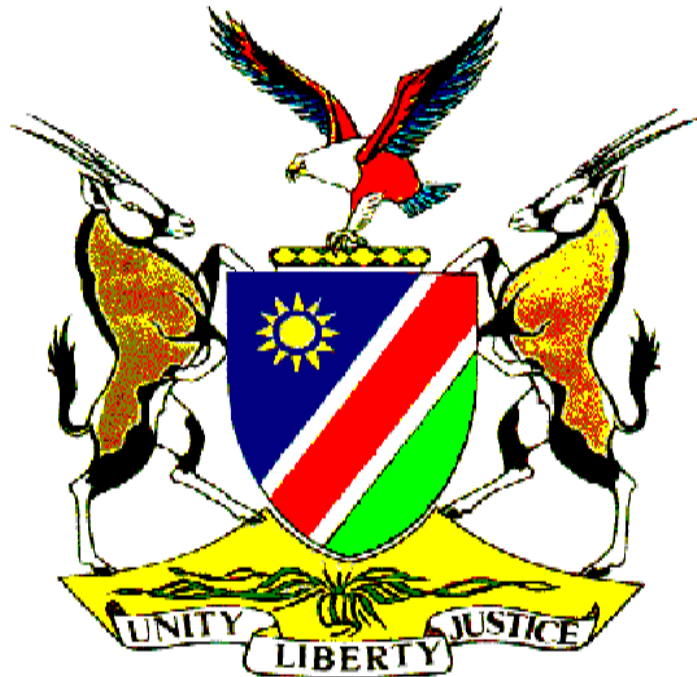


REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



HIS EXCELLENCY DR HAGE G. GEINGOB,

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF CABINET MINISTERS INDUCTION

SEMINAR

APRIL 9, 2015

WINDHOEK COUNTRY CLUB RESORT AND CASINO

WINDHOEK

**Directors of Ceremonies – Honourable Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, His Excellency Dr. Nickey Iyambo, the Vice President of the Republic of Namibia,
Right Honourable Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila, Prime Minister of the Republic of Namibia,**

Dr. Carlos Lopes, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA),

Honourable Ministers, Deputy Ministers and Permanent Secretaries,

Ambassador Musinga Bandora, UN Representative in Namibia,

Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

Distinguished invited guests,

Members of the Media,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to be here today to officiate at the opening of what I believe will be a landmark event in the history of the Government of the Republic of Namibia. The Cabinet Ministers Induction Seminar, under the theme, "*Promoting Innovative Approaches and Synergies for Sustainable Economic Growth in Namibia*" is a first step towards internalizing some of the key governance and development issues that the newly appointed Cabinet Ministers will be seized with during their respective tenures.

I would like to extend our gratitude to the United Nations Economic Commission on Africa (UNECA), through Dr. Carlos Lopes and his team for responding so positively to our request to facilitate an event of this nature. This is once again a testament to UNECA's commitment to Pan African solidarity and the development of what I call the *New Africa*.

By now you are all aware that I have declared all-out war on poverty. This is a major war. And it is a long term war which will require soul searching, meticulous planning and innovative approaches, so that while we continue fighting for economic emancipation, we can achieve a number of short-term successes along the way - as well as - to boost the morale of the populous.

In order for us to be ready to deliver on these promises we need to set ourselves up for success and that is where induction plays a pinnacle role.

I have learnt with disappointment that induction is often seen as a waste of time by leaders and managers in both the public and private sectors. However, in planning for success, induction becomes a key ingredient which is often the difference between excellence and mediocrity. Assigning employees with tasks without induction is setting them up for failure and this does not matter whether they are junior employees, executives or Cabinet Ministers.

To illustrate the importance of induction and the need to continually revisit our approach to solving socio-economic problems, let me quote Francis Fukuyama who says the following in his book *Political Order and Political Decay* and I quote, "*Institutions are created to meet certain needs of societies, such as making war, dealing with economic conflicts, and regulating social behavior. But as recurring patterns of behavior, they can also grow rigid and fail to adapt when the circumstances that brought them into being in the first place themselves change.*"

Dealing with issues of poverty will require us to discard our rigid approach and adopt new a modus operandi which is flexible, modern and practical. We will need to optimize our systems in order to effectively deliver goods and services to the populous.

Induction will help us in this regard by helping to give us an objective view of our various Offices/Ministries/Agencies and help us develop strategies to optimize our organizational structures, instill proper work ethics and integrate properly into the workplace.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We have a huge task ahead of us when it comes to rectifying the existent gaps in our socio-economic architecture. However, we can take solace in the fact that Namibia has made tremendous progress and therefore we have a platform on which to build.

Our Governance Architecture is much lauded and recognized worldwide, culminating in the recent awarding of the Mo Ibrahim Prize for African Leadership to our former president, Comrade Hifikepunye Pohamba. As he said, the award was as much recognition of Namibia's Government as well as his leadership.

Namibia's renowned governance has been developed by a legacy of fearless leaders, revolutionaries and stalwarts of the liberation struggle. Beginning with the Founding Father Comrade Sam Nujoma, who brought peace to a nation that was still simmering from the heat of the extinguished flames of the apartheid regime. Comrade Hifikepunye Pohamba then consolidated this peace by ushering in an era of stability. This legacy is now set to continue under me and I have the heavy task on my shoulders of bringing prosperity to Namibia. Such a challenge requires planning and that is why we are here today.

In terms of our macro-economic architecture, we have undergone a significant and sustained growth spurt since independence. Namibia's political stability has been accompanied by an expansion of its economy by over fifteen fold since independence, from N\$8.3 billion in 1990 to N\$126.6 billion in 2013. The country has also seen an increase in its per capita income from N\$ 5,500 to N\$ 58,300 during the same period, and registering impressive GDP growth rates, averaging about 5 percent per annum, throughout much of the last decade.

However, as Francis Fukuyama states, “*There are many arguments among economists and others whether GDP is an adequate way of measuring human well-being, since per capita GDP looks only at money and not health, opportunity, fairness, distribution, and many other aspects of human flourishing.*”

This is the reason you have often heard me argue about the World Bank’s classification of Namibia as an Upper-Middle Income Country according to the simple formula of calculating per capita GDP by dividing it into population and deriving a high Per Capita Income.

Nobody disputes the fact that we have not grown economically but one must also be honest and attest to the fact that this growth is skewed.

As I said earlier, there are gaps in our Socio-Economic Architecture caused by lack of opportunity and economic fairness as well as distribution of wealth and income. These are the areas and problems the people expect the new Government to tackle head on and no excuses will be accepted. I don’t know how many of you read the sms’s sent in to the daily newspapers.

If not, I urge you all to pay attention to these in order to gain a perspective on the level of expectation that is out there. How can we reach the lofty heights of economic emancipation and meet these countless expectations? Firstly, we have to develop a passion for our work.

We need to have a feel for what we do; similar to how a conductor at an orchestra has a feel for the ebb and flow of the tunes. Ministers need to become conductors of their ministerial orchestras and the whole system should culminate in a crescendo of excellence. We cannot achieve this if we lack the passion for our work.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In Namibia, and in some parts of Africa, there is a negative culture which has ingrained itself in the behavior of few officials who are content with just sitting in their offices and being content with mediocrity and unproductivity. In the corporate world, there is what is known as the 80/20 syndrome which states that 20% of the people do 80% of the work and 80% of the people do 20% of the work.

20% are work and result orientated while 80% belong to the "Thank God it's Friday" club. 20% are people who make things happen while 80% are people who watch things happen.

Obviously if we want to win the war on poverty we cannot have an 80/20 culture in our Government. We need a 100% committed Executive and Civil Service. We must all be people who are action and results orientated. We must all be people who make things happen.

As I alluded to in my speech to Cabinet on March 31, 2015, Ministers and Deputy Ministers will be assisted in the areas of accountability, by soon receiving their Terms of Reference outlining Key Performance Indicators on which their performance will be gauged.

Ministers and their deputies are expected to have a clear work plan and vision which should be linked to the objectives of Government. The vision and work plan will map out a five year delivery system with clear and well defined deliverables.

Similarly the Civil Service will need to adopt a new culture and work ethic guided by clear plans and identified deliverables which should be known by every civil servant across the board. To effectively deliver goods and services, we should adopt a culture of transparency, unity and inclusivity in the civil service.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Much has been said about the size of the Executive and the enlarged structure of Government given the introduction of new Ministries. However, it is much ado with nothing. People fail to see the big picture and what we are trying to achieve by reducing wastage of resources which eventually links to our efforts to tackle poverty. Let me give you an example.

The newly created Ministry of Public Enterprises will be tasked with looking into the management of the 84 parastatals we have in Namibia. The Ministry will look into problems involving Managing Directors and Boards of Directors. Already there are 3 Managing Directors suspended. The money that can be recovered from the salaries of these three individuals will be enough to recover the cost of the so-called bloated Executive.

Staying on the issue of the Executive, we will soon be issuing out a challenge to anyone who can develop a plan to cut costs and reduce wastage in Government. The winner will receive a prize. So the challenge is out, it is time for the critics to put the money where their mouths are.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Fukuyama has said that, "*No country can get rich without an effective government.*" Although we have effective governance in place, we need to improve in some areas in order to maximize the full potential of our Civil Service.

One area which requires immediate attention is the issue of Political Heads versus Administrative Heads.

We are exploring several options to change the name of Permanent Secretary which some have interpreted as meaning that individuals in these positions are there on permanent basis. I am glad that last year, as Prime Minister I oversaw the signing of performance contracts by Permanent Secretaries which will be reviewable every 5 years. This is one step closer to increased accountability.

Furthermore, there must not be any conflict of interest in Government. The days of being a Government official and trying to be a businessman or businesswoman should come to an end.

In these instances, one area usually suffers and most often it is the official work that lags behind.

This is why as political officials, we declare our interests in order to ensure that as public officials and stewards of the public trust, we should continue to put the public's interest before our own.

Continuing with the theme of prioritizing public interest, I would like to announce that no outbound travel requests by Ministers will be approved for the time being. Only the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of International Relations and Cooperation will be allowed to travel.

Ministers should first travel internally to the regions and familiarize themselves with the needs of our most impoverished citizens.

Only once the Ministers understand the scope of poverty and the needs of our people will they be able to travel overseas and seek the necessary assistance and opportunities to help fight the war on the home front. This is why I have decided to take all Cabinet Ministers on regional visits,

starting with Tsumkwe and surrounding areas as well as the Kunene Region. It is important that as Government we adopt a serious approach to the war on poverty from the onset.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I have perused the concept note for this seminar and it makes for interesting reading. UNECA has helped us set up a wonderful platform for us to take stock and take an introspective look at ourselves in order to rethink our approach to governance.

I urge you all to partake with energy and vigor in these discussions during the intense one day seminar. This is your opportunity to ask questions and develop a keen understanding of certain concepts. It is also an opportunity for you to already start visualizing the road maps for you and your ministries and the role they will play in the economic development of Namibia.

The nation awaits prosperity and all eyes are on us to see how we tackle poverty. Let us in the true spirit of the *Land of the Brave*, pave the way towards setting a new benchmark for governance, a benchmark which will set us apart as an exemplar of effective governance and propel us towards an era of equality, inclusivity and prosperity.

With these words I now have the pleasure to declare the Cabinet Ministers Induction Seminar officially opened.

I thank you.