



KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY

HON. VERNA SINIMBO, MP

MINISTER OF INDUSTRIALISATION AND TRADE (MIT) AT THE

EHAO CULTURAL EXPO GALA DINNER EVENT

ON

SATURDAY, 13 MAY 2023 AT,

EHAO CULTURAL EXPO CENTER

- **The Governor of Omusati Region Honorable Hon. Erginus Endjala.**
- **Herworship the Mayor of Okahao Town Honorable Cornelia Iiyambula.**
- **The King of Ongandjera Tatekulu Johannes Mupiya**
- **Honorable Leornard Shikulo, Councilor of Okahao Constituency**
- **Mayors of various towns.**
- **All Honorable Councilor present here today**
- **Traditional Leaders**
- **Captain of various Institution**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**

Good evening,

1. I extend my gratitude for extending an invitation to me to deliver a speech at the Ehao Cultural Expo Fundraising Gala Dinner this evening.

2. It is a privilege to be a part of this significant gathering in the lively and stunning town of Okahao.
3. I would like to convey my heartfelt thanks to the organizers of this event, the Okahao Town Council, for successfully resuming the Expo despite the pandemic. This showcases the robustness (strength) of the Okahao Town Council as an organization.

Esteemed guests, ladies and gentlemen,

4. The purpose of this gathering is to raise funds that are necessary for the growth of the local economy, provide a platform for small and medium-sized enterprises to showcase their products and services, and create opportunities for businesses to thrive.
5. I have received reliable information that this year's expo is centred around the theme of "***Connecting Businesses towards creating the Future.***"

6. This theme encapsulates (summarises) the true purpose of this event, which is to connect businesses with each other and their potential clients and suppliers, eventually leading to a brighter tomorrow.

7. During the Ehao Cultural Expo, businesses will be given the chance to network with one another and expand their business contacts.

8. Networking can bring several benefits to businesses, such as;

Providing support, solutions to problems, and new business opportunities. It also helps establish effective relationships with key individuals in various industries, raising the profile of your business and leading to new customers or suppliers.

9. All the benefits of business networking will ultimately lead to a better future.

Dear distinguished guests,

10. The Ministry of Industrialization and Trade has the noble objective of establishing and maintaining a favourable business environment by adding value, promoting market access, developing enterprises, and encouraging investment for the benefit of all stakeholders.

11. To achieve this, the Ministry facilitates investment opportunities, simplifies business processes, improves infrastructure, ensures macroeconomic stability, fosters democratic culture, and creates a conducive business climate.

12. Events like the Expos are central to the mission of the ministry, as they represent one of the ways in which the Local Authorities are promoting the growth of businesses and fostering an environment that is conducive to the success of SMEs - both of which fall under the mandate of the Ministry of Trade and Industrialization.

13. The Ministry of Industry and Trade has implemented numerous initiatives to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) at the grassroots level, including:

- The Equipment Assistance Program, which provides SMEs with necessary equipment and technology to efficiently operate their businesses and generate employment opportunities.
- The Sustainable Development Goals Impact Facility, a joint effort between the United Nations Development Programme and the Ministry of Industry and Trade launched in November 2022.

14. This facility is designed to enhance the productive capacity of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises and address development challenges in the country by strengthening the local economy, improving livelihoods, creating decent jobs, and building equitable communities.

15. The Ministry offers several other programs that businesses can access and I urge businesses to take up the opportunities whenever there is a call for applications for this programs

Distinguished guests,

16. I would like to conclude by urging all stakeholders, businesses, individuals from Okahao Communities, and our invited guests to generously contribute to the Okahao Town Council's fundraising efforts. This will enable us to host a successful event that will foster connections between businesses and create a bright future for Okahao and its residents.

Thank you.