

# I never apologised — Skelemani

STAFF WRITER

**T**he Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Phandu Skelemani, yesterday denied media claims that he had apologised to the government of Kenya for comments he made to *Mmegi* about that country's President-elect Uhuru Kenyatta and his International Criminal Court (ICC) case.

"I have nothing to apologise for," he said. Skelemani related how a certain Kenyan named Muriti had called him after the *Mmegi* report in which he asserted that Kenyatta should not set foot in Botswana if he does not cooperate with the ICC.

Speaking fluent Setswana, Muriti asked Skelemani to apologise. "I told him that I was not apologising," Skelemani said.

He added that Muriti claimed to work in Kenyatta's office. "I have never spoken to the foreign press about Kenyatta," he insisted. "I wonder where the claim that I have apologised comes from".

The Kenyan  
*Daily*

*Post* first reported yesterday that the minister had apologised to the people of Kenya.

*Mmegi*, along with other international news outlets such as the *BBC*, further reproduced the "official apology" that the Kenyan newspaper attributed to Skelemani.

Meanwhile, government issued a statement yesterday "to clarify a recent statement attributed to the Minister Phandu Skelemani on the question of the ICC and its processes".

The government said the minis-

ter's statement relating to a hypothetical visit to Botswana by Kenya's President-elect was aimed at merely explaining the rules of the ICC and obligations of members of the court.

"In this context, he indicated that as can be expected, any member of the court is bound by its rules," the statement said.

"Equally important is that all members of the court are obliged to uphold its rules, a principle that impels any member, including Botswana, to act to fulfill its obligations under the rules of the court."

The government noted that Skelemani had indicated that the parties involved had not only pledged cooperation but had always cooperated with the ICC.

"In other words, the Kenyan situation does not fall within the above scenario dealing with non-compliance with the court," the statement continued. "Botswana, as a member of the ICC, will only act in accordance with the decisions of the court.

"At the moment, no decision has been made on the Kenyan situation that would require Botswana to act.

The strength of Botswana-Kenya relations is reflected in the long history of wide ranging cooperation between the two countries, as well as the fact that the two countries have resident missions in each other's capitals."

