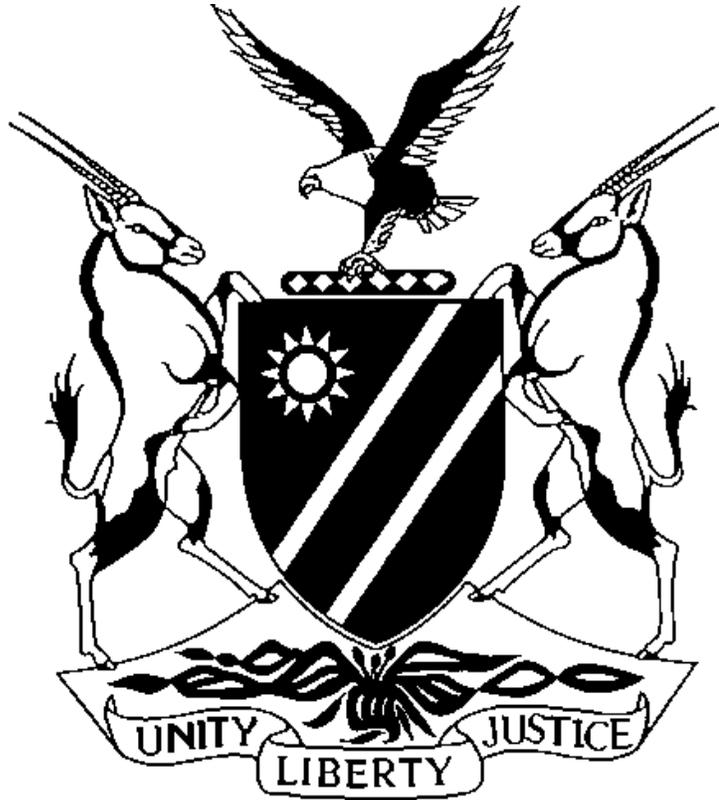


REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY,
HIFIKEPUNYE POHAMBA, PRESIDENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA,
ON THE OCCASION OF THE
LAST CABINET SESSION FOR 2010**

07 DECEMBER 2010

WINDHOEK

**Check Against Delivery*

Right Honourable Prime Minister,
Honourable Deputy Prime Minister,
Honourable Ministers,
Esteemed Secretary to the Cabinet and your Team,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have come to the end of yet another busy year. During this passing year, we continued to make strides aimed at further consolidating democracy and providing better public services and social amenities to our people as well as implementing development programmes in all parts of the country. While there were also many challenges, encouraging progress has been made in many areas. These include the expansion of our physical and communication infrastructure, improvement of our education system, expansion of health care services and modernization of health care facilities, increased investments in our agricultural sector and the ongoing efforts to combat unemployment through the creation of new employment opportunities.

At the outset, I would like to thank all members of Cabinet for their dedication to duty during the passing year and for their services to the nation, guided by the letter and spirit of the Namibian Constitution. I also wish to thank you for your contributions to the debates in Cabinet that enabled us to take informed decisions in the interest of all the Namibian people.

Dear Colleagues,

A few weeks ago, the 2010 Regional Councils and Local Authorities Elections were held. During these elections, the Namibian people made their voices heard in a democratic manner through the ballot box and gave the SWAPO Party an overwhelming landslide victory. The elections confirmed, once again, the confidence that the people of Namibia continue to repose in the SWAPO Party. Yesterday, I addressed a Victory Rally at the SWAPO Party National Headquarters. I used that occasion as President of the SWAPO Party, to thank the voters for their longstanding support and for once again giving our party and our candidates the mandate to serve as regional and local authority councilors.

I urge the newly elected and sworn-in councilors to serve the nation to the best of their abilities. There are many issues that need to be addressed in order to improve the living conditions of our people. The priority areas are clearly articulated in the 2009 SWAPO Party Election Manifesto and in our National Development Plans. These are the road maps that must guide the newly elected councilors as they work to implement the policies of the SWAPO party government. I have already appointed the majority of Governors for most of the political and administrative regions of the country, with only three outstanding, who will be announced in due course. The focus of the newly elected councilors must be on service delivery, promotion of good governance and on making Namibia a better place for all our people.

Dear Colleagues,

The promotion of employment creation continued to occupy center-stage in the work of Government during the passing year. In this regard, Cabinet took deliberate decisions aimed at finding appropriate solutions to this national challenge. In this connection, an *Employment Creation Summit* was held in the last quarter of this year, where Government consulted all relevant stakeholders on the measures that we need to put in place and the strategies that we need to adopt in order to boost employment creation in the country.

At that summit, a wide range of strategies were considered to support the SME sector, to assist entrepreneurs, to ensure greater co-ordination in the implementation of government policies and to strengthen the culture of consultation among relevant stakeholders in dealing with issues of national concern. While we await the publication of the final Report of the Employment Creation Summit, we also look forward to the full implementation of its recommendations and the positive impact that this is envisaged to have on the creation of employment and the growth of the national economy.

Towards the same end, Cabinet also took a decision to restrict the participation of foreign citizens and foreign owned entities to participate in certain sub-sectors of the economy, namely the retail business, hair-dressing and hair salons, local transport services.

The aim is to level the playing field so that our Small and Medium Enterprises can grow and create more wealth of local Namibians. We must do more in the New Year to ensure that Government policies continue to generate effective solutions to the problems that our society and communities face.

An *Agricultural Investment Conference* was also held, here in Windhoek, in September this year in order to boost investments in Namibia's agricultural sector. Strengthening the agricultural sector is an important part of our job-creation strategy as the sector has significant untapped potential, not only to create thousands of employment opportunities, but also to contribute significantly to local food production.

Dear Colleagues,

As we search for solutions to the development challenges facing our nation, we should consider both the short and long term options that can take our country further towards the achievement of our national development plans and Vision 2030.

In the same vein, we must continue to promote the values of collective accountability, effective consultations, transparency, team work and efficiency.

A few years ago, we took a decision to revitalize and streamline the operations of Cabinet in order to bring about greater efficiency, to ensure quicker decision-making and make all Cabinet processes more agile and robust.

We must continue in the same spirit in the coming year in order to ensure the business and the affairs of Cabinet are managed in the most efficient and effective manner. The agreed mechanisms must be enforced to ensure that the decisions of Cabinet are implemented and properly monitored. In the same vein, I wish to continue insisting on the need for all Cabinet Committees to carry out their assignments expeditiously at all times.

Thus, each Cabinet Committee must ensure that all matters referred to them are dealt with in a speedy manner, while not compromising on in-depth analysis and consideration of all relevant issues.

This is vital to ensure that Government work is carried out effectively and efficiently at all times so that we can find solutions to the challenges facing our people in their daily lives.

Dear Colleagues,

With the festive season just around the corner, many Namibians have already started traveling to different holiday destinations around the country. Unfortunately, this is also the time when the number of road accidents on our roads increases. These accidents rob our nation of productive citizens who could contribute in many ways to the social and economic development of our nation.

I would therefore wish to once again call on all road users to take the necessary care and to obey traffic rules and regulations in order to make our roads safer. Anyone who violates traffic rules and puts the lives of other road- users at risk must face the full force of the law.

I call upon all our law enforcement officials to forcefully and without fear or favour, maintain law and order and promote the safety of all road users during this busy time of the year. I take this opportunity to wish you all and your families a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

I thank you.