

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY
HIFIKEPUNYE POHAMBWA, PRESIDENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA, ON THE
OCCASION OF A FAREWELL DINNER
HOSTED IN HIS HONOUR BY THE
NAMIBIAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY**

11 MARCH 2015

WINDHOEK

"Check Against Delivery."

Director of Ceremonies,
Honourable Ministers,
Mr. Sven Thieme, President of Namibia Chamber of Commerce and Industry
(NCCI),
Distinguished Members of the Namibian Business Community,
Senior Government Officials,
Distinguished Invited Guests,
Members of the Media,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

My wife and I are most delighted for the kind invitation you have extended to us to attend this Dinner hosted in our honour by the Namibian Business Community. We would, therefore, like to thank the leadership of the Namibia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NCCI), the Secretariat, and through you, the entire membership of the NCCI and the Namibian business community in general, for this generous gesture.

Our Government has always held the view that the private sector is a critical partner in the socio-economic development of our country.

The private sector has had a profound effect in the on-going efforts to create employment opportunities, combat poverty, expand infrastructure and provide services to our people. For this reason, our Government has put in place legislative and regulatory framework to facilitate and encourage Public Private Partnerships (PPPs).

Similarly, Government has made consistent efforts to create an enabling environment for investment and doing business in our country. Several measures have been put in place to achieve this important objective. For example, steps have been taken to modernise the Investment Act and the Export Processing Zone Act.

The process of registering companies has been simplified through the establishment of the *Business and Intellectual Property Authority* (BIPA) by our Ministry of Trade and Industry, which will serve as the One-Stop Centre for the registration of companies, as well as the protection of business, commercial and industrial property rights.

In the same vein, Government has amended the Public Procurement Regulations to enable the SMEs to participate in the public procurement system. These and other measures have brought about positive results.

As you are aware, in rolling out and expanding public services in different parts of the country, Government relies on the expertise and technical know-how of the private sector to execute projects such as the construction of roads, houses, schools, clinics and other public facilities. These projects are awarded to private contractors through the public procurement system. In this context, I wish to emphasise that it is critical that the private sector implements the public projects on time, within the approved budgets and in line with the required standards.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I must say that through the interactions that I have had with business leaders and individual entrepreneurs in different parts of the country, I am confident that Namibian business persons are committed to using their creativity and innovation for the betterment of our society. The private sector has also provided valuable assistance to humanitarian projects and programmes initiated by the First Lady. This assistance is highly valued. I, therefore, take this opportunity to acknowledge the positive role played by the Namibian private sector in the development of our country over the years.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have been greatly honoured that the people of Namibia elected me as President for two five years consecutive terms. As I retire from my public duties as Head of State of our Republic on Saturday, the 21 March this year, I urge you to continue working hard to grow the economy and create employment opportunities for all our jobless countrymen and women.

I take this opportunity to thank the Namibian business community for the unwavering support rendered to me and the governance during the period of my Presidency. I urge you to provide the same support to our incoming Head of State, Dr. Hage Geingob.

Once again, on behalf of the First Lady and on my own behalf, I would like to thank you most heartedly for hosting us here this evening. We wish you all success in your individual and collective efforts towards growing the Namibian economy.

I thank you.