

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**STATEMENT DURING OFFICIAL TALKS FOR H.E DR.
HAGE G. GEINGOB, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF
NAMIBIA ON THE OCCASION OF A STATE VISIT BY H.E.
LT. GEN. DR SERETSE KHAMA IAN KAHMA TO THE
REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

FEBRUARY 5, 2018

STATE HOUSE

WINDHOEK

**Your Excellency Lieutenant General
Dr. Seretse Khama Ian Khama,
Honourable Ministers from
Botswana and Namibia,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Your Excellency, President and dear Brother, for accepting my invitation to undertake a State Visit to Namibia. It has been said, "We make our friends; we make our enemies; but God makes our next door neighbor."

We therefore thank God that He has made Botswana our next door neighbor.

Your Excellency,

The bilateral cooperation which our two countries continue to pursue today is embodied in our historical ties and strong commitment towards the improvement of our economies and the standards of living conditions of our people. I am fully aware of the fact that both of us share and are committed to the continued

enhancement of bilateral relations and cooperation between our two countries and peoples for the purposes of realizing our development goals.

Our countries have signed a number of bilateral cooperation instruments which outline the framework of our cooperation. These include cooperation in energy, education, health, defense, environment, the Trans-Kalahari Railway Line, and the development of the Botswana Dry Port Facility in Walvis Bay, to mention but a few.

In terms of the Dry Port, we are pleased to have assisted our formerly land locked neighbor to now become a sea-linked neighbor, in the interest of solidifying our fraternal bonds and pursuing our common interests in terms of trade and economic development.

Although cooperation continues smoothly in all areas mentioned, at the technical levels between officials and institutions in Namibia and Botswana, I would like to see accelerated progress, especially while Your Excellency is still in

office. I am informed that our Ministers met with their counterparts earlier this morning to discuss issues pertaining to our bilateral cooperation. Specifically, I am pleased to note that

Air Namibia is flying directly to Gaborone. Connectivity is one of the major challenges that hampers inter-regional trade. I am convinced that this undertaking is already greatly enhancing trade and tourism between our two countries.

In this vein, I am pleased to note the number of tourists from Botswana that visited Namibia during the December/January holidays. Your Excellency will agree with me that it is a welcomed development as witness of Africans deciding to spend their holidays in neighbouring countries and other African countries. This is not only a sign of rising standards of living amongst our people, but also the attractiveness of our countries and the level of facilities which they offer to tourists and business travelers alike.

Free movement of goods and services must be followed by people to people visits.

Your Excellency,

Namibia is happy fact that there are more than 100 Namibian students studying at various tertiary institutions in Botswana. Among these students, there are 14 with disabilities. Namibia appreciates cooperation that is aimed at enhancing our human capital through quality

education. It has been said that, "Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself. The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically". For Botswana and Namibia to reach levels of industrialization and economic development comparable to developed nations, it is crucial that our youths are given the requisite tools to think intensively and critically.

The Boundary Treaty that we will sign shortly, came about as a result of extended bilateral negotiations that were held in a cordial manner. This is indeed a significant milestone that our two countries have achieved. Namibia appreciates the spirit of neighbourliness that is evident in the interactions between our two countries.

Your Excellency,

Water and energy supply shortages represent some of the major critical challenges facing our countries and the SADC region as a whole. These are indispensable commodities needed for industrialization and economic growth. I hope that during our discussions, we will be able to identify ways in which our two countries can enhance cooperation in these critical areas since we face similar challenges with regards to water and energy shortages.

On the multilateral front, I wish to state that our two countries should maintain regular consultations on key international issues. As Namibia will be taking over the Chairmanship of SADC later this year, it will need the support of all Member States in pursuit of the regional agenda. Equally we must continue to pursue our shared goals such as the need for reform of the United Nations, Security Council and other multilateral organizations.

I am therefore confident that these Official Talks provide us with an opportunity to continue working on enhancing our bilateral cooperation and exploring new areas of cooperation for the benefit of the our two countries and peoples.

I thank you.