

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



THE PRESIDENCY

MAIDEN STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS

BY

**H.E. DR. NETUMBO NANDI-NDAITWAH,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

PARLIAMENT, WINDHOEK

24 APRIL 2025

THEME:

**“Unity in Diversity, Natural Resources Beneficiation and
Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development.”**

We are too few to be Poor

Fellow Namibians.

- 1. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to you, Hon. Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila and Hon. Phillipus Katamelolo, on your respective election as Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the 8th National Assembly. Equally, I thank the former Speaker, Professor Peter Katjavivi and former Deputy Speaker, Professor Loide Kasingo, who have executed their tasks as Presiding Officers in this chamber with distinction. I also thank the former Deputy Prime Minister, Comrade John Mutorwa and members of the National Assembly who served in the 7th National Assembly for their contributions to a better Namibia.**

- 2. I am addressing you in this revered Chamber, without the guiding presence of some of the Founders of our Republic who have passed on. We should therefore, honour the memory of our Founding President, Father of the Namibian Nation and Leader of the Namibian Revolution, His Excellency Dr. Sam Shafiishuna Nujoma. We also honour the memory of Comrade Dr. Hage Gottfried Geingob, the first Prime Minister and third President**

of the Republic of Namibia. We salute these giants of the Land of the Brave, whose legacies can never die and whose debt of gratitude we can never fully repay. May their revolutionary souls rest in perfect peace.

- 3. My gratitude goes to Comrades Hifikepunye Pohamba and Nangolo Mbumba for the steady leadership they provided over time, and particularly during the storms of adversity that raged more recently in our nation's history. We are grateful to you for your enduring commitment to Namibia. We wish them good health and happiness, as they continue to guide us.**

**Madame Speaker,
Fellow Namibians,**

- 4. Article thirty-two (32), sub-section two (2) of the Constitution places the President under the obligation to annually *"address Parliament on the state of the nation and on the future policies of Government, report on the policies of the previous year and be available to respond to questions."***

Accordingly, it is my honour to join this House today, to deliver my Maiden State of the Nation Address as the fifth President of the Republic of Namibia.

- 5. On the 27th of November 2024, the Namibian people were loud and clear by electing the SWAPO Party and I, to lead our nation for the next five years. I thank the SWAPO Party members for presenting me to the Namibian people as its candidate. I further thank the Namibian people for the trust and confidence they have placed in me, by voting for me to become the fifth President of the Republic of Namibia. In doing so, the Namibian people have directed the SWAPO Party and I, to implement the 2025-2030 SWAPO Party Election Manifesto under the theme "Unity in Diversity, Natural Resources Beneficiation and Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development." Namibians have placed their hopes in us, to lead and to transform our country on the basis of the promises we made in our victorious Manifesto, that must be implemented without failure.**

6. When I took the Oath of Office on 21 March 2025, I pledged to be the President of all Namibians, and to lead our nation with integrity and accountability, by fostering unity of purpose and teamwork. As Namibians, we must focus on the implementation of policies and programmes to create jobs for our young people and bring about tangible socio-economic development. Our implementation will be guided by seven (7) identified priority sectors and eight (8) critical economic enablers. I will revert to these strategic priorities and their enablers, later on in my Address.

Madame Speaker,

7. I will now proceed to report on the policies of the previous year, which also concludes the good work of the 7th Administration of my predecessor President Nangolo Mbumba and our late President Hage G. Geingob. I will then outline the vision and implementation priorities for the coming year as articulated in the SWAPO Party Manifesto Implementation Plan. This Plan will serve as the Government's blueprint to deliver on the binding

contract we have entered into with the Namibian people.

- 8. Today, the 24th of April, marks exactly 34 days since I took the solemn Oath of Office, cognizant of the urgent need to improve the livelihoods of our people. Since Independence, peace, stability and the rule of law in our country have served as strong foundations for our development. It is why we need to use these strong foundations to accelerate development and prosperity for our people.**

- 9. The Harambee Prosperity Plan II is concluded; hence, we account and reflect on the achievements and challenges encountered during the 2024/25 period under review. Owing to the strength of our processes, systems and institutions, we witnessed a smooth transition of power following the untimely passing of our third President, H.E. Dr. Hage G. Geingob on the 4th of February 2024.**

Madame Speaker,

10. Notable progress was made during the reporting period with key bills being finalized and some ready for tabling in Parliament.

11. The following laws were passed by Parliament:

- i. Vehicle Mass Act, 2024;**
- ii. Dissolution of Marriages Act, 2024 (Act 10 of 2024);**
- iii. Property Practitioners Act, 2024 (Act 11 of 2024);**
- iv. Civil Registration & Identification Act, 2024 (Act 13 of 2024);**
- v. Health Professionals Act, 2024 (Act 16 of 2024);**
- vi. Marriage Act, 2024 (Act 14 of 2024);**
- vii. Regulation of Status of Certain Residents of Namibia, their Descendants and foreign Spouses Act, 2024.**

12. The following Bills are on their way to the Parliament for tabling and I humbly urge Parliament to finalise them during this sitting:

- i. The Insolvency Bill;**
- ii. Regional Councils Amendment Bill;**
- iii. Local Authorities Amendment Bill;**

- iv. Constituency Development Fund Bill;**
- v. Land Bill;**
- vi. Public Finance Management Bill;**
- vii. Namibia Investment Promotion and Facilitation Bill;**
- viii. Statelessness Determination and Protection Bill;**
- ix. Namibian Citizenship Amendment Bill;**
- x. Namibia Refugees (Control & Recognition) Amendment Bill; and;**
- xi. The Legal Aid Amendment Bill.**

13. Our Constitution places great emphasis on environmental protection. During the period under review, the first ever Environmental Crimes Court was opened in Otjiwarongo to deal exclusively with crimes involving fauna and flora. I had the honour of officially opening that court last year.

14. Public procurement is important for economic activities. In that vein, I am pleased to inform that the Code of Good Practice, which prioritizes local content has been operationalized. To further improve transparency, accountability and management of procurement data, the Electronic-

Government Procurement Portal (E-GP) is now ready for use by OMAs.

15. In the reporting period, the Government has made commendable strides to grow the economy after the devastating COVID-19 pandemic. Subsequently, the 2024/25 budget delivered yet another primary surplus, notwithstanding the decline in Government revenue, largely due to lower income from the diamond sector and from the SACU common revenue pool.

Fellow Namibians,

16. The global economy is in a state of flux with trade protectionist policies and prolonged conflicts creating market uncertainty and volatility. Inward-looking policies by the major economies call for the intensification of our efforts to become self-reliant. According to the Ministry of Finance, the Namibian economy is estimated to have grown by 3.8 percent in 2024, reflecting a slowdown from 4.2 percent recorded in 2023 and is expected to expand to 4.5 percent in 2025. While Government debt remained

high at 61 percent of GDP for the year under review, we are hopeful that the projected expansion of economic activity in 2025 and 2026 can lead to a reduction in Government debt.

17. A sustained track record of fiscal prudence, coupled with prospects from oil and gas, tourism and green hydrogen have contributed to an optimistic country outlook. Fiscal priorities for the 2025-2028 MTEF will focus on policy measures that will promote growth and reduce expenditure for macroeconomic stability, through deficit reduction and debt stabilization.
18. Import coverage: the stock of international reserves rose to 63 billion Namibia Dollars, a 17.2 percent year-on-year increase in import cover of 4.2 months. This is above the international benchmark of 3 months import coverage.
19. The Welwitschia Sovereign Wealth Fund which was established to secure generational wealth has grown steadily from an initial seed capital of 262 million Namibia Dollars in May 2022, to 450 million Namibia Dollars in January 2025.

- 20. Water Supply Security: In 2024 Namibia experienced a devastating drought with Agriculture, which accounts for at least 23 percent of total direct employment negatively affected. However, in 2025, large parts of the country received good rainfall, reviving prospects for agricultural productivity.**
- 21. In December 2024 Namibia gazetted import tariffs for the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) to increase trade and economic activities with other African markets.**
- 22. The following Tax Reforms will be implemented during the 2025/26 Financial Year:**
- i. Reduction of non-mining company/corporate tax rate to 30 percent in 2025 and further down to 28 percent in 2026;**
 - ii. Taxpayers will be granted further amnesty to get their tax affairs in order by an additional two years, until 2026;**
 - iii. Increased mandatory registration threshold for VAT to one million Namibia Dollars to provide tax administration relief to SMEs;**

iv. Planned Special Economic Zones are expected to have a corporate income tax rate of 20 percent, the same as for all SMEs with annual turnover below the defined threshold.

23. These tax reforms seek to enhance the competitiveness of the tax system to attract investments and foster private sector development, broaden the tax base, improve revenue mobilization, to maintain equity in the taxation regime.

24. According to the Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA), the broad unemployment rate is at 36.9 percent and youth unemployment is at 44.4 percent, which is unacceptably high. The 8th Administration has made the fight against unemployment a key priority.

25. During the reporting period, one hundred thirty-five (135) SMEs participated in the second intake of the SME Financing Strategy from all 14 regions. The Omukwa Capital Fund, the first public Venture Capital Fund was registered in December 2024. Currently, seven (7) financial institutions are

participating in the Credit Guarantee Scheme with a combined total disbursement of 84,3 million Namibia Dollars by December 2024.

26. The solution to high unemployment is also to invest in business and commerce, hence our focus on upskilling and MSME development. By supporting industrialization, value addition and the professionalization of sectors, such as the creative industries and sports, we will be able to reduce high levels of unemployment, in the medium to long-term.

Fellow Namibians,

27. Genocide & Reparations: I commend my predecessors for their leadership in the Genocide, Apology and Reparations negotiations with Germany. I fully appreciate the challenges and the opportunities that lie ahead in order to heal the wounds and move towards a path of reconciliation and reconstruction.

- 28. In 2006, the National Assembly unanimously passed a Motion on the 1904-1908 genocide, which was spearheaded by the late Ovaherero Ombara Otjitambi Kuaima Riruako.**
- 29. The motion unequivocally stated that Germany should:**
- i. Acknowledge that the German State committed genocide in Namibia during the period 1904-1908;**
 - ii. Render an unconditional apology to Namibia; and**
 - iii. Pay reparations.**
- 30. Negotiations, by their nature, are complex and require a process of give and take. In May 2021, Namibia and Germany agreed on the Joint Declaration to guide the process of acknowledgement of genocide; rendering of an apology and payments of reparations by Germany. Beyond the 1.1 billion Euros, which Germany had said was a final quantum, Germany acceded to our demand to allocate additional resources. We have to proceed with the knowledge that we have made remarkable progress over the past years of**

negotiations and there is an opportunity for a solution to be found.

Madame Speaker,

- 31. Our activities as a government are geared towards better housing, health and educational facilities. During the reporting period, 1,772 new plots were fully serviced with water, sewer, electricity and road services in various parts of the country, through combined effort and investments by the Government, Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia and the private sector.**

- 32. The National Housing Policy was adopted during the reporting period, laying the groundwork for urban development. During the 2024/25 Financial Year a total of 1,514 housing units were constructed nationwide. Notwithstanding legal disputes that delayed the handover of some houses under the Mass Housing Development Programme, 319 houses under this programme have been handed over at Swakopmund.**

33. For better management of urbanisation, 26 townships were proclaimed during the reporting period, bringing the total to 115 townships proclaimed over five years, of which 15 townships have been formalized.

34. On Land Reform and Management, as the Willing-Buyer-Willing-Seller principle was not working. Following the 2018 National Land Policy Conference, the Government introduced the Land Tax and increased focus on absentee landlords. I request this August House to urgently pass the Land Bill to ensure that there is balanced land redistribution. Over the next five years, we will ensure that at least 130,000 hectares of land are added to the portfolio of productive land.

Fellow Namibians,

35. The Government is not satisfied with the disparity between the haves and the have-nots. We believe that creating jobs and business ownership opportunities for Namibians is the key to wealth

creation and thereby reducing poverty and income and wealth inequalities.

- 36. Understanding the corresponding relationship between education, hunger and poverty-the National School Feeding Programme guarantees a daily meal to 466,860 learners in public schools to arrest hunger and mitigate children dropping out of school. The programme has successfully piloted Home-Grown School Gardens to supplement the feeding scheme with more nutritional varieties.**

- 37. Social Grants as part of our Social Safety Nets to the most vulnerable members of our society amounted to a total of 5,49 billion Namibia Dollars is allocated, this includes 979 million Namibia Dollars towards veterans' welfare. The Old Age Social Grant takes care of 217,870 beneficiaries. I know that our late President Geingob expressed his wish, which I supported, to incrementally increase the Old Age Social Grant from the current 1,600 Namibia Dollars to 3,000 Namibia Dollars, over a period of time.**

- 38. I plead with my parents, who are my elders, that we had to take the very difficult decision this Financial**

Year not to increase the Old Age Social Grants. This is due to the urgent need to prioritize our children, the young people, by constructing sports infrastructure and funding youth-related empowerment initiatives that will lead to job creation for our youth. I give you my assurances that the incremental increase of our Old Age Social Grants will start during this MTEF.

39. The Disability grant benefits 58,087 beneficiaries, while Orphans and Vulnerable Children grant benefits 375,765 children. Notably, the Government has successfully increased the child disability grant from 350 Namibia Dollars to 1, 600 Namibia Dollars.

40. Households that have been converted from the Food Bank to a Conditional Basic Income Grant have increased from 8,238 households to 21,697, reaching 108,485 beneficiaries during the pilot rollout, in the period under review.

Madame Speaker,

41. A healthy nation is a productive nation. We will ensure the enactment of the Universal Health

Coverage law to serve all Namibians by rolling out standard Healthcare Packages. The Government shall extend rural health services, improve intermediate hospital services and commence construction of the Category C Havana District Hospital in the Khomas region.

Fellow Namibians,

42. The development of any country depends on the quality of its human resources. To that end, 227 schools were connected to water supply, while an additional 512 new classrooms were constructed during the reporting period, against a national backlog of 4,550 classrooms as at 2023. Moreover, various sports codes were integrated into the education curriculum, delivering a more holistic approach to learning.

43. The Higher Education sector has been expanded with new Vocational Training Centres that were established at Nkurenkuru, Khorixas and Keetmanshoop during the reporting period. A new

**Namibia University of Science and Technology
Campus was opened at Lüderitz.**

Madame Speaker,

44. The Namibian Government has taken a zero-tolerance stance against Gender-Based Violence. I urge all stakeholders to work together to fight the evil of GBV and violence against children. I condole with the parents and family of 5-year-old Ingrid Maasdorp, whose young life was brutally cut short at Okahandja on the 21st of March 2025. Namibia must be a safe place for our citizens and visitors to work and raise their families. I call on NAMPOL to intensify visible patrols to eliminate crime in our communities.

45. In a move to improve efficiencies through the digitalization of service delivery, the Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security has rolled out a Biometric Fingerprint System to 19 towns. The Ministry will also intensify the rollout of e-IDs to the population.

Madame Speaker,

46. While we have done well at the top levels of government and Parliament, I have noted with concern that 40 of the 104 National Assembly seats are occupied by women, representing 39 percent, a decline from 47 percent in the 7th Parliament. Political parties need to find a way to fight retrogressive actions, and may consider to pass a law to ensure 50/50 women and men representation in Parliament. In fact, the current 39 percent is predominantly due to the SWAPO Party policy of zebra list.

Fellow Namibians,

47. In the period under review the Government, through the Ministry of Works & Transport, employed a number of qualified artisans from the Association of Unemployed Artisans in the renovation and maintenance of Government immovable assets. These include the Katutura Intermediate Hospital, the Government Museum in

Windhoek, Aerodromes, as well as construction of roads and railway infrastructure. These efforts contribute to employment creation among the youth.

Madame Speaker,

48. Infrastructure is a critical enabler for economic development. In the energy sector, the following projects were concluded: commissioning of the 20-Megawatt Omburu Solar Photo-Voltaic Power Plant at Omaruru; the 54-MegaWatt Anixas plant expansion at Walvis Bay and the 20-MegaWatt Moses Garoeb Solar Project at Usakos. The peri-urban electrification programme has connected approximately 12,573 households to the grid.

49. In the water infrastructure sector, the commissioning of Phase 3 of the Kuiseb Collector 2-Swakopmund Pipeline Replacement, the expansion of rural water networks in Otjombinde, Katima/Kongola, and Ruacana South have improved access to potable water. The Calueque-Oshakati Canal renovation continues.

- 50. We made notable progress in transport and logistics with the completion of the Windhoek-Okahandja Dual Carriageway, the Swakopmund-Henties Bay-Kamanjab Road (Phase 1-Section A) and the Walvis Bay-Kranzberg-Tsumeb Rail upgrade (Phase I). The Northern Railway Line Extension (Phase III: Construction of Oshakati Railway Station Buildings & Civil Works) has also been completed.**
- 51. Ongoing projects to be completed over the MTEF include the Windhoek-Hosea Kutako International Airport Dual Carriageway (Phase 2a and 2b); the Swakopmund-Henties Bay-Kamanjab Road (Phase I, Section B); the Walvis Bay-Swakopmund Freeway Upgrade; the Gobabis–Aminius–Aranos Section B (between Onderombapa–Aminius and Aranos) road upgrading to Single Carriageway. In addition, the Otjiwarongo Railway Section (Phase II); the Sandverhaar–Buchholzbrunn Railway line upgrading (Phase 1) and the Karibib-Usakos road rehabilitation.**

Fellow Namibians,

52. The world is changing at a rapid pace and international relations are becoming increasingly uncertain. As a nation, we must remain attentive to these changes by leveraging our unique geographic location, our natural resources and our assets. Our proximity to important trade routes and borders with peace-loving nations constitute a significant asset in strengthening our economic diplomacy, that remain a centrepiece of our foreign policy.

53. Regionally, Namibia continues to implement SADC Decisions aimed at the maintenance of peace and security in the region.

54. Subsequently, we continue to honour our financial obligations toward peacekeeping missions. Without peace and stability in the region, there is no development and regional integration would be an illusion. In that vein, Namibia continues to support all diplomatic and political efforts aimed at finding a lasting solution to conflicts in the region and beyond.

55. The women, peace and security agenda remains one of Namibia's highest priorities. Against that background, in October 2025, Namibia will join the international community in commemorating 25 Years of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, since the adoption of the landmark UN Resolution 1325.

Madame Speaker,

56. Namibia continues to advocate for the sovereign equality of states and calls for the lifting of the unilateral coercive measures against Cuba, Venezuela and Zimbabwe. Namibia reiterates its call for the full implementation of relevant UN and AU resolutions, for the holding of the UN-backed Referendum on the right to self-determination for the people of Western Sahara.

57. The people of Palestine have the right to live in peace, security and dignity as opposed to the continued humanitarian toll of genocide. Namibia reaffirms unequivocal support for the inalienable

rights of the people of Palestine to self-determination, considering our country's grief-stricken history of experiencing atrocities and genocide.

58. Namibia holds dear the values of multilateralism and international cooperation for the benefit of humanity. Hence, our commitment to implement the SADC Strategic Indicative Plan, the AU Agenda 2063, and recently UN adopted the Pact for the Future, a consensus document that seeks to renew global efforts towards peace and sustainable development and other international instruments to which Namibia is a member. Namibia was honoured to be Co-Facilitator of the UN Summit for the Future.

59. Namibia values the partnership we have with many countries of the world, including the United States of America, in different areas of cooperation. With reference to the recently trade tariffs introduced by the American Administration, it is our belief that the principle of reciprocal tariffs creates opportunities for renewed dialogue on fair trade and equity. To that end, the Namibian Government stands ready to

engage the US Government on a dispensation that is mutually beneficial.

**THE 8TH ADMINISTRATION AND THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE 7 PRIORITIES AREAS THROUGH 8 CRITICAL
ECONOMIC ENABLERS**

**Madame Speaker,
Fellow Namibians,**

60. The 2024/25 Financial Year is now behind us and we look forward, to the future with our eyes set on what lies ahead in 2025 and beyond. As we turn the page to the next chapter, let us think about the Namibian story we would like to write.

61. As citizens of Namibia, we can write the next chapter of our common destiny when we accept that it should not be *business as usual*. Our Plan is to deliver on our theme "Unity in Diversity, Natural Resources Beneficiation and Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development" through the SWAPO Party Manifesto Implementation Plan. We cannot realize the ambitious undertakings contained in our Manifesto, if we continue to do things in the same manner, yet expecting different results. I will repeat it again here; we are too few to be poor and we can

eradicate poverty. The Plan that we have, which clearly outlines 7 priority areas and 8 critical economic enablers must drive the socio-economic transformation we have committed to deliver to our people over the next 5 years.

62. Allow me to mention these 7 priority areas for each and every one of us to own them and to work towards achieving them.

63. The priority areas are:

- i. Agriculture**
- ii. Sports**
- iii. Youth Empowerment**
- iv. Quality Education & Training**
- v. Creative Industries**
- vi. Quality Health & Social Welfare**
- vii. Land, Housing & Sanitation**

64. The 8th Administration is planning to deliver on these 7 priorities through 8 critical economic enablers, which are:

- i. Mining**
- ii. Energy**

- iii. **Oil and Gas**
- iv. **Tourism**
- v. **Agriculture**
- vi. **Water**
- vii. **Fisheries; and**
- viii. **Transport & Logistics**

65. To reach our goals, I am calling for a Government that is working for the next five years with *One Mind and One Heart* to ensure that the 7 priorities and 8 critical economic enablers are realized. I have also directed that these are integrated into the 6th National Development Plan (NDP6), and Ministerial Plans. The 8th Administration has hit the ground running and we have to deliver.

Madame Speaker,

66. Namibia has a conducive environment for foreign and domestic investors to invest in various sectors of the economy. This should allow us to diversify and to grow our economy in order to fight unemployment, which disproportionately affects our young people. For a long time, we did not fully

**invest in value addition and natural resources
beneficiation, which the 8th Administration has now
decided to focus on as a frontier for job creation and
economic growth. Strategic projects and programmes will be partly funded through the national budget, public-private partnerships, as well as domestic and foreign investment.**

- 67. For us to reach our goal we must commit ourselves to hard work with honesty and integrity. We must all fight the evil of corruption. President Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere once said, “corruption is an act of treason”. I quote him now as I quoted him in my inaugural address, to emphasize the fact that corruption is an evil that diverts limited public resources away from development. I am pleased that efforts to combat corruption have been reinforced through the Whistle-Blower Protection Act, and soon the operationalization of the Witness Protection Act. Alongside the implementation of the second National Anti-Corruption Strategy, these Acts marked important steps forward in our fight against corruption.**

Fellow Namibians,

68. Mining contributes 12 percent to our Gross Domestic Product and over 50 percent of our foreign exchange earnings. Regrettably, this figure does not reflect the true potential of mining and our mineral resources. We all know that value addition and natural resources beneficiation equals job creation and industrialization. As part of value addition, the Hyiron Oshivela Plant was opened in Arandis, which I opened on the 11th of April 2025. During the construction, 400 people were employed. With more investors showing interest the project will lead to the production of steel in Namibia.

69. Among others the critical minerals such lithium, cobalt, manganese, graphite and rare earth elements are a target for value addition. Currently, only a fraction of our marble is exported as finished product. Therefore, more investment will be mobilised to scale up value addition.

70. The oil and gas sector holds the potential to transform our economy in the next 5 years. This new

industry will require close monitoring hence, my decision to place it in the Presidency, as I look to nurture its potential for the benefit of Namibians. To gain maximum benefit from this industry, the oil refinery is part of the programme.

71. The 8th Administration will place unwavering focus on ensuring that Namibia achieves first oil production within the shortest timeframe. We will accelerate strategic partnerships, streamline regulatory processes, and invest in critical infrastructure to unlock the full potential of our hydrocarbon resources. This milestone will not only fuel our energy security but also drive rural and peri-urban electrification, job creation, local capacity development and sustainable growth for generations to come.

Madame Speaker,

72. Mineral beneficiation can only be enabled by sufficient quantities of energy and water. The desalination plants to be setup in the Erongo Region will be critical enablers for unleashing the country's

full economic potential, thereby increasing output for the mining sector.

73. It must also be underscored that; Namibia is the third highest producer of uranium in the world. As part of value addition, we must not shy away from using this God-given resource to contribute to our energy mix. While I am not in a position to tell you when we will have a nuclear energy power plant in Namibia, I can assure you that the discussions will certainly begin this Financial Year.

74. Strategically located industrial zones along the coastal regions of our country will be placed close to our port infrastructure and will act as key export hubs. These Special Economic Zones are going to be key hosts of competitive industries which will help transition Namibia from a primarily extractive to an industrialized economy.

75. The Government will provide a conducive environment for the private sector to thrive and will provide the requisite enabling infrastructure to deliver on the economic promise of the Manifesto. We have a good track record of working with

domestic and international investors and we aim to improve on our collaborative efforts. We call on the private sector and other stakeholders to join us in unlocking the opportunities that lie ahead.

76. AGRICULTURE: As our Founding President taught us, a nation that cannot feed itself will never be respected. By placing emphasis on food security, climate resilient and competitive agriculture, the 8th Administration aims to reduce agriculture imports by 80 percent. During the 2025/26 Financial Year, the Government will inject a capital amount of 561 million Namibia Dollars into Agri-Infrastructure. The Green Scheme will be put into full operation and Agro-processing will be intensified.

77. We also intend to introduce the Cattle Breed Improvement (Bull) and Cattle Herd Restocking Schemes, with the aim to improve the beef industry. The breed improvement is targeting emerging, resettled and communal farmers.

Fellow Namibians,

78. SPORTS: The sports industry is a major part of the global economy. We should move away from looking at sports only as recreation and entertainment, and regard it as an avenue that should be harnessed to create sustainable livelihoods and generate wealth, especially for the youth. The sports industries include research and development, talent management, construction and marketing, creating many new business opportunities and stimulating job creation. The 8th Administration will therefore work towards the professionalization of sports codes, targeted investment promotion and sports infrastructure development.

79. To give effect to our agenda, the construction of the following Sport facilities will commence during this Financial Year:

- i. Construction of six Category 2 Stadiums with capacity of 10,000 seats at Omuthiya in Oshikoto, Mariental in Hardap, Gobabis in Omaheke, Katima Mulilo in Zambezi, Otjiwarongo in Otjozondjupa and Nkurenkuru in Kavango West regions.**
- ii. Construction and renovation of seven Category 3 Stadiums with a capacity of 30,000 seats at**

Oshakati in Oshana, Rundu in Kavango East, Independence Stadium in Khomas, Outapi in Omusati, Swakopmund in Erongo, Eenhana in Ohangwena and Keetmanshoop in //Kharas Regions,

iii. Construction of Multi-Purpose Youth Centres at Mariental Haradp, Nkurenkuru, Kavango West and Opuwo Kunene Regions;

iv. Further, 200 million Namibia Dollars has been allocated for basic sports facilities in the constituencies.

80. The Government together with the private sector will continue to invest in professional sports leagues and the hosting of international sporting events.

Madame Speaker,

81. YOUTH EMPOWERMENT: As I have mentioned before, empowering our young people is about sustainable development. Youth Empowerment has been elevated to one of the seven (7) priority areas in the SWAPO Party Manifesto and Implementation Plan.

82. We will consolidate the various Government funds, grants and schemes targeting youth, into a single, ring-fenced YOUTH FUND that will focus exclusively on providing targeted support to youth-owned informal and micro businesses. This consolidation into one Fund seeks to reduce the cost of administration. An initial seed amount of 257 million Namibia Dollars has been allocated for this Financial Year.

83. As a government we will strengthen the SME Financing Strategy to assist SMEs to address the challenges that they face, which include access to start-up finance and lack of business skills, by increasing the coverage of the Credit Guarantee Scheme, the mentorship and coaching programme and implementation of the venture capital fund. In the new financial year, an amount of 9.8 million Namibian Dollars is budgeted to complement the soft loans for the 121-youth-owned-enterprises.

84. In addition to existing efforts and instruments towards Youth Empowerment, we will roll-out the national Youth Internship and Apprenticeship

Programme this Financial Year, both in the private and public sector.

85. The CREATIVE INDUSTRIES have been elevated as a sector of national strategic priority, so as to harness the creativity and innovation of our youth in a holistic and integrated manner, and to leverage the 4th Industrial Revolution.

86. An amount of 50 million Namibia Dollars towards the hosting of the 2025 National Arts and Creative Industry Awards has been allotted. Furthermore, the *Arts Fund Act of 2005* will be reviewed so as to expand the mandate to incorporate the *Creative Industry Infrastructure and Equipment Fund*. This Fund will be capitalised and operationalised during this METF.

87. The Ministry of Information & Communication Technologies is directed to:

- i. Spearhead digitalization, working together with the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sports, Art and Culture, the private sector and academia. The Ministry should also develop a database of IT experts, for use as appropriate.**

- ii. Oversee the establishment of Special Economic Zone for the Film Industries in the country.**
- iii. The Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board is tasked to intensify investment promotion for Namibia as an international, world-class film production destination, and to include sports and technology as priority sectors for investment.**

Madame Speaker,

88. QUALITY EDUCATION & TRAINING: Education is a tripartite partnership between the Government, parents and the learner/student. As a nation, we have a moral obligation to educate the Namibian Child. To derive cost savings and to maximize value to student beneficiaries, the Namibia Students Financial Assistance Fund (NSFAF) will be reintegrated back into the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sports, Arts and Culture by October 2025.

89. Through the Universal Access to Education Policy, the Namibian Government has been providing free

primary and secondary education in all public schools. While tertiary education in Namibia is already significantly subsidized by the Government, I am pleased to announce that from the next Academic Year, commencing 2026, tertiary education will become 100 percent subsidized by the Government. That means, no registration fees and no tuition fees at all public Universities and Technical & Vocational Education Centres. While this will be a gradual, phased in approach, your contribution as families and students for now will be towards accommodation and other related costs. We have heard your cries, “the Fees have Fallen”.

90. The above must serve as a specific message to our youth. That is the golden opportunity accorded to you by your caring Government in an independent Namibia. You must use this opportunity to bring out your talents to contribute meaningfully to the development of your country and support your parents.

91. The 8th Administration will therefore count on your individual and collective support and contributions,

towards our collective agenda of nation-building and development.

Madame Speaker,

92. We have set for ourselves to address the situation of the informal settlements. The national alliance between the public, private sectors, and members of the society, in the upgrading of informal settlements and accelerated delivery of low-cost residential housing and sanitation continues to be critical. Going forward the 8th Administration has planned to construct 10,000 low-cost social housing per annum and 50,000 units over the 5-year term. The mass formalization of informal settlement will commence in earnest.

93. There is a need for innovation to augment institutional capacities and decongest the bureaucratic bottlenecks that have for too long undermined supply of urban land and housing. To this end, the Minister of Urban and Rural Development is directed to establish a Special Land Delivery Task force under existing laws, restructure

the Township Board and capacitate the Surveyor General's Office to fast-track surveying, to create more land and housing ownership opportunities.
Every Namibian deserves the opportunity to a safe environment to call home.

Fellow Namibians,

94. The successful implementation of our Plan will result in economic growth and improved living standards for Namibians, where citizens have access to the basic human needs to live a dignified life. The 8th Administration aims to meet these basic human needs of decent shelter, food, safe and potable water, quality education and health services, safety and security, so that every Namibian can realize their full potential.

95. We have committed ourselves to the strengthening of Government institutions, as well as the security and law enforcement agencies. The management of the current floods in the country has underlined the importance of well-resourced security and law enforcement agencies. Both the Namibian Defense

Force and NAMPOL facilitated the efficient and effective movement of flood victims to safety and have transported food, water and all essential services needed by the flood victims. On behalf of the Namibian people, I thank our uniformed personnel for the quality services you continue to render to our people. I also thank all Government Offices, Ministries and Agencies who have managed this year's flood effectively.

96. The SWAPO Party Manifesto Implementation Plan has identified some laws and policies that undermine effective service delivery. In addition to that, members of the Cabinet individually and collectively, are under clear direction to review and amend all the laws which are a hindrance to quality service delivery, in their areas of responsibility.

97. I now use this platform to call on the public. Should there be a law which you consider to be a hindrance to service delivery, send your concerns to the Ministry of Justice and Labour Relations. To speed up the process, be specific on the particular articles or clauses of concern. It will also be appropriate to submit your proposal to enable the discussion to be

more focused for solutions or understanding to be reached. Talking to ourselves will not help us. Let our worries be brought to the attention of those with national responsibilities in a more structured manner.

Honourable Speaker,

98. As I conclude, I want to thank Members of the 8th National Assembly. In your maiden speeches, most of you have recognized the support you received from your families. I found this very significant as our Constitution is very clear that the family is the basic unit of our society. Therefore, a strong family, will mean a strong nation. Allow me to thank Lt. General Ndaitwah, my dear husband, my children, all my family members and household for the support they continue to give me.

Madame Speaker,

Fellow Namibians,

99. We are fortunate to be here at this pivotal moment in our nation's history where we can collectively

shape our destiny. We may be from different regions, different races, different ethnic groups, different political parties. But we are all Namibians. Together, we have upheld the enduring values of Unity, Liberty and Justice. Our path to prosperity shall not be easy and we should all work hard to live up to the binding contract we have signed with Namibians. I am confident that together, we can fulfil the promise that tomorrow holds for a Namibia that is just for each and every citizen.

ONE NAMIBIA, ONE NATION.

I THANK YOU.