



# **REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

**MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY**

**TALKING NOTES**

**BY**

**HON. DR. HAGE G. GEINGOB MINISTER OF TRADE AND  
INDUSTRY,**

**INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY**

**NAMPOWER CONVENTION CENTRE**

**MARCH 8, 2012**

**Check Against Delivery**

**Director of Ceremony, Ms. Bernadette Artivor-, US-NIC**

**Women present,**

**Distinguished Guests,**

**Members of the Media, and**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

- 1. Thank you for bringing us together on this important day which is internationally and also in Namibia celebrated in recognition of the achievements women have made in the quest for equality, respect and acceptance as equals with men-folk the world-wide.**
- 2. In support of the efforts by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, to further highlight the plight of women, on this day the Ministry of Trade and Industry through this small gesture also wants to add its voice to strengthen women in Namibia particularly, those in the business arena.**

- 3. Women are probably the most important beings in any given society, since all of us were or are either associated or affected by their presence as sisters, mothers, wives, lovers and so forth. Namibian women both inside and outside participated in the liberation struggle, in various capacities such as soldiers, politicians, shelter and food providers, teachers, nurses and so forth, and contributed immensely to the liberation of Namibia. In the process, some were killed, imprisoned, maimed, widowed, became refugees, or were subjected to mental and physical torture and harassment.**
- 4. During and after the liberation struggle, some became prominent and visible, however, the majority of them have never been acknowledged properly either in the media or elsewhere. They have been the invisible foot soldiers of the liberation struggle. These are the unsung heroes whose stories we still have to tell to our generations to keep the flame of their heroic deeds alive for posterity.**

- 5. Today, it is these thousands of invisible Namibian women who have become the victims of horrendous atrocities by our men-folk.**
- 6. We have to pause awhile as a nation and collectively and decisively act against the perpetrators of senseless violence against women. We have to come to a point where we are saying enough is enough: let us substitute talking with fast action to root out violence, abuse and killings of women.**
- 7. If laws are a problem, let's change them, if resources are not enough let's add more, as long as we make sure that we end this cycle of violence and abuse.**
- 8. To my fellow men, I appeal, if the relationship is over, and the lady does not want to be in it any more, let her go peacefully, do not kill, she too is a human being just like you, and don't be selfish, think of the innocent children, do not kill them either.**

- 9. Equally, you women should also respect your men, don't drive them to insanity. Nevertheless, we do not condone violence against women and children.**
- 10. In Namibia the reputation must be created that perpetrators of violent crimes against women and children are candidates for the highest degree of punishment ever possible.**
- 11. There should be no tolerance and no place for those sold out to the idea that women and children are soft targets for abuse.**
- 12. Churches, schools, police, the media and the entire Namibian society should be mobilized through education campaigns to restore dignity and a place under the sun for women in this country.**
- 13. Therefore, I am happy for and support initiatives such as the Zero Tolerance Mass Media Campaign on Gender Based Violence by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare.**

- 14. We have to remember that the total emancipation of women cannot be achieved, if they are not able to share equally in the process of economic empowerment.**
- 15. Therefore, the Ministry of Trade and Industry will continue to create conducive conditions that will give women an equal chance to make history as economic pioneers in an independent Namibia.**
- 16. Economic empowerment of women is high on the Ministry's agenda. In this regard, the SME bank will greatly assist in the economic advancement of women through collateral free loans. But the commercial banks must also come onboard with tailor made products for women, they cannot just continue making business in the traditional male oriented way they have been doing all these years. Let them change too.**

- 17. Already, in the process of empowering previously disadvantaged Namibians, we have set up the Equipment Aid Scheme, which assisted 413 people in all regions with equipments to the value of N\$41, 78 million, since 2009 to date.**
- 18. I am also happy to indicate that in our industrial parks and SME modules constructed and managed by the Namibia Development Corporation (NDC), host a good number of women creating jobs and contributing to the economic growth of this country.**
- 19. We need more women to become pro-active and seize opportunities to come into the mainstream of economic activities. We would like to see that more migrates from small retail, and venture into sectors such as construction, mining, fishing, agriculture, energy and ICT, which are currently dominated by men.**

- 20. In this regard, I would encourage women to enter into joint ventures with local and foreign investors, and make use of tender preferences, because the Minister of Finance has set in motion a new Tender Board Bill to provide for a 30% ownership by formerly disadvantaged Namibians.**
- 21. The Bill also makes provision for the reservation by Government of some tenders for target beneficiaries such as women, youth and SME's.**
- 22. Never forget the golden lesson that we have all learnt from the liberation struggle, namely that no one can empower you, unless you take the initiative to empower yourself. You have proven that you are not objects or observers waiting to be empowered.**
- 23. You have the capability and the will to become masters of your own destiny, but only require a helping hand to level the playing ground and compete successfully in the market place.**



**24. Therefore, organize yourselves to become a strong lobby group, able to push your development agenda. Currently, you are too much fragmented in various organizations which are all working for women empowerment. Come together under one business organization and affiliate to the Namibia Chamber of Commerce and Industry, to also benefit from Government support.**

**25. The Government of Namibia is your partner in this respect, and you are always welcome to approach our offices to request such assistance as you may need, and also sometimes when you are faced with too much bureaucracy from the officials do not hesitate to ask us politicians both me and my Deputy Minister to intervene on your behalf, our doors are open for you.**

**I THANK YOU**