

# **REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**



**Statement by His Excellency, Dr. Hage G. Geingob  
President of the Republic of Namibia**

**Sixth Graduation Ceremony of the  
Namibia University of Science and Technology**

**Safari Hotel, Windhoek**

**March 20, 2017**

*Check against delivery*

- **Master of Ceremonies and Vice-Chancellor of the Namibia University of Science and Technology, Professor Tjama Tjivikua**
- **Honourable Speaker of the National Assembly and Chancellor of Namibia University of Science and Technology, Professor Peter Katjavivi**
- **Chairperson of the Council of the Namibia University of Science and Technology, Advocate Esi Schimming-Chase**
- **Honourable Ministers and Deputy Ministers Present**
- **Honourable Members of Parliament and Government Officials**
- **Members of the Diplomatic Corps**
- **Visiting Dignitaries**
- **Members of the Council of NUST**
- **Academics and Staff of NUST**

- **Honoured Graduates**
- **Students of NUST**
- **Members of the Media**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**

**It gives me great pleasure to join you today for the 22<sup>nd</sup> graduation ceremony of this Institution, formerly the Polytechnic of Namibia and now the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST).**

**When I first learned of the decision to transform the Polytechnic of Namibia to the Namibia University of Science and Technology, I was slightly concerned that we would be moving from an institution of higher education, which offered students an opportunity to specialize in vocational and technical fields of**

**study, to an institution of higher learning at which students would take on undergraduate and postgraduate courses, which are taught through a more philosophical approach - philosophy which is 'thirst for knowledge', allowing students to attain sound foundational credentials but not specializing for a particular job market.**

**However, after carrying out some research, I came to learn that there is a difference between an ordinary University and a University of Science and Technology. The later, offers more technological, career directed applied educational programmes, focused on innovation, problem solving, research and product development. It therefore, addresses Schumpeter's definition**

**of innovation and development, which he describes as, “The commercial or industrial application of something new – a new product, process or method of production, a new market or source of supply, a new form of commercial, business or financial organisation.”**

**All Developed Nations are characterized by unique products and services, which have been conceived, tested and developed at Universities of Science and Technology. We must equally develop the capability to spearhead the development of our own products and services, for local consumption and the export market. I was deeply encouraged last year to watch the news, where a group of students from the Namibia University of Science and Technology and**

**students from the Windhoek Vocational College, teamed up to develop a prototype for a solar powered taxi. Although, I did not meet the students, I wish to commend them all for their efforts. It is also important for the University of Science and Technology, to have strong linkages with the Public and Private Sector, as well as other stakeholders as end users.**

**Having perused today's program with great interest, I have taken note of the various diplomas, as well as undergraduate and postgraduate degrees which our graduates will be receiving over the next two days. Some examples are Diploma of Human Resource Management, Diploma of Marketing and Sales, Bachelor of Logistics and Supply Chain**

**Management, Bachelor of Tourism Management, Master of Leadership and Change Management, just to name a few. When I look at these courses, I am confident in the fact that NUST is focused on producing young people with qualifications that are tailor made for the 21<sup>st</sup> century job market. Moreover, these courses are also in line with key priority areas identified in our developmental plans.**

**Many of you may recall that during the delivery of my third State of the Nation Address, last week Wednesday, I outlined the fact that a key strategy that Government is deploying to arrest youth unemployment is the promotion of high quality Vocational Education and Skills Training. Under the Harambee Prosperity Plan,**

**we have targeted to increase the annual Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) enrollments to 25 thousand students by 2019. This strategy speaks to our broader objective of becoming a knowledge based society, characterized by a workforce which possesses specialized skills and innovative capacity.**

**For Namibia to progress towards the next frontier of development, we will have to become more innovative, technologically advanced, and we have to embrace – in an applied manner – science and research. Human Capital, must be at the centre of our drive to becoming an industrialized Nation by 2030. That is why we continue to spend the bulk of our financial resources in the education sector.**



**Brother Malcolm X once said, “Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those that prepare for it today”. Therefore, you have taken the appropriate steps to prepare yourself for tomorrow. Through many years of dedication, hard work and sacrifices, you have earned yourself a passport to the future. You can now confidently look forward to tomorrow, having prepared for it today.**

**To the graduants, I am confident to say that your educational, training and learning experience at NUST has been a time for discovery and self-development. We believe you have developed your intellect to analyse complex ideas and think ahead, innovate and lead people and institutions in a multi-cultural environment. The world of tomorrow is about**

**thinking ahead, creativity, technology, entrepreneurship and innovation. These are important facts that should be easily recognizable as benchmarks of educated persons.**

**There is an imposing responsibility on every public official, office bearer and citizen, to address our state of being: the way we live and behave, the way we educate, the way we care for the sick and the weak, and the way we plan for the future.**

**In our quest for shared prosperity, our human development index and capacity should be at a higher level. In other words, we need educated Namibians to drive development and to maintain our development at higher levels at all times.**

**Despite our noble developmental aspirations, we are under no illusion that there will be challenges along the way. This past year has been a case in point, as we have had to face financial headwinds, adverse climatic condition such as droughts and floods, as well as external factors that affect our economy such as the depreciation of the Rand. The 21<sup>st</sup> century requires leaders who can clearly understand the changing international environment and who can quickly learn new ways of solving problems, who are willing to embrace diversity and take global perspectives in problem solving, using technology, entrepreneurship and innovation as effective tools.**

**The development strategies deployed in more advanced economies demonstrate the importance of higher education in promoting growth. Their success stories have been the result of investments in education, especially higher education, technology and production methods, which were adapted and improved upon by well-educated people. A rapid growth of labour intensive manufacturing was made possible with highly trained individuals to put in place the structures to achieve greater productivity.**

**Graduants, it is for this reason that you – trained professionals – must be highly efficient and productive citizens of this world. Society has invested in you and you must re-invest your knowledge and energy in society. You are**

**at crossroads in your lives. Many things await your engagement: opportunities, responsibilities, liabilities and risks. You are the workforce of today and tomorrow. Once you receive your respective diplomas and degrees, you will hold the key to our country's development and prosperity. In every way, your country's prosperity depends on your collective and personal contribution.**

**A month ago we celebrated our country's 27<sup>th</sup> independence anniversary. Since independence, it has been our Government's mission to bring about a more equitable society in Namibia. A society in which every Namibian is able to enjoy peace, protected by the law. A society in which every Namibian has access to opportunities to pursue his/her**

**education. A society in which each and every Namibian can pursue his/her career development and economic aspirations. The facilities and tools that are being developed today, are cutting the barriers of race and gender, of income and age. We are slowly redressing the social injustices and imbalances of the past. Those left out of the economy previously are seeing new opportunities. Small businesses are competing in markets once reserved only for powerful corporations. In many ways, our hopes are being realized through education. Education is becoming more relevant now, because there are many changes in the world, mostly driven by education and the related tools such as technology.**

**In his policy document titled “Education for Self-Reliance”, Julius Nyerere elucidates the primary purpose of education by stating the following, “Its purpose is to transmit from one generation to the next the accumulated wisdom and knowledge of the society, and to prepare the young people for their future membership of the society and active participation in its maintenance and development”. NUST has enabled you to acquire the wisdom, knowledge and skill of our modern-day society. You are now primed to not only be members of the society, but to become active participants, who will be responsible for maintaining and developing it. With your acquired knowledge and skill, feel free to dream and imagine endless possibilities – because from this moment on, you are**

**capable of ushering in a new era for Namibia. An era in which Namibia will attain, and even surpass the objectives of Vision 2030. The sky is the limit for all of you. Congratulations and best wishes to NUST and to all of you – our leaders of tomorrow, our guardians of the Namibian House and our harbingers of prosperity.**

**In conclusion, I offer my hearty congratulations to the Class of 2017. I laud you for your commitment to success, for challenges conquered, for projects completed, for goals reached or even surpassed. You, your parents and your friends are very proud today, and very hopeful, because many more possibilities are now open to you. You have acquired your**



**passports for tomorrow, now it is time to get  
that first visa stamp, as your journey begins.  
Thank you.**