



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

STATEMENT BY HON. LUCIA IIPUMBU

MINISTER OF INDUSTRIALISATION AND TRADE

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE NAMIBIA - ZAMBIA JOINT TRADE AND
INVESTMENT COMMITTEE (JITC) MINISTERIAL MEETING AND
BUSINESS TO BUSINESS ENGAGEMENTS**

**VENUE: MULUNGUSHI INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTRE,
KENNETH KAUNDA WING**

LUSAKA, ZAMBIA

4 – 6 September 2023

Hon. Rodney Sikumba – Acting Minister of Commerce, Trade and Industry

Mr. Sikongo Haihambo – Executive Director – Ministry of Industrialisation and Trade

Mr. John A. Mulongoti - Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry

CEO of the Zambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry

CEO of the Namibian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Senior Government Officials, Ministries and Agencies on the Namibian and Zambian side

Members of the Media

Namibia and Zambian businesses present

Distinguished delegates

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, allow me to sincerely thank my brother, Hon. Chipoka Murenga, Minister of Commerce, Trade and Industry represented here today by Hon. Sikumba for hosting us at this session of the Joint Committee on Trade and Investment between our two countries. I additionally wish to extend our appreciation for your warm welcome, generous hospitality and the excellent arrangements made to ensure the successful outcome of this session.

I further wish to extend our profound appreciation to the technical teams under the leadership of our respective Executive Director and Permanent Secretary as well as the entire team from both Ministries for fruitful coordination efforts to make this JTIC trade mission a reality.

I am also pleased to be with you yet again here in Lusaka following our prior bilateral engagements, which took place in February 2023. We agreed to reconvene in order to take stock of all the resolutions and commitments made during that meeting and it is pleasing to see our respective business fraternity present here today to also engage bilaterally.

The presence of our business community signifies a key milestone, considering the interests shown and their participations. It is my wish that this gathering will result in tangible business networking.

I am informed that there are priority sectors that were identified where our respective business communities/ associations may undertake to engage during the B2B event, specifically on Agriculture, fishing, Mining (salt) , Renewable energy, ICT and Beverages to mention but a few.

This session must therefore moot the best possible way for collaborations, consider some of the challenges our traders face in engaging in business activities, seek business opportunities and forge sustainable partnerships, which may enhance trade and investments between our two countries under the guidance of this Committee.

Hon. Minister,

Ladies and Gentlemen

Various activities and progress has taken place since our meeting in February this year and we are going to get a full report from the Senior Officials on what has transpired in order to chart a new collaboration path.

Our efforts are further complimented by the recent developments, which includes the inauguration of a 24-hour operations at Wenela/Katima Mulilo border between Namibia and Zambia on 22 August 2023, ushering in a new era of economic cooperation and growth between our two nations while promoting trade relations.

Our main objective remains to reignite the potential trade and investment opportunities and strengthen bilateral ties between Namibia and Zambia. This event has also created an excellent platform to promote mutual trade and industrialisation ambition of our two sister countries.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to reiterate that Namibia and Zambia's cooperation dates back to the pre - independence era. This relationship and our geographic proximity must therefore remain our key driver to attain deep levels of integrations in terms of trade, industrialisation and investments.

Our two counties both enjoys the strongest and most favourable business environment, stable democracy, sound infrastructure, and good services in the region as well as policy stability. Our Governments strength in maintaining peace, economic and social

stability as well as ensuring strong adherence to the rule of law underscores our commitment to creating a business - friendly environment.

Namibia and Zambia must continue to pioneer these type of economic relations and business affiliations to provide fertile ground for economic development. We must further strongly consider cementing bilateral business partnerships, which may result in technological transfer, skills development, value chains development, and enhancing value addition to our raw materials.

Hon. Minister,

Ladies and Gentlemen

We will witness the signing of various MoUs in different fields today and it is our believe that these will translate in tangible exchange of skills transfer and tradable goods as well services. I further wish to implore our Namibia business delegation to robustly engage your counterparts here and benchmark on best practices during the industrial tours/visits.

Our business community must also take note that both our countries have negotiated, signed and ratified the Agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AFCFTA). This will indeed ease trade between our two countries as we will eliminate tariffs. This must therefore remain one of key avenues of trade for our two sister countries.

Our business community present here must take note that our trade statistics between our two countries leaves so much to be desired and there is still much that we can do to diversify our markets and bring more products in the baskets for trading with each other.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me emphasise that our two Ministries will continue to actively act as interfaces between our private sector and investors. Allow me therefore at this juncture invite both Namibian and Zambian companies to consider exploring joint ventures options for setting up businesses in the two countries, as this will spearhead and revive business activities.

Allow me to conclude with words of encouragement to both the Namibian and Zambian business communities to embrace opportunities, which may emanate from these engagements. Thank you once again for hosting us and I am confident that we will have fruitful deliberations and I look forward to seeing you back in Namibia soon.

I thank you