

## **JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ ON THE OCCASION OF THE JOINT MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE (JMC) MEETING OF THE TRANS-KALAHARI RAILWAY LINE PROJECT**

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1. At the invitation of Hon. Eric Molale, MP, Minister of Transport and Public Works of the Republic of Botswana, Rt. Hon. John Mutorwa, MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Works and Transport of the Republic of Namibia, attended and Co-Chaired the Joint Ministerial Committee (JMC) of the Trans-Kalahari Railway Line Project, which was held on 30<sup>th</sup> & 31st May 2024 in Kasane, Botswana.
2. Hon. Molale was accompanied by H.E. Mr. Phemelo Mbi Rankoro, High Commissioner of Botswana to Namibia, Mr. Kgakgamalo Ken Ketshajwang, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Transport and Public Works and Co-Chair of the Joint Steering Committee (JSC), and Mr. Johannes Tsimako, Co-Chair of the Joint Technical Committee (JTC), as well as Rail Authority Officials and Senior Government Officials.
3. Hon. Mutorwa was accompanied by H.E. Mr. Asser Kapere, High Commissioner of Namibia to Botswana, Ms. Esther Kaapanda, Executive Director of the Ministry of Works and Transport and Co-Chair of the Joint Steering Committee (JSC), Mr. Jonas Sheelongo, Deputy Executive Director: Transport, and Co-Chair of the Joint Technical Committee (JTC) as well as, Port, Corridor and Rail Authorities and Senior Government Officials.
4. The JMC meeting was preceded by the JSC, co-chaired by Ms. Esther Kaapanda and Mr. Kgakgamalo Ken Ketshajwang. The JSC reviewed the progress made since the last meeting on 2 February 2024 in Swakopmund, Namibia, which had approved the engagement of a competent consultant

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to augment the Trans-Kalahari Railway Line Project Management Office (TKR-PMO). The consultant will be tasked with developing comprehensive Terms of Reference for the Request for Proposals (RFP) and undertake a Feasibility study in collaboration with the Railway Operators of both Member States with TKR-PMO.


5. The Hon. Ministers noted that a technical team comprising of officials from the Member States, Railway Operators and the TKR-PMO convened on 25-27 March 2024, in Lobatse, Botswana, to develop the Terms of Reference for the RFP bidding document for the engagement of a competent consultant, complete with a draft contract. The draft contract was developed and finalized by legal expert from the Member States, from 09-12 April 2024, Swakopmund, Namibia.
6. The Hon. Ministers further noted that following the drafting and approval of the bidding documents for the engagement of a consultant to develop the Terms of Reference of the RFP, the TKR-PMO published an advertisement for the consultant on 13 May 2024, with a deadline of 26 June 2024.
7. The Hon. Ministers recalled their decision that a Feasibility Study for the Trans-Kalahari Railway Line Project be undertaken by a prospective developer for the Member States, and considered that an independent Feasibility Study be carried out by the Member States through a consultant. It was observed that the Feasibility Study will affect the timeline of the Trans-Kalahari Railway Line Project Roadmap.
8. Following deliberations, the Hon. Ministers noted and approved that the Feasibility Study be carried out, and further approved the revised Roadmap with the revised timeline.
9. The Hon. Ministers took note of the upcoming elections within the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Region, and wished the Republics of Botswana, Mozambique, and Namibia well in the preparation of their general elections, expected to be held in the later part of 2024, respectively.
10. They also congratulated the Republic of South Africa for hosting its general elections on Wednesday, 29 May 2024, commending the country for its


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commitment to the SADC democratic principles and the peaceful conduct of the electoral process.

11. Notwithstanding the aforementioned, the two Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to continue working closely together to further deepen and consolidate the strategic cooperation and partnership in the areas of transport infrastructure, namely the Trans-Kalahari Railway Line and the Dry Port facility at the Port of Walvis Bay, which are increasingly necessitated by the Kalahari Copper Belt in Botswana.
12. The Hon. Ministers further underscored the need to continue nurturing the warm and excellent bilateral relations that subsist between Botswana and Namibia, which are anchored by long-standing historical bonds of solidarity, socio-economic and common cultural heritage.
13. Hon. Mutorwa expressed appreciation to Hon. Molale for the excellent hospitality rendered to the Namibian delegation for the duration of their visit, and further used the occasion to extend an invitation to Hon. Molale to attend the next JMC meeting, scheduled to be held in Namibia, at a date to be communicated through diplomatic channels.

**ISSUED AT KASANE, BOTSWANA, ON 31 MAY 2024**

  
For the Republic of Botswana  
**Hon. Eric Molale, MP**  
Minister of Transport and Public Works

  
For the Republic of Namibia  
**Hon. John Mutorwa, MP**  
Deputy Prime Minister and  
Minister Works and Transport