

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



THE PRESIDENCY

**TALKING POINTS BY HIS EXCELLENCY, PRESIDENT
HAGE G. GEINGOB ON THE OCCASION OF THE VIRTUAL
MEETING WITH REGIONAL GOVERNORS**

10 JULY 2020

Good Morning Honourable Governors,

I wish to thank you for your presence during this virtual meeting, which I have convened for the purpose of discussing specific issues with you, following your respective appointments as Regional Governors. This is part of your ongoing induction, which is a critical success factor in the execution of your important developmental mandates.

The November 2019 Presidential and Parliamentary elections demonstrated to us, in no uncertain terms, that regional councils and local authorities are crucial national institutions for service delivery and nation building. In my New Year statement, and subsequently my inaugural statement as Head of State on 21 March 2020, I was very clear that as a Government, we have heard the cries of our fellow citizens. I also emphasized in the SONA last month that development should be accelerated and the needs of citizens should enjoy urgent priority.

Hence, it is your task in the regions, to listen and to act on demands from the population. Of course, we are aware of the COVID-19 pandemic which is an independent intervening variable, and has resulted in a global economic downturn. We are also aware of the devastating drought through that

caused havoc on the farming sector which is the livelihood of a majority of Namibians. The combination of these factors, i.a. the economic downturn, drought, and Covid-19, have negatively impacted on the growth of the Namibian economy. This scenario has exacerbated the resultant growing numbers of the unemployed, especially our youths.

I am confident that if we hold hands and mobilize stakeholders within our regions to come together through a unified and patriotic effort, we will be able to overcome the challenge posed by COVID-19, in order to maintain progress in our objective to bring about shared national prosperity.

The Role of Governors

In light of the aforementioned, it is important for you, as Regional Governors to understand your roles, and also the rationale why you now reside in the Office of the President. The Regional Governor is a representative of the President and Central Government in the region; the political head of the region. In that capacity, the Regional Governor acts as a link between the Central Government and the Regional Council, Local Authorities and Traditional Leaders.

- **The Constitution of the Republic of Namibia is clear about Namibia being a Unitary State, as stated in the Preamble**

and I quote, "Whereas we the people of Namibia – have finally emerged victorious in our struggle against colonialism, racism and apartheid; are determined to adopt a Constitution which expresses for ourselves and our children our resolve to cherish and to protect the gains of our long struggle; desire to promote amongst all of us the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Namibian nation among and in association with the nations of the world; will strive to achieve national reconciliation and to foster peace, unity and a common loyalty to a single state; committed to these principles, have resolved to constitute the Republic of Namibia as a sovereign, secular, democratic and unitary State securing to all our citizens justice, liberty, equality and fraternity", unquote.

- Regional Governors are accountable to the President as the appointing authority and should at all times ensure that they account to The Presidency about activities, developmental challenges and opportunities in their assigned Regions.**
- You are not petitioners in Regions who are there to complain about what the Central Government has done or not done in a particular area. Your duty is to defend Government programmes, its positions and to assist**

government by pursuing innovative ways to initiate development within your specific region.

- **I have said repeatedly that we must do more with less. Resources are scarce and you are aware that we introduced a fiscal consolidation strategy, which delivered the desired results. Regrettably COVID-19 has altered our path and our gains, and we are compelled to work harder and more creatively.**
- **In this vein, you must take note that the recruitment of staff for your offices i.e. Executive Directors, will be affected by the current financial constraints. Therefore, staff, within government, will be seconded to those offices where to serve as administrators instead of advisors. Furthermore, we have noted that than in most instances, Political Advisors, were not doing anything. Therefore you will get bureaucrats as your advisors.**
- **The Minister in the Presidency is the designated person to channel your reports in a timely manner.**
- **As Representatives of Government in the Regions, it is expected that you remain and work in your duty stations, which is the Region to which, each one of you, have been assigned. Fruitless travel to Windhoek and other parts of the country is strongly discouraged, which some of you use as an opportunity to request meetings with me. Your**

movements must be cleared with the Minister in the Presidency, who I have designated as the focal point in the interaction with the President as the appointing authority.

- **As the most senior Officials and Representatives of the Government, you should deal with problems horizontally by building solid working relations with line-Ministries in order to bring tangible changes in the lives of people living in the regions.**
- **I, alongside the Vice President have an open-door policy and ready to offer assistance if and when required. Challenges must be raised transparently at these levels and the necessary action will be taken.**
- **Acquaint yourselves with Government programmes and Presidential statements, work with diligence, and ensure that the work of Government is accessible to all the layers in your regions. This includes, regional councilors, local authorities and traditional leaders. It is expected that you carry out these functions in the most inclusive and collaborative manner in order to avoid unnecessary tensions and delays in the execution of developmental activities.**
- **I always say that exclusivity spells conflict and inclusivity spells harmony. Therefore, you must work with that**

mantra by bringing people in our regions together, with the clear objective building national cohesion. Tribalism, racism and regionalism does not have a place in any society and is a recipe for disaster.

Finally, I would like to express our solidarity with, Comrade Neville Andre, the Regional Governor of Erongo. We are aware that the current situation in the region, with regards to Covid-19, has placed an unprecedented level of strain on your office and the people of Erongo Region. We express our empathy with the people of Erongo, as we are well aware that if we don't maintain vigilance and hold hands in fighting this pandemic, similar Covid-19 outbreaks could spread to the rest of the country, and pose a greater national health and economic threat. Therefore, let us work together, pull in the same direction and defeat this pandemic so that we can return to the process of building our nation.

I thank you