



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

Keynote Address

Deputy Minister of Sport, Youth and National Service

Honourable Emma Kantema-Gaomas

at the

Civics Football Club and Premier Sports Trading Partnership

Launch

11 August 2021

Virtual (Zoom), Windhoek



Director of ceremonies,

Mr. Percy Misika, Executive Director, Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform

Mr. Djaffar Moussa-Elkadhum, Head of Office, UNESCO Representative to Namibia,

Prof. Kenneth Matengu, Vice Chancellor, University of Namibia

Dr. Errol Naomab, Vice Chancellor, Namibia University of Science and Technology

Father Roderick April, Secretary-General, Namibia National Commission for UNESCO

Prof Nnenesi Kgabi, UNESCO Chair on Sustainable Water Research for Climate Adaptation in Arid Environments

Prof Damas Alfred Mashauri, the proposed UNESCO-Chair on “Flood and Drought Risks in the Southern Africa Region”, University of Namibia,

Local and International Development Partners,

Representatives of Academia,

Distinguish Invited Guests;

Members of the Media,

Ladies and Gentlemen;

I am honored to be invited to be part of the conference that promote youth engagement on issues affecting them. The youth are the building blocks of a nation and increasingly the backbone of economies, especially in Africa. I can never over-emphasize the importance of platforms like this conference, organized by key institutions for the benefit of youth as an investment into youth development is in turn an investment into the future of Namibia. It is therefore critical to mainstream youth development into the fabric of the national agenda.

From the onset, I commend UNESCO Windhoek Office, in partnership with University of Namibia (UNAM) and Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST), for organising a Water and Climate Change Conference that aim to accelerate youth action on the innovative solutions for water challenging and climate change. As a Ministry entrusted with the mandate we feel encouraged to observe and acknowledged that our stakeholders are mainstreaming youth development issues in all their agendas to ensure the inclusion of youth development interventions at all levels of governance.

We applaud the stakeholders for the initiative to promote awareness and empower young people in advocating and initiating climate change adaptation and mitigation actions in the context of water security in their respective communities.

Director of Ceremonies,

Despite swift responses from our government and others around the world, the issues of water and climate change remains a challenge. I was reminded of this harsh reality just last week as I was assessing the progress of the Horticulture Projects we launched last year in all 14 regions. The projects that is not doing well is hampered by mostly water problems. I must say that this particular initiative that will bring together water young professionals to establish the UNESCO Intergovernmental Programme (IHP) youth network in Namibia will provide the youth with an opportunity to address challenges undermining development in Namibia and positioning young Namibians to assume their rightful place in building a “united, inclusive and prosperous Namibian House”. At this juncture, as you establish the youth network be assured of our support as we see ourselves as a critical stakeholder. The NYP III notes that development initiatives which do not invest in building capacities and honing capabilities of young people, are not sustainable.

In formulating the recently approved National Youth Policy III by Cabinet, we conducted an exercise to determine the status quo of the youth issues Above all, it is guided by the **peculiar challenges** faced by the Namibian youth and one of the emerging cross cutting issue identified was water. Especially in Agriculture as we know the agricultural sector remains one of Namibia’s biggest employers, contributing approximately 167,242 jobs (90,076 males and 77,166 female), or 15.3% of the total Namibian workforce (Namibia

Labour Force, 2018). Investing in agriculture is one of the most effective ways of reducing hunger and poverty, promoting agricultural productivity and enhancing environmental sustainability. With the high youth unemployment this initiative plays a crucial role in the development and implementation of our national development goals

Director of Ceremonies,

The NYP III is a strategic document, the NYP III casts a common goal towards Vision 2030 of the NDPs, HPP, SDG 2030 etc. and act as a catalyst to accelerate implementation. The overall goal of the policy is to ensure that young **Namibians are empowered** and become **self-reliant** and **productive citizens** through improved education, health and economic outcomes, and increased political participation. Above all, the Policy calls for a **strong partnership** between the government, the private sector, non-governmental organisations, civil society, the community, Development partners and the youth sectors.

The topic of discussions resonates with some of our annual plan under **Strategic Objective to Enhance Youth Empowerment** initiatives as set out in our annual plan to Sustainable development

As I conclude, I would on behalf of Government through the Ministry of Sport Youth and National Service like to thank United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the University of Namibia and the Namibia University of Science and Technology, as represented by their highest offices, your work is integral in our collective efforts to build and develop our envisioned knowledge based nation, by 2030.

I thank you.