



STATEMENT

BY

HON. LUCIA IIPUMBU

MINISTER OF INDUSTRIALISATION AND TRADE

**ON THE OCCASSION OF THE OFFICIAL CLOSING OF THE NATIONAL OZONE
UNIT AND CUSTOMS TWINNING WORKSHOP AND BORDER DIALOGUE FOR
COUNTRIES OF THE SADC REGION - ANGLOPHONE NETWORK**

FRIDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER 2023

HILTON HOTEL

WINDHOEK

Director of Ceremonies,

Mr. Patrick Salifu, Regional Network Coordinator for African English countries at the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), based in Nairobi, Kenya;

Mr. Sikongo Haihambo, Executive Director: MIT

Mr. Sam Shivute Commissioner for Namibia Revenue Agency;

Officials from the NAMRA and MIT

Government representatives from neighbouring countries;

Distinguished Invited guests;

Members of the media;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

A very good morning.

It is my profound gratitude to deliver closing remarks at this National Ozone Unit and Customs twinning workshop and border dialogue for countries of the SADC Region - Anglophone network.

The convening of this workshop is part of our Montreal Protocol mandate which encourages neighbouring countries to hold border dialogues and address issues of monitoring trade as well as preventing illegal trade in Ozone Depleting Substances and Hydrofluorocarbons in order to promote cooperation at regional level with customs and excise officers and National Ozone Unit officers.

As a country, Namibia ratified all the Amendments to the Montreal Protocol on substances that depletes the Ozone Layer. Our main aim as a country and region remains to tackle ozone depletion caused by Hydrochlorofluorocarbons and climate issues caused by Hydrofluorocarbons. Namibia is pleased to be Party to the Montreal Protocol which is successful in addressing the challenges caused by these substances.

In lieu of the above, being a Party to this Protocol will not only benefit the global climate, but also a large proportion of our population that have limited means of adaptation to the threats of ozone depletion and climate change.

Ladies and Gentlemen

As Namibia has embarked on the phase out of importation of Ozone Depleting Substances by 2030, and seeing that Parties to the Montreal Protocol are gearing towards ratification and implementation of the Kigali Amendment, this border dialogue undoubtedly served as a platform for discussions on the plethora of trade issues relating to the control of new substances under the Kigali Amendment and improve implementation of the licensing and quota systems.

Namibia is one of the few countries in the world that has included a clause in its Constitution targeting the sustainable management of natural resources. Article 95(L) requires the State to take measures to promote and maintain the welfare of the people including "the maintenance of ecosystems, essential ecological processes and biological diversity of Namibia and utilization of living natural resources on a sustainable basis for the benefit of all Namibians, both present and future.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Our National Ozone Unit within the Ministry of Industrialisation and Trade (MIT), is at the forefront of Hydrochlorofluorocarbons phase-out and will continue to promote environmental friendly and energy-efficient products. In an effort to meet international obligations, the Government of Namibia has amended the ODS regulations for controlling the import of substances listed under class A, B, D, E and F, as well as goods specified in Annex, Class C of the regulation through Section 2 (1) (b) and section 3, respectively, of the Import and Export Control Act, 1994 (Act No. 30 of 1994) and came into operation on 01 January 2021.

Since the enforcement of the gazette no. 7265 on 07th July 2020, the importation of Chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) containing equipment continue to be prohibited and further banning of import of HCFC based equipment. The Hydrofluorocarbons are restricted and coordinated through issuance of an import permit.

Namibia cannot, independently, efficiently and successfully, ensure that there is minimal or no illicit trade in hydrofluorocarbon without symbiotic partnerships in the SADC region, in addition to other African countries. The Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm (BRS) Conventions as well as the Paris Agreement have highlighted the importance and significance of such partnerships, towards managing chemicals in an environmentally sound manner throughout their life cycle, through the adoption of synergies decisions.

In September 2015, as reported by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Namibia became the first developing country to submit Intended Nationally Determined Contributions to the Convention Secretariat. Recognised by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change as Namibia's concrete Climate Action Plan in view of the Paris Climate Agreement, the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions enhance the prioritisation of climate change investment by stating the estimated costs and the proposed specific adaptation and mitigation measures. Namibia's intended actions for the mitigation of climate change are regarded as a commendable commitment to the Paris Agreement.

Director of Ceremonies

While all countries have a licence and quota system which covers Hydrofluorocarbons, their implementation and enforcement varies considerably from country to country. We have amended our legislation to include control of Hydrofluorocarbons, and it is a platform such as this one, which allows us to discuss harmonised legislations within our neighbouring countries.

It is a known fact that at implementation level, chemicals respect no borders, and thus as a region, we need to closely work together towards this common goal of managing chemicals in an environmentally sound manner throughout their life cycle. We have a chemicals and waste desk within the SADC office, which we need to get involved in, in our sub-regional chemicals and waste initiatives, so that we are better coordinated and our issues are readily taken up to the rest of the regional bodies. This type of involvement could assist us in mainstreaming of the chemicals and waste agenda within our sub-region, and hopefully increase the allocation of much needed resources.

Our Customs and Excise officials are the ones on a daily basis that are at coalface of illicit trade of these toxic chemicals across our borders. In this respect, we need to continuously encourage them, and build their capacity not just on chemicals listed under the Montreal Protocol, but also on other chemicals of priority that need concerted effort by SADC member states.

Let us therefore continue to appraise each other when one country realises that there is a banned, restricted or very toxic chemical that is coming through one's borders so that swift actions can be taken to deal with the perpetrators. We must endeavour to commit ourselves, be zealous and work together towards making our SADC sub-region on chemicals and waste management, exemplary that other sub-regions within and beyond our continent, would wish to emulate.

In conclusion, I wish to commend our stakeholders for their unrelenting and concerted efforts in making this Protocol a success. I further would like to extend our gratitude to all our Customs and Excise officer within and across our borders for their effort in combating illegal trade of ozone depleting substances and ensuring that our countries remain compliant to their Montreal Protocol obligations.

It is thus my distinct pleasure to declare this workshop officially closed and I thank you for your constructive and fruitful engagements and the ministry is looking forward full operationalisation and implementation the outcome of this dialogue.

I THANK YOU