



REMARKS

BY THE

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MINISTER OF SPORT, YOUTH AND NATIONAL SERVICE

OPENING CEREMONY

OF

THE AFRICA NETBALL CUP 2021

09 NOVEMBER 2021

WINDHOEK

- **Honourable:** Minister of Sport, Uganda
- Members of the Diplomatic Corps
- **Honourable** Emma Kantema-Gaomas: Deputy Minister of Sport
- **Ms Cecilia Molokwane:** World Netball Director and President of Africa Netball
- **Mr. Freddy Mwiya:** Chief Administrator: Namibia Sport Commission
- **Ms. Joan Smit :** Africa Regional Development Manager
- **Presidents of Netball Federations of participating countries**
- Esteemed Sponsors and Partners
- Distinguished invited guests
- Members of the media
- Ladies and Gentleman,

Good evening,

It is a great pleasure to address the Opening of the Africa Netball Cup, held for the first time in Windhoek, Namibia.

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Namibia I wish to warmly welcome the Hon. Minister of Uganda, the delegates, officials and most importantly the athletes representing various countries from our great Continent. 9 Countries are represented at this prestigious event:

- Botswana
- Kenya
- Malawi
- Namibia
- South Africa
- Tanzania
- Uganda
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

It is my wish that you will enjoy your stay in the Land of the Brave, and that you will return to your motherland with positive memories about our hospitality and exceptional natural splendour.

Ladies and Gentleman,

Netball Namibia represents the biggest female sport in Namibia. I am confident when I say, Netball is the biggest female sport in Africa. This event allows us to celebrate our girls and women and at the same time, raise the profile of Netball not only on the Continent, but worldwide.

As we all know, Netball is a sport associated with a great set of values such as Focus, Concentration, Discipline, Tradition, Elegance, Precision, Strength and Respect. All of these values are of utmost importance in the development of any human being, and for this reason it is a sport which can help everybody on their journey through life.

Ladies and gentleman,

The sport of Netball offers untold possibilities to the former disadvantaged communities of our Nations. In Namibia, our young girls play Netball on an open space, not necessarily a Netball court, as long as they have a ball. Why then should these young people, the youth, not be able to adapt their natural skill to become athletes, competing nationally, and ultimately internationally?

All countries present here have hidden treasures in the form of potential World Champions and Commonwealth Games Champions. The African champions are right here with us competing in this event.

To all the athletes I would like to say: The essence of sport is to show discipline and commitment, to compete in a spirit of friendship, fair play and excellence, to win with humility and to lose with grace. If you as sportswomen follow these principles, then you have all the marks of a champion athlete.

Dear Athletes,

There is a perception today that playing sport is all about winning at all costs. Sure wins are great, championships are great, but there is something so unifying about

sport and culture in its purest form. Most importantly is the fact that you need to participate. It is the feeling of knowing that you have given everything you have in you that makes it worth it. That determination of perseverance that you have learned and honed is going to stay with you all your life.

One of the great things about sport is that there's always room for improvement, we can all work on doing something just a little better.

Ladies and Gentleman,

Athletes do not become champions on their own. It takes team effort to bring about athletic success. All stakeholders have a role to play in ensuring that athletes set the global sports arenas alight.

Our Coaches and support staff also need recognition for the hard work and sacrifices they make, in most cases as volunteers. They need to be up to date with the latest trends, scientific developments and skill enhancement. They have the daunting task of bringing out the best in their players and the potential to reach their dreams. I guess the ultimate goal for any coach is to see a team receiving medals on a podium....that is the ultimate reward and recognition for any coach.

It is important that you stay focussed and learn from the best. Make sure that you instil in your athletes the ethics needed to become worthy contenders. Stay away from what negatively influence the performance of your players and your reputation.

Ladies and Gentleman,

I am humbled and grateful for the generous sponsorships, if any from the private and public Sector that contributed towards the successful hosting of the Africa Netball Cup. Your generosity is invaluable! Thank you.

I would like to remind you all the doors of the Government of the Republic of Namibia and that of the Ministry of Sport, Youth and National Service are always open for Netball Namibia.

I wish you all the best for the event and officially declare the Africa Netball Cup for the year 2021 open.

Let the games begin!