

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**STATEMENT BY H.E. PRESIDENT HIFIKEPUNYE POHAMBWA, TO THE 28TH
NEPAD HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT ORIENTATION COMMITTEE
(HSGOC) SUMMIT ON THE “IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF THE
PRESIDENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE CHAMPION INITIATIVE”**

26 JANUARY 2013

ADDIS ABABA

**Check Against Delivery*

**Your Excellency, Mr Haile Mariam Dessalegne, Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia and Chairperson of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee (HSGOC),
Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,
Your Excellency Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union,
Dr Ibrahim Mayaki, Chief Executive Officer of NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency,
Heads of Delegations,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I wish to express our appreciation for the opportunity to comment on the report of the Presidential Infrastructure Champions, led by H.E. President Jacob Zuma of South Africa. Let me at the outset congratulate you, Mr Prime Minister, on your election as the Prime Minister of Ethiopia. Allow me to thank the Government and people of Ethiopia for the hospitality accorded to my delegation and I since our arrival in Addis Ababa. Once again, on behalf of the Government and people of Namibia, I express our heartfelt condolences to the Government and people of Ethiopia on the passing away of the former Prime Minister of Ethiopia, and former Chairperson of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee, Meles Zenawi.

Let me also thank Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union, Dr Ibrahim Mayaki, and their respective teams for the excellent preparations for our meeting today.

Mr Chairperson,

The Reports have clearly outlined the challenges and the constraints encountered during the implementation of the projects under the Presidential Infrastructure Champion Initiative (PICI). We believe that this Initiative adds an important dimension of leadership at the highest level to ensure a successful implementation of the identified projects.

Namibia has completed the construction of the Trans-Caprivi Highway, linking Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana, Angola, and DRC to the port of Walvis Bay in Namibia. We have also completed the construction of the Trans-Kalahari Highway, which links South Africa, Botswana and Namibia. We believe these highways are contributing to the development of African infrastructures. Namibia recently designated the Ministry of Works and Transport as Namibia's Champion for Infrastructure Projects and communicated this information to the NEPAD Agency.

Our country, therefore, stands ready to play a constructive role, together with members of the North South Corridor, to link the two highways to the North South Corridor project. In this regard, I wish to propose that Namibia be considered to be part of the North South Corridor project.

Mr Chairman, I would like to commend the Champions for their eloquent presentations, which have provided an overview of the activities undertaken by the Champions and the respective implementing countries. Namibia indeed welcomes the

specific results of the work done over the last 6 months. I would like to congratulate President Zuma and all the Champions for the focus and commitment they have demonstrated towards the implementation of the infrastructure projects for the development of our continent.

Progress has been made on many fronts. For example, in Southern Africa, people are able to travel by all-weather highways to and from Windhoek, Gaborone, Harare, Johannesburg and Lusaka. When completed, the projects you are championing will make the physical integration of Africa a reality. It is also important to expand and modernise our harbour as part of infrastructure development and expansion in Africa.

I thank you.