



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

STATEMENT

BY

RIGHT HON. SAARA KUUGONGELWA-AMADHILA,

PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

AT THE

OPENING OF OPUWO TRADE FAIR

OPUWO, KUNENE REGION

WEDNESDAY, 24 MAY 2023

- Director of Proceedings
- Honourable Governor of Kunene Region
- Honorable Members of the Regional Council of Kunene Region
- Your Worship the Mayor of Opuwo, Madam Rosa Binge Tjeundo and other members of the town council of Opuwo
- Senior public sector officials
- Community Leaders from Traditional Authorities and Religious Organizations and other community leaders
- Captains of Industry
- Dear Teachers and Learners
- Exhibitors
- Ladies and Gentlemen

1. It is a pleasure for me to return to this beautiful town of Opuwo and experience the realization of the efforts of the people of Opuwo that went into resource mobilization and other preparations for this trade fair.
2. I commend the exhibitors that are participating at the fair for deciding to be part of these efforts to display to the Opuwo community and the region and country at large the businesses products that are available to meet their needs, here and elsewhere on the country.

I am told that the exhibitors come from across the entire Namibia and that some come from beyond our borders. I join the Governor and the Mayor in welcoming you.

3. It is important in any situation that efforts to advance a cause are championed by those that are on the ground where activities are implemented.
4. This ensures sustainability, and it ensures optimal local impact of our development interventions.
5. I want to thank the leadership of Opuwo and Kunene for successfully organizing the trade fair and for inviting me to officiate at its opening.
6. The leadership and residents of Opuwo have shown resilience in their pursuit of prosperity for this town.
7. Your passion to bring Development to this town is indeed shared by the central government, as reflected in the government policies that seek to bring about sustainable and equitably shared economic growth with jobs throughout our country.

8. In essence, the government's development policy advocates for a locally driven economic growth , growth that optimizes welfare conditions of Namibians, it leverages on the country's abundant natural resources, harnesses the energies and creativities of our youth , and optimizes the opportunities for increased trade brought about by regional integration and globalization.

9. After a prolonged economic downturn occasioned by weather related emergencies and Covid, we are relieved to observe the rebound in the economy.

The recovery presents an opportunity for new emerging businesses to enter the market and for the existing businesses to turn around their businesses which were negatively impacted by these emergencies.

10. The government has launched several initiatives aimed to support economic and business recovery and to promote the development of MSMEs as drivers for job creation and entry points for aspirant entrepreneurs into the main stream economy.

11. The government undertook a review of the support that it provides to business support to assess their responsiveness to the current needs of businesses and has worked out measures to improve them.

12. In this regard, the approved measures under the business rescue task force report are under implementation, including a business rescue fund that will assist debt ridden companies to get the much needed relief, so that they can turn around their fortunes and help consolidate the economic recovery and put out economy back on a higher growth trajectory.
13. The government also continues to use public procurement to provide an off take market for local producers. I urge Namibian businesses to venture into production in order to take advantage of the opportunities created through public procurement.
14. I hope to see a wide range of Namibian made products displayed at this fair so that Namibians get an appreciation of what is locally available, so that they can support our local producers.
15. It is important that, as Namibians, we buy locally made products as this supports local enterprises development, promote job creation and economic expansion and reduce reliance on imports which exposes us to shocks from external factors.

16. The disruptions in supply chains which has caused shortages of critical supplies and price hikes in basic products have highlighted the vulnerability of our economy due to reliance on imports and the need to build national resilience by developing self-reliance in basic commodities.
17. It is also important for the resilience of our economy that we engage in value addition. The natural resources offers a basis for industrialization through processing of raw resources.
18. By adding value to our natural resources, we optimize opportunities for job creation and increase earnings from processed resources, thereby optimizing the benefits from our natural resources for our country.
19. The government will continue to support the local businesses and foreign investors in order to promote increased investment in the country.
20. The trade fairs provide a platform for businesses to establish contacts that will translate into business relations.
21. I urge all participants to optimize their participation at the trade fair by effectively marketing their products and forging business relations that will support their businesses' growth.

22. The public is urged to optimize this convergence of businesses at the trade fair to source products and also to get to know the range of products on offer here in Opuwo and those from elsewhere across the length and breadth of our country.

23. Congratulations, once again to Opuwo for this event.

24. It is now my pleasure to declare the Opuwo Trade Fair 2023 officially open.

I thank you.

