

**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**



**THE PRESIDENCY**

**THE PRESIDENCY MEDIA RELEASE  
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**SWAKOPMUND**

**The President of the Republic of Namibia, His Excellency Dr. Hage G. Geingob concludes Regional Assessment Missions (RAMs) for the week, with a Town-Hall Meeting at Swakopmund, preceded by a visit to Keetmanshoop the previous day**

## **1. Erongo**

President Geingob was joined by several Cabinet, including Prime Minister Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila who provided feedback on the current drought relief programme that has been underway since the declaration of drought as a national emergency.

Prior to the Town-Hall Meeting, the President visited the Trans Kalahari Highway project to assess progress on the highway that will serve as a corridor for Walvis Bay, Windhoek and Central Namibia through Botswana and South Africa.

During the Town-Hall Meeting, President Geingob encouraged dialogue saying, “with engagement you find one another, but if you don't talk, you suspect each other”.

President Geingob recognized that corruption has been decentralized hence the need for better authority for regional leaders in order to deal with the corruption occurring at regional level.

The President further addressed the concern regarding civil servants engaging in business activities, directing the Prime Minister to explain that the Public Service Act provides that public servants are only allowed to do business after they have declared direct or indirect interest in business activities, after permission had been granted permission.

Prime Minister Kuugongelwa-Amadhila informed that there has been cases of public servants who have been apprehended for their business activities outside the Act, and prosecuted and even found guilty.

The Head-of-State in a number of comments also addressed the recurrent concerns there are regarding service provision by those in the public sector.

Addressing the issue of inequality, President Geingob said that initiatives such as the New Equitable Economic Empowerment Framework should not just be rejected, but revisited and reworked.

“One thing is clear that we have to address inequality,” President Geingob told the meeting.

A total of 22 submissions were made from representatives of business sector, youth leaders, elderly, town councils and private sector.

Participants from the business sector said that while they believe in President Geingob's vision, some are failing in supporting his vision.

They submitted that government must consider providing cheaper water and electricity by looking into the options of nuclear energy and water desalination.

They also submitted that Namibia must look at areas such as the blue economy and see where value can be added for the benefit of the Namibian economy.

Activists for the legalisation of cannabis have sought audience with law makers and the Head of State to discuss the future of medicinal cannabis and the decriminalization of its use and growing.

Participants also questioned why China was using Uranium, while the country can be using the natural resource for itself.

Government provided feedback on the responses to the issues that were raised in the 2015 Town-Hall Meetings. Some of these responses included the drought relief program

## **2. //Karas**

Town-Hall Meetings and Regional Assessment Missions (RAM) are purposed to build the Namibian house, President Hage G. Geingob told inhabitants of //Karas yesterday

The President of the Republic of Namibia, His Excellency Dr. Hage G. Geingob concluded the //Karas Regional Assessment Mission with a Town-Hall Meeting at Keetmanshoop on 17 July 2018. The meeting was preceded by an assessment mission at farm Itsawises near Keetmanshoop, impacted by the drought in the area and interventions.

President Geingob emphasized that “the idea of transparency is paramount. This is the only country all of us can call home”. President also added, “we believe that governance should be inclusive” hence the trip to the regions. The President spoke strongly against bad service by the public sector saying those working in government are there to serve the Namibian people.

Responding to the unemployment concern, President Geingob said, “We come from a background of having a boss always, that is the problem”. The President challenged the youth to change the narrative of being job seekers.

Attendees representing the youth, persons with disability, the elderly, Shack Dwellers Federation (SDF) and farmers, as well as business sector all submitted issues that affect them directly, saying they see it as an indication of President Geingob's concern towards their problems.

One of the participants representing the elderly said that while he is certain there are good leaders in the top structures of government and that President Geingob himself is an exemplary leader, government is being failed by the the leaders and government officials on the ground.

The participant raised concern over a farm that government donated to the Vaalgras Traditional Authority which as been underutilised for the past eight years.

One of the biggest concerns by the elderly is that their municipal debts are very high and they want them to be written off, and prepaid meter services be introduced.

The government responded to this saying there are various policies in place that subsidizes municipal services for elders.

Government added that the first 50 units for electricity used by elderly were subsidized and that there was a N\$19 subsidy on the first 1000 cubic liters of water used.

Members of the youth raised points that included the exclusion of the youth in allocation of low cost housing and land for resettlement, unemployment and underfunding or no funding for entrepreneurship for the youth.

Participants speaking on behalf of the youth also said that the private banks were business unfriendly towards the youth as the requirements for loans and funding are not considerate of youth startups.

Government responded that there are two schemes that assist the youth who need financial assistance for entrepreneurship.

The Government last year approved a programme that provides lending to the youth through the Development Bank of Namibia, provide guarantee for credit as well as venture capital.

There is also another scheme targeting graduate youth in starting their own businesses.

A participant speaking on behalf of the business sector in the region said that there is a need to create a more conducive environment to do business as many of them are currently frustrated by cumbersome process of activities such as registering a business with BIPA, bureaucracy on the part of civil servants and the creation of employment.

Government responded to the BIPA issue acknowledging that there

are too many requirements and Government was currently reviewing the requirements with the intention of doing away with some of the unnecessary requirements.

Prime Minister of the Republic of Namibia Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila said that government has responded to the drought situation that was raised in 2015 as well as in today's Town Hall Meeting by amongst other providing food support to households through the food rations and assisting with water supply through the rehabilitation of and drilling of boreholes.

Kuugongelwa-Amadhila said that the various subsidies provided under the drought relief programs are also well underway as a number of applications for have been received and processed.

Prime Minister Kuugongelwa-Amadhila acknowledged that there are those who do not meet the requirements to benefit from the subsidies and assistance from government, but that they are faced with dire challenges. She urged these farmers to approach the offices of their governors. Government needed more funds than what they had estimated for the drought relief excercise.

Kuugongela-Amadhila noted that the estimates of the number of households and farmers who needed assistance had shot up and the estimated N\$500 million budgeted would not be sufficient. The PM also added that her office is aware of the complaints that there are delays in the payments of claims, but that this was as a result of applicants providing wrong or incomplete information.

President Geingob concluded the Town-Hall Meeting saying "We may not answer all questions, but we learn".

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