

Business trends

Avoid cost overruns - Kedikilwe

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Close the digital divide, SADC urged

BY KOOBONYE RAMOKOPELWA

Newly appointed permanent secretary (PS) in the Ministry of Transport and Communications, Mabua Mabua, has urged governments to invest more in telecommunications and Information Communications Technologies (ICT) for economic benefit.

Mabua said this yesterday (Tuesday) when addressing officials at the 10th Southern African Development Community (SADC) Telecom Operators bilateral meeting in Gaborone, which attracted attendants from the Southern African region.

"It has been proven by various studies that the development of telecommunication and ICT greatly improves the economic and commercial activities of our countries," Mabua said, adding that more funds need to be di-



The 10th SADC telecommunications operators bilateral meeting (STOBM 2010) held in Gaborone GICC. In the picture (L-R) BTC acting CEO Keabetswe Segole, permanent secretary Mabua Mabua and Chali Tumelo

of urgency.

Mabua said that despite the recognition that telecommunication is a catalyst for growth improved communications, generally has not been a central investment focus in most developing countries.

He said the ICT industry is not

also helps countries to remain competitive in the increasingly information-oriented global economy.

"Failure to develop telecommunications will only increase the development gap between our countries and the developed world, commonly known as the Digital

He said access to telecommunications and ICT services especially the internet can no longer be viewed as a luxury for the rich and the privileged, "but is now an important part of all people's lives whether urban or rural."

He added that quality service is

communications and ICT industry. Minimising outages and faults as well as the ability to expand to meet customer's demands could contribute towards quality service.

Acting Botswana Telecommunications Corporation (BTC) Chief Executive, Keabetswe Segole, said all stakeholders must tackle ITC challenges such as the development of telecommunications infrastructure to pave way for the provision of quality telecommunications services at affordable rates.

"I trust that with the varied experience and dynamism of the delegates that are attending this conference, much progress will be made to meet ICT challenges," said Segole.

Various fixed and non-fixed telephone operators attended the SADC Telecom operators 10th meeting from countries such as Zambia, Angola, and South Africa