



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

AT THE

MASUBIA ANNUAL CULTURAL FESTIVAL 2019

BY

SAARA KUUGONGELWA-AMADHILA, MP

PRIME MINISTER

Bukalo, Zambezi Region

27 July 2019

09h00

Thank you Directors of Ceremonies.

- Munitenge Kisco Liswani III Head of the Masubiya Traditional Authority
 - Members of the Masubia Traditional Authority
 - Other Traditional Authorities' Leaders
 - Honourable Members of Cabinet
 - Honourable Members of Parliament
 - Honorable Regional Governors
 - Honorable Constituency and Local Authorities Councillors
 - Community Leaders
 - Members of the Diplomatic Corps
 - Members of the Media
 - Ladies and Gentlemen
1. I am most delighted to join the Masubia Traditional Authority and the Masubia Traditional Community as they celebrate their cultural festival.
 2. I commend the Masubia Traditional Authority for organizing the event, and indeed for remaining steadfast in upholding the Customs and Traditions of the Community, something which we in government are pleased to observe across all our Traditional Communities.
 3. Congratulations indeed for the excellent organization of this event.
 4. Traditional Authorities are the custodians of the customs and traditions of our traditional communities. These traditions and customs have kept our communities together, sustaining them as cohesive social units which are well organized and mobilized to ensure their members' social and economic development.

5. The external influence on our communities that came with, especially , colonialism impacted negatively on the way that many of our communities function, both at the broad societal level and at household and individual levels. Traditional Authorities, therefore, play an important role of ensuring that our traditional values are upheld and passed on to future generations to ensure that we maintain our identity as a people and that we can forge forward towards a bright future of peace and prosperity as a Nation.
6. It is for this reason that our Government has, right after Independence, provided for the role of Traditional Authorities in the Supreme Law, the Constitution, and subsequently , the Traditional Authorities Act.
7. The Government remains committed to nurture the cooperation between it and our various Traditional Authorities.
8. We appreciate the positive contributions made by our Traditional Authorities in various areas of our endeavors as a nation.
9. As we have adopted the development approach that puts people at the centre, we shall continue to strengthen our cooperation with Traditional Authorities and grassroots Communities as we strive to ensure that development in our country translates in improved welfare conditions for all our people.
10. In this regard, we shall continue to ensure that the various development programs implemented amongst our different communities aimed to improve their livelihoods are designed and implemented with the involvement of the communities.

11. These include initiatives in the areas of land reform and development, Environmental management and Tourism where we have established structures at community levels to ensure that local communities, including traditional communities , are involved in the management of activities related thereto and that benefits to communities from such activities are optimize. Such structures include communal land boards and community based conservancies.
12. I wish to congratulate those communities who have optimized these activities to improve the livelihoods of their communities, and call on those who have not to make maximum efforts to do so.
13. We can only realize our dream of a prosperous Namibia if we are prepared to put in maximum efforts to bring it about.
14. 15. On its part, Government is committed to implement the range of initiatives that have been adopted to optimize national development of our communities in the communal areas who are lagging behind the rest of their compatriots in the more developed urban areas due to past colonial policies that neglected rural areas development. In this regard, the Resolutions of the 2nd National Land Conference held last year (October 2018) are receiving priority attention.
15. I wish to, at this point, to express Government's appreciation for the positive contributions made by Traditional Authorities in the lead up to the Conference and during the Conference, al of which contributed to its success.
16. We call upon you to maintain this support through the implementation phase of the agreed actions.

17. I should, however, at this point, also touch on the negative trend of disputes amongst Traditional Authorities. This situation distracts the attention of traditional communities from constructive issues that advance the interest of traditional communities and our country in general and it diverts the meager resources from community development activities to finance legal battles that have become the common approach to dealing with differences amongst traditional communities.
18. I call on Traditional Authorities and communities to make use of the traditional methods of resolving disputes between and amongst them, instead of resorting to Courts. The Council of Traditional Leaders can also facilitate resolution of these disputes and should be made use of in this regard.
19. Other issues of great significance on which Traditional Authorities and Government will need to continue to cooperate on include:-
 - a. Implementation of the current drought relief program ;
 - b. Combating crime, especially violence against women and children and drugs and alcohol abuse which have become rampant,
 - c. Curbing Teenage pregnancies and school dropouts;
 - d. Combating Mismanagement and promoting sustainable management of our environmental resources, including both forestry and wildlife resources; and
 - e. Promoting sustainable land management and agricultural production.
20. This Region, especially, has a great potential to become the food basket of and one of the tourism hubs in, our country, and the government will work relentlessly to help make this a reality.

21. I want to conclude by congratulating the Masubia Traditional Authority, under the leadership of Munitenge Kisco Liswani III, for organizing this event , and also to express my profound gratitude for the invitation to be part of the event and deliver a keynote address.

22. I wish this community and its Traditional Authority the best in all its noble endeavors to promote its welfare and that of our greater family of the Namibian Nation.

I thank you.

DRAFT