



**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA  
OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER**

# **KEYNOTE STATEMENT**

**BY**

**RIGHT HONOURABLE DR. SAARA KUUGONGELWA-  
AMADHILA  
PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

**ON THE**

**OCCASION OF NAMIBIA'S 27<sup>TH</sup> INDEPENDENCE  
ANNIVERSARY**

**MAURITIUS GYMKHANA CLUB, VACOAS, MAURITIUS**

**21 MARCH 2017, 19H00**

- Director of Proceedings
- Your Excellency, Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, President of the Republic of Mauritius.
- Honourable Ministers present
- Heads of Mission and Members of Diplomatic Corps
- Mrs Lynda Kok Shun, Honorary Consul of the Republic of Namibia to Mauritius
- Distinguished Guests
- Ladies and Gentlemen

A very good evening!

Let me begin by extending a warm welcome to our guest of honour, Your Excellency, Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, President of the Republic of Mauritius.

We are truly honoured that you, Your Excellency, took time off your very busy schedule to celebrate this historic day with us today.

I am also extremely grateful to Mrs Lynda Kok Shun, Honorary Consul of the Republic of Namibia to Mauritius, who took the initiative to host this reception to commemorate Namibia's 27<sup>th</sup> Independence Anniversary. This sincere gesture is very much appreciated. My delegation and I feel at home on this special day.

Today marks exactly twenty-seven years since our country was officially declared free, sovereign and independent. The first and historic democratic presidential and legislative elections that were held in November 1989, decisively marked the end of over hundred years of colonial rule.

Twenty-seven years later Namibia has grown into a vibrant democracy, based on a solid constitutional order and a deep culture of the rule of law, fortified by a collective consensus that, we are all equal before the law.

Since independence, Namibia has maintained social, economic and political stability, making it possible for our people to contribute to the development of our country and to a steadily growing economy. As a proud member of the international community, we make our voices heard in the area of regional development, continental integration and active contribution to the promotion of world peace and security. Our Government has articulated and pursued a focused national development agenda, aimed at conquering the social and economic development challenges facing our country.

We have crafted our Vision 2030, which articulates our collective national aspirations to turn Namibia into a prosperous nation with an industrialised economy by the year 2030.

Under the stewardship of His Excellency, Dr Hage Geingob, we have adopted the Harambee Prosperity Plan (or HPP in short), which is the Namibian Government's Action Plan towards Prosperity for All covering the three-year period 2016/17 to 2019/20, which coincides with the remaining term of this Government's term of office. The HPP is meant as a call for unity and to encourage Namibians to work towards a common purpose.

Director of Proceedings,

Your Excellency,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have made good progress in many areas of social and economic development during the past twenty-seven years, but our nation is still facing some challenges that requires our constant and focussed attention.

The most testing challenge is the high rate of **unemployment** and poverty. It is, therefore, Government's strategic intent to develop and harness our human resource capacity, to contribute towards employment creation and SME driven economic growth, propelled by the youth.

Our Government has introduced a number of initiatives to address the **social and economic inequalities** that came about as a result of the legacies of racial discrimination under the apartheid regime. The GINI coefficient now stands at 0.57 compared to 0.7% at independence, which proves that our redistributive policies are having some impact, although income inequality in Namibia is still high. We, therefore, continue to forge ahead with initiatives to bring the previously disadvantaged communities into the economic mainstream and uplift their standards of living.

Although we have gradually diversified our economy away from primary industries, we recognise that more will have to be done to diversify our production, export and tax base so as to lessen the impact of external shocks. There are lucrative opportunities that can be harnessed by the private sectors in the secondary and tertiary industries, besides the traditional destination sectors for Foreign Direct Investment in the primary industries.

Director of Proceedings,

Your Excellency,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Namibia notes the tremendous progress made by the Government of Mauritius to develop and diversify its economy. We are keen to learn from your successes to consolidate our achievements and take our country to a higher economic growth trajectory. We are also committed to the SADC values of promoting shared economic growth and development

through increased intra SADC trade and investment and a unified approach on global economic and trade issues. I am inspired by the energy and proactivity of Mrs Lynda Kok Shun, our honorary Consul that our two countries can realise increased trade and investments through bilateral contacts and private sector exchanges.

I wish to express, once again, our appreciation for this arrangements made to give the Namibian delegation the opportunity to commemorate our 27<sup>th</sup> Anniversary together with our Mauritian partners. We look forward to stronger relations and cooperation between our two countries and peoples.

#### Proposing of a toast

Director of Proceedings,

Your Excellency,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

May I now request you to join me in proposing a toast to the continued good health of Your Excellency, the President of the Republic of Mauritius, to the prosperity of the people of Mauritius and the lasting bond of friendship between our two countries.

I thank you.

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