



STATEMENT

BY

HONOURABLE VERNA SINIMBO

DEPUTY MINISTER: MINISTRY OF INDUSTRIALISATION & TRADE

ON THE OCCASION OF THE

PHASE-TWO OF THE 'BUY LOCAL, GROW NAMIBIA' CAMPAIGN

15 SEPTEMBER 2021

SWAKOPMUND

Director of Ceremonies,

The Honorable Neville Andreas, Governor of the Erongo Region,

Her Worship Louisa Kativa, Mayor of the Swakopmund City,

The leadership of the Swakopmund Municipality,

Ms. Stacey Pinto, CEO of the Namibia Trade Forum,

Representatives of the Development Bank of Namibia, The Namibian Standards Institute, The Namibian Agronomic Board, The Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Agency, and GS 1 Namibia (our barcode center)

Representatives of Pick n Pay, Spar and Shoprite,

The distinguished SMEs and business community present,

Members of the Media,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. It is with immense pleasure and gratitude to be afforded this opportunity to join you all at this gathering, the launch of Phase 2 of the Buy Local, Grow Namibia Campaign in the Erongo Region. I am happy to return to the “mighty Erongo” where I took part in the buy local grow Namibia campaign, which was launched in October 2020. In exact two weeks times, a year will have lapse since this initiative began and how remarkable are the achievements that have been recorded, in spite of the social and economic challenges that have been amplified by the health pandemic continue to afflict the lives and livelihoods of our citizens.
2. The buy local, grow Namibia campaign was conceived as the Nation navigated the challenges and realities that were brought about by the

pandemic. With lockdowns being introduced and restrictions hampering the flow of basic goods and services, the issue of national self-sufficiency took greater prominence.

3. The aim of the campaign is clear: it is to help create an enabling environment for local produced goods to access the retail space as well as to sensitize all Namibians on the economic benefits of supporting local. As has been eloquently highlighted by the Honorable Minister, progress has been made since the conception of these initiatives through the implementation of the Retail Sector Charter that saw its genesis in the 4th National Development Plan. It was also one of our desired outcomes under the Harambee Prosperity Plan, pillar of Economic Advancement, is to significantly increase the volume of locally produced goods supplied to the public and retail sectors.

Director of ceremonies

4. Allow me to take a moment to appreciate the team that has been responsible for the great partnership and collaboration that has made all this possible. To the leadership of the Erongo region, the UN in Namibia, the UNDP, The Namibian Newspaper, Team Namibia, the NIPDB. The agencies that are implementing various government mandates, such as the DBN, NSI, NAB, thank you for demonstrating that we are all serving the Namibian house. We look forward to the presentations on the offerings and support to improve market access. The retails such as pick n pay, Shop rite, Spar and Woolworths, the commitment you have demonstrated to this initiative is greatly appreciated.

5. To the SMEs and the business operators in our country thank you for your tenacity and perseverance in these challenging times and let us continue to hold hands.

6. As mentioned earlier, remarkable progress has been made since October 2020 when the Campaign was launched. With the great corporation with major retailers and partners, most of whom will be presenting later, the launch of the 2nd phase with an emphasis on helping build capacity for market access estimate close to 60% increase in shelving of local products particularly agricultural products. We were fortunate for His Excellency the Vice President to launch the 2nd phase of the Buy local grow Namibia campaign in May 2021 in the Kavango East Region. The Zambezi Region has also been recipient of the initiatives and we are in Erongo and plan to tour the Hardap and Karas Regions next.

7. At the heart of the Industrialisation drive is the need to accelerate initiatives aimed at transforming our economy from that of a commodity base, to developing value chains around those raw materials and commodities. This has been the underlying theme in the Growth at Home Strategy.

Ladies and Gentlemen

8. Let me highlight the benefits of buy local which these efforts are meant to forge. By **buying** food and other **goods** that are produced **locally**, consumers help stimulate their regional economy, create and retain valuable jobs, supports families and strengthen community and preservation of culture. In addition, it also helps to mitigate against climate change by reducing transportation times as well as the emission of greenhouse gases.
9. As has been alluded to earlier, the focus of the second phase of the Buy Local Grow Namibia campaign has the objective of capacitating the mirco, small, medium enterprises as well as the informal sector to better understand various requirements for local market access. After identifying this of lack of critical knowledge on the retailer requirements this is a noble initiative which we hope will gain momentum and be institutionalized.

Directors of ceremonies,

10. Allow me to quote what His Excellency the Vice President reminded us at the launch earlier in the year. “The reality on the ground is that our shelves are dominated by foreign imports and that the local producers find it difficult to access retail shelf space for a variety of reasons, some of which we are trying to address through these initiatives. Some of the challenges are relate to quality standards, access to finance and distributions channels to name a few.” I am therefore very pleased and anticipate the presentations of the

DBN, NAB and NSI, which I hope will try to translate their mandates into impact on the actual beneficiaries particularly the SMEs.

11. Let me say that I am encouraged and deeply appreciative of the effort made by some of the retailers that source from within Namibia and help with the promotion of local products and value chains. It is the right thing to do and I would like to thank you for that and it is my hope that others will follow these exemplary leads.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

12. I began by highlighting the state of the economy is in distress due to the effects of the pandemic. Now more than ever, this is the time for us to work together and forge unity of vision and action. We have to support one another in everything we do.

13. In conclusion, let me end with the words of the Vice President “We have to ensure that we buy local and consume local services on the part of the consumer. The entrepreneur has to be committed to quality service delivery, the community has to demonstrate that loyalty, the institutions to ensure that bottle necks are removed.”

14. With these few remarks let me once again thank you for this remarkable initiative and I now have the pleasure to declare the Phase 2 of the Buy Local Grow Campaign officially launched in Erongo.

I thank you!!

