materials Research Society (AMRS).

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