

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**STATEMENT BY
HIS EXCELLENCY HIFIKEPUNYE POHAMB
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
ON THE OCCASION OF THE DELIVERY OF THE
QUEEN'S ANNUAL MESSAGE TO THE
COMMONWEALTH**

9 MARCH 2015

WINDHOEK

Your Excellency Ms. Ivette Lillian Mavivi Myakayaka-Manzini,
High Commissioner of the Republic of South Africa and Dean of
the Commonwealth Heads of Missions in Namibia;
Your Excellencies, High Commissioners
Ladies and Gentlemen

I am happy to receive you at State House once again to mark the
Commonwealth Day and to receive Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth
II's Annual Message to the Commonwealth.

The Government and people of Namibia are proud to be part of the
Commonwealth family, which makes up of 53 member countries.
The Commonwealth community has, over the years, developed a
vision based upon commonly held values and principles such as
gender equality and the empowerment of young people.

This year the Commonwealth theme is "A Young Commonwealth".
This theme is in harmony with Namibia's own National
Development Plan (NDP4) whose goals include: employment
creation, increased income equality, and high and sustained
economic growth, all of which recognise the capacity, contribution
and potential of young people, and the vital role they play in nation
building. This year's theme also supports youth participation at all
levels of society in order to build democracy and skills in a
culturally diverse environment.

It is gratifying to note that tomorrow, 10 March 2015, the regional
winners from among sixteen extraordinary young people shortlisted
from across the Commonwealth, will be announced in London for
the prestigious 2015 Commonwealth Youth Awards for Excellence
in Development Work. On behalf of Namibia I congratulate them on
their outstanding achievement and wish them the best for their
future endeavours.

Namibia has benefited from the Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative, now known as the Namibia Youth Credit Scheme, which is an integrated youth empowerment programme initiated in 2005 through the enterprise development. This Initiative aims to provide simplified business planning and business management training to young people, as a means to support committed out-of-school youth in their efforts to establish SME initiatives as strategies for self-employment, income generation and improvement of their living standards. More than 7000 young people have been trained under this Initiative, and a further 5000 have received loans to start or expand their businesses.

I am also informed that more than 80 young Namibian professionals have benefited from the Commonwealth Youth Programme, a Diploma in Youth and Development Work offered through the Namibia College of Open Learning. I call upon all young people to continue with their studies and work, and to inspire others since you are fundamental to Namibia's national development.

Other programmes aimed at developing potential among Commonwealth Youth have been launched recently such as the Young Leaders Programme. This Partnership between the Queens Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust; the Royal Commonwealth Society; Comic Relief, and a Young Professional Programme by the Commonwealth also builds youth leadership.

I wish to state that Namibia will continue to honour her financial and other obligations towards the Commonwealth.

As my term of office as President of the Republic of Namibia draws to a close on 21 March 2015, I wish to take this opportunity to bid you farewell, and wish you success in your future endeavours as we continue to collectively address the developmental challenges

affecting our continent and forge ahead with peace, stability and development on our continent.

It is my sincere hope that Your Excellencies will accord the incoming President the same support as you have rendered to me during my tenure.

Let me take this opportunity to extend our best wishes to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second. May she continue to enjoy good health.

I thank you.