

September 19, 2003

**PRESS RELEASE**

**SHOCKING DEATHS OF MATSHA SNR STUDENTS**

The Botswana Federation of Secondary School Teachers (BOFESETE) would like to express its shock and sadness towards the death and hospitalization of Matsha Senior School students. It is regrettable that a large number of students had to die such painful deaths while numerous others have gone blind.

The death of the Matsha students follows closely that of Kedia and Mc Connell College students. Teachers as loco parentis are facing immense pressure, trauma, frustrations and stress as these deaths keep on increasing. Teachers in schools are now facing tough challenges as students' indiscipline continues to rise in different forms.

Teachers today remain uncertain about their students' needs and as to what they are likely to do. The students have become highly unpredictable and this has thrown the school system into confusion. There is a serious need to review and overhaul the school and home socialization programmes. This therefore calls for community leaders, professionals, youth leaders, parents and other stakeholders to conduct a comprehensive research that will look at youth issues, indiscipline, crime and other social ills.

BOFESETE sends its condolences to the bereaved and grieved families, Matsha staff and students. We hope that with the grace of God that the remaining affected students would recover.

Thank you.

BOFESETE National Executive Committee