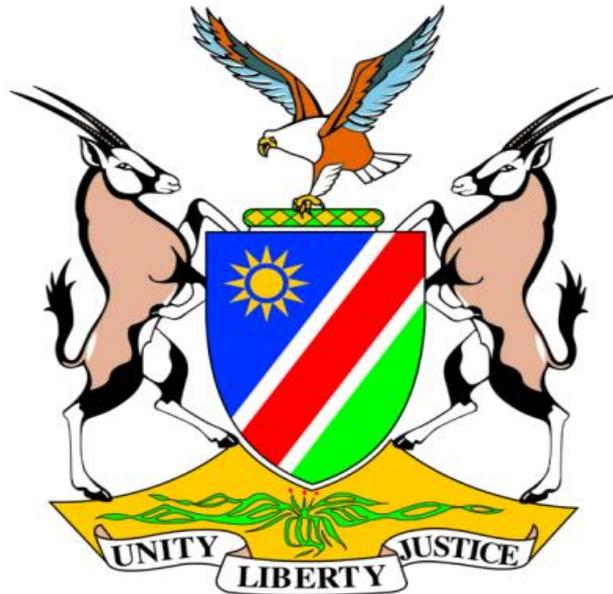


REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**STATEMENT BY
HIS EXCELLENCY DR HAGE G. GEINGOB,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA,
ON THE OCCASION OF THE LAST CABINET MEETING OF
THE 2019 CALENDAR YEAR**

DECEMBER 6, 2019

STATE HOUSE, WINDHOEK

Check against delivery

Comrade Nangolo Mbumba, Vice President of the Republic of Namibia;

Right Honourable Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila, Prime Minister of the Republic of Namibia;

Honourable Ministers;

Comrade Sophia Shaningwa, Secretary General of the SWAPO Party;

Secretary to the Cabinet;

Members of the Media;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

As another year draws to a close and we reach the end of our working calendar, I would like to share a few words with you.

The end of the year is usually a time of introspection and reflection. It is a time when we look back on what has transpired throughout the year, on our successes, as well as the tasks we were unable to achieve.

We commenced the year, as we always do, with renewed vigour and enthusiasm. This year was the year of accountability and indeed, it was a year in which we accounted to the people of Namibia, the ultimate sovereigns.

It has been a long and sometimes arduous journey but Cabinet was able to meet its main objectives and keep the nation on a steady trajectory towards its developmental objectives.

We have always prided ourselves on the pillars of democracy, unity, peace, stability and the Rule of Law, which have safeguarded the integrity of our country since independence. I am therefore proud, that in this year, you all worked tirelessly to preserve these integral pillars, thereby ensuring our continued social stability.

As I have often stated, we sometimes take social peace, order, and security for granted.

Maybe our people have become too accustomed to these things over the years and we don't understand how critical they are to our way of life. That is why I say, it is easy to destroy but difficult to rebuild. With this in mind, I wish to laud all of you for having worked tirelessly to preserve peace in our Namibian House.

We are aware, that peace, stability and security alone does not equate to prosperity.

For this reason, we undertook an extensive and grueling program of Town Hall meetings, in order to account to the sovereigns, on what government has done, is doing and plans to do, in order to better their living standards. We sat in these meetings for an average of seven hours, engaging the masses.

Comrade Inge Zaamwani-Kamwi, covered the matters arising from the previous round of town hall meetings and gave a detailed account of what government has done to address these issues.

As you are aware, the year 2019, has brought untold devastation to Namibia, as a consequence of one of the worst periods of drought in recent memory, prompting me to declare a Drought Emergency. For this reason, the Right Honourable Prime Minister provided the meetings with an overview of Government's efforts to mitigate the devastating effects of the drought.

Many of you engaged the masses during the open floor discussions and where you couldn't provide answers, you gathered details from the people, in order to provide appropriate follow up actions and responses to their queries. Thus, I would like to thank the Vice- President, the Prime Minister, Minister and Advisors for your support during these town hall meetings.

Many of you were consistently present throughout the program, thereby displaying your commitment to bringing about positive change in our country.

Honourable Members of Cabinet,

You may recall that during the town hall meetings, the issue of corruption was only raised twice.

This is why I believe that corruption is not systemic in Namibia, but perceptions have been created that Namibia is a corrupt society. Nevertheless, we admit that although corruption is not systemic in Namibia, the actions of a few corrupt officials have tainted the name of our country. It is therefore important for public service officials to emphasize that corruption in any form, e.g. kickbacks, or percentage commission for the amount of contracts, is unacceptable.

We are aware of the current corruption storm in the fishing sector which has coincided with the build up to the Presidential and National Assembly Elections. We have seen the anger of the people, especially those who have had their livelihoods destroyed as a result of corrupt practices. Anybody would be angry and this has been a wakeup call for us to re-double our efforts to promote greater accountability and transparency across all sectors of Government.

The fact is, those involved in the infamous fishing sector corruption case are no longer ministers and their offices are now open so that proper investigations can take place. As a law-abiding society, we believe in processes, systems and institutions and for this reason, we will allow those implicated to be tried under due process of the law.

While on this matter, I would also like to state that it is pertinent that we must work on a law which will clearly define election donations and campaign contributions to political parties in order to eliminate the grey area in which we currently operate.

Honourable Members of Cabinet,

This year has had its challenges and it has had its rewards.

We have recently concluded another round of successful National Elections and I would like to sincerely thank you for your hard work. Without your sterling efforts, we would not have prevailed. I hope that next year, we will have more successful moments and that we will be able to learn from the lessons of 2019 and work on tangible solutions to guarantee sustained economic growth and job creation in Namibia.

With these remarks, I wish you all good health, strength, a joyous festive season and a prosperous New Year!

May you travel safe and return with renewed verve in 2020. Thank you.