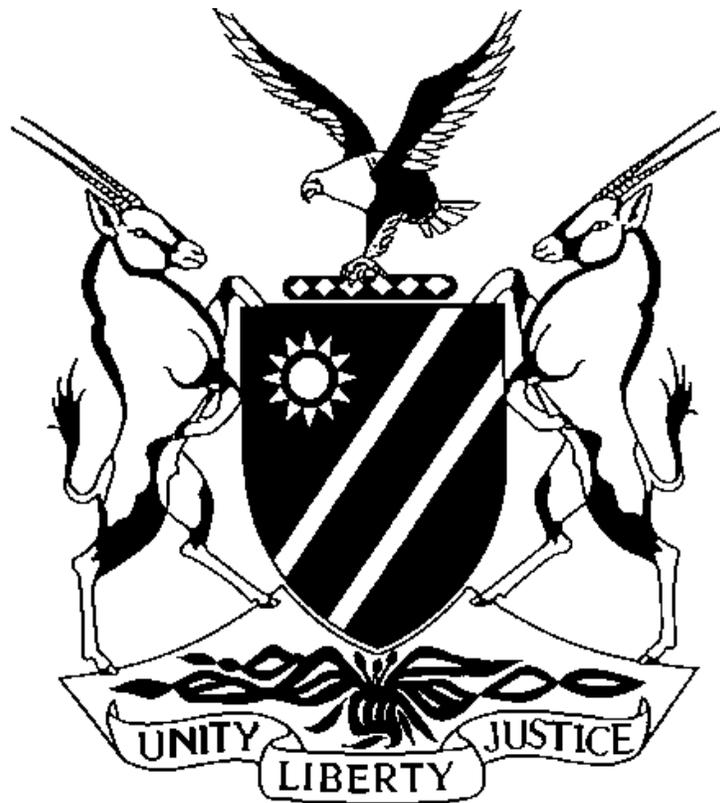


# REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



## CHRISTMAS MESSAGE BY HIS EXCELLENCY HIFIKEPUNYE POHAMBWA, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

24 DECEMBER 2006

WINDHOEK

*\*Check against Delivery*

## Good Evening Fellow Namibians

At this time of the year, the happy voices, the songs and the cheers all around us are reminding us that the joy of Christmas has arrived once again. On this special evening of Christmas Eve for 2006, I am filled with great joy as we look back at a passing year that was marked by both successes and challenges. Of course, in the course of human existence, this is to be expected. By the Grace of the Almighty, we have arrived at this juncture, poised to celebrate once again the miracle of Christmas.

My message to you, my fellow citizens on this Christmas Eve is this: Let us celebrate this special occasion by demonstrating kindness, love and generosity to our fellow citizens. Let us show compassion and empathy to those who are less fortunate than ourselves. Let us spare a thought for those who are bedridden because of illnesses of different kinds. Indeed, let us bring forth the caring and the kinder side of the Namibian society. In this manner, we can help to make the time of Christmas and this holiday season a meaningful and memorable time for our fellow citizens.

Many people have traveled to visit relatives and friends in different parts of our vast country. Some are still on the road at this very moment. I wish to use this opportunity to caution all our road users to respect and adhere to all traffic regulations. It is regrettable that several lives have already been lost in road accidents since the beginning of the holiday season. It is important to ensure that all road-users, drivers of vehicles and passengers alike, behave with maximum caution, discipline and self-restraint so that we can avoid unnecessary loss of productive and innocent lives.

Every year, our road users are cautioned and reminded to adhere to traffic regulations, to ensure that all vehicles are roadworthy, to get enough rest before embarking on a journey and to drive within the prescribed speed limits. However, and sadly so, every year, during this time road accidents escalate with the accompanying horror of many innocent lives cut short. On the evening of 13 December 2006, a gruesome accident occurred between Grootfontein and Rundu in which seventeen lives were lost. On behalf of the Government and the people of the Republic Namibia, and indeed on my own behalf, I wish to extend our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families of those who died in this and other road accidents this holiday season. Hence, I urge our road-users to avoid nighttime driving, unless it is a matter of necessity.

All road-users in Namibia have a responsibility towards themselves, their loved ones and indeed all other persons who make use of our roads. Let us work together to prevent unnecessary sorrow and grief that is caused by preventable road fatalities and injuries.

Fellow Namibians,

Christmas has always been a source of happiness, excitement, and a sense of wonder, particularly in the children and the youth. As they experience this wonderful time, parents and guardians have a duty to instill in our children and the youth, the values of sharing, respect for others and for authority as well as self-respect. Schools have now closed and children are spending time with their families and friends. This time should be used to teach them to stay away from bad influences and practices that can endanger their lives and their health. Therefore, parents and guardians should ensure that children play and celebrate Christmas in a safe environment.

I wish to make specific mention of our elderly, the senior citizens of Namibia who are the source of timeless wisdom. I am pleased to state, on behalf of our Government that, you are in our thoughts during this special time. Your respective roles of providing a moral compass in households, families, communities and the society at large are highly appreciated, for they serve to strengthen our social fabric. Indeed, households, families and communities are building blocks for a strong nation, therefore, your role is highly appreciated.

May this holiday season and the good tidings of Christmas bring our people closer in the spirit of unity and national reconciliation. May the spirit of togetherness and sharing prevail in our land so that families, relatives and friends can rekindle and strengthen the ties of friendship that can make our country and our society stronger. May all Namibians, from the east to the west and from the north to the south, celebrate a safe and enjoyable Christmas.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year, 2007.

Good Evening.