

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FOR 2009
BY HIS EXCELLENCY HIFIKEPUNYE POHAMBWA,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

24 DECEMBER 2009

WINDHOEK

**Check Against Delivery*

Good Evening, Fellow Namibians

The holiday season is once again upon us and many people have already started to travel to different destinations around the country and even beyond our borders. This follows a hectic and eventful year during which Namibians worked hard for the development of our nation, the upliftment of our communities and the improvement of the living conditions of our people. Together, our people faced the challenges of fighting poverty, improving food production and expanding commercial activities to create prosperity. In different parts of the country, Namibia entrepreneurs, both big business and small and medium enterprises did their best to boost the performance of our economy. These men and women have made a valuable contribution to the process of nation building and they deserve our commendation for their hard work.

On the political front, our nation held the fourth Presidential and National Assembly Elections. The Elections were declared free and fair and credible by independent international observers as well by the Namibia Electoral Commission.

I would like to commend our people for their political maturity which made it possible for Namibia to hold yet another round of peaceful and credible elections.

Fellow Namibians,

The holiday season is a time for families to come together after many months of hard work. Parents who work may have taken leave and children have come home for the school holidays. This is therefore a good time for families to spend quality time together, to relax and enjoy each other's companionship. It is also an opportune time for parents guardian and elders to further inculcate the values of sharing and respect in our young people. While the young people must be exposed to this kind of upbringing throughout their lives, the holiday season and Christmas humility and selflessness, which are central to the essence of Christmas.

On this occasion, I would like to send a special greeting to all our youth. I request them to listen to and obey their parents all the time. They must stay away from the temptations of alcohol abuse, premarital sex and other social evils.

I encourage them to engage only in constructive activities such as volunteering to assist the vulnerable members of our society, including orphans, the elderly and people living with disabilities. They can also organise themselves in groups of positive peer pressure and encourage their peers to reject the temptations of alcohol and abuse of drugs.

While the Christmas holiday is a time to be merry and joyful, we should not lose sight of the fact that there are many dangers when our people indulge in alcohol abuse, drug abuse or excessive enjoyment. Such behavior leads to many regrets and should therefore be avoided. Yes, our people must enjoy their holiday season, however, it is also important to emphasise that everything must be done in moderation. This is my message to our nation especially to our youth on this Christmas Eve.

Fellow Namibians,

Every year, extensive educational and awareness raising campaigns are carried out by various stakeholders to sensitize our road users about the need for road safety. Yet, every year many lives are lost on our roads during this time of the year.

I would like to make a special appeal to all road users to respect the regulations for road safety to have regard for other road users, to drive safely at all times and to have courtesy for other road users. We must join hands to stop the carnage that results from negligent driving on our roads during the holiday season.

The number of fatalities and injuries from motor vehicle accidents can be drastically reduced if our road users respect and abide by the regulations, exercise caution and practice courtesy towards one another. In this respect, I appeal to the motoring public and to all road users to do their part in our joint efforts to make our roads safer.

I also appeal to the relevant stakeholders and the law enforcement agencies to apply the law without fear or favor. All offenders must face the full wrath of the law. Each and every person who breaks the law must be brought to book in order to serve as an example to others. There should be no compromise. Law enforcement agencies must ensure that the law is applied to the letter.

Fellow Namibians,

I would like to once again congratulate the Namibian nation on the peaceful, free and fair elections that were held on 27th and 28th November this year. The elections have further consolidated and deepened the roots of the tree of democracy that we planted on 21st March 1990. Indeed, the Namibian people demonstrated their political maturity and peace-loving nature as they stood in lines to cast their votes.

The successful holding of this latest round of peaceful and democratic elections is an achievement that all patriotic Namibians should be proud of.

ON this special night let us also spare a prayer for our fellow citizens who are bedridden because of illnesses, our senior citizens as well as the workers in essential services such as the law enforcement official, security guards, nurses, doctors, firefighters and indeed all persons who are on duty not only this Christmas Eve, but also during this entire holiday season. May this holiday season be filled with joy and happiness for all our people.

May the families and communities rekindle the familial ties of togetherness and belonging as we recuperate and recharge our energies for the hard that awaits all of us in 2010. I wish all our people and indeed all persons within our borders a Merry Christmas.

Long Live the Republic of Namibia

I thank you and Good night.