



**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
MINISTRY OF SPORT, YOUTH AND NATIONAL SERVICE**

**SEND-OFF OF THE WOMEN & MEN'S SENIOR HOCKEY TEAM TO WORLD CUP AND THE
NETHERLANDS**

**By:
HON. EMMA KANTEMA-GAOMAS
DEPUTY MINISTER**

**On:
12th January 2023
WINDHOEK**

Director of ceremonies,

Mr. Erastus Haitengela- Executive Director of the Ministry of Sport, Youth and National Service,

Mr. Reagon Graig- President of the Namibia Hockey Federation,

Mr. Simataa Mwiya- Chief Administrator of the Namibia Sports Commission,

Coaches as well the Team players,

Representatives of the respective sponsors,

Personnel of the media,

Distinguished invited guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good Morning,

It is an exciting time for Namibia to send our hockey teams to Pretoria, South Africa, to train for and compete in the 2023 Hockey World Cup. I've been informed that a total of 12 men's teams and 12 women's teams will compete at the 2023 Hockey World Cup. We are pleased with the Namibian Hockey Federation's efforts to build the National Hockey Teams. Their efforts are commendable, as this will be the second World Cup appearance for the Men's Hockey Team and the third appearance for the Women's Hockey Team.

Last year, we were beaming with pride as Namibia was crowned the African Champions of the Hockey 5's. To say the least, it was an outstanding performance. Furthermore, the Namibia Hockey Federation staged a three-day hockey test series in Namibia last October, with the women's senior team winning the series. These outstanding accomplishments demonstrate the dedication of both the Namibia Hockey Federation's leadership as well as its athletes.

In his New Year's speech the President deemed this year as the year of revival. You qualifying for and potentially winning this World Cup can revive and restore a lot of hope in the Namibian people.

We are sending you off today and wish you the best of luck with your training camp in the Netherlands. We will undoubtedly see you in Pretoria once the World Cup begins. We believe you are physically and mentally prepared for the World Cup. The Namibian people will be rooting for you all the way, and we are confident that you will finish on the winning podium at the World Cup.

Cesar Chevas once said: "We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community. Our ambitions must be broad enough to include the aspirations and needs of others, for their sakes and for our own." Therefore, it is imperative to note that sport cannot be developed in the country solely by the government.

We need corporate enterprises to join us, and as Government, we would want to take this opportunity to extend our sincere gratitude to NAMDIA, MTC, Standard Bank and Namibre for being the sponsors of the Team Namibia Women's Hockey team. Additionally, to thank NAMDIA and MTC for being the sponsors of the Team Namibia Men's Hockey Team.

Before I conclude, I would be remiss if I did not express my heartfelt sympathies to Mr. David Strauss, the captain of Team Namibia Men's team, who lost his father two days ago. I wish you and your family strength in this trying time. In spite of your misfortune, the Namibian country appreciates your determination to continue to carry the Namibian Men's team. Thank you very much, sir.

I also want to acknowledge Ms. Magreth Mengo, the longest serving player for Namibia Senior Hockey with an impressive 61 National indoor Hockey Caps. Sadly, you have indicated that this will be your final competition as you head into retirement. My sister, I trust that hockey hasn't entirely lost you. I am confident you will continue serving hockey in other capacities such as a coach or manager of a club or team. We wish you all the best in your retirement and endeavors. You have indeed diligently served the Namibia nation as a hockey player.

In conclusion, we wish Team Namibia, a safe journey to the Netherlands and trust you will break a leg in South Africa, don't worry coaches, I mean it metaphorically. Herewith, I present the national flag to the Team Captains and with this, we symbolize that you are now on National Duty and Ambassadors of the country.

I thank you.