



**NEW YEAR 2021
MINISTER'S STAFF ADDRESS**

**HON. LUCIA IIPUMBU, MP
MINISTER OF INDUSTRIALIZATION AND TRADE**

**VIRTUAL MEETING
12 FEBRUARY 2021**

TIME: 09:30

"Growth at Home"

Deputy Minister, Hon. Verna Sinimbo

Executive Director, Mr. Sikongo Haihambo

Deputy Executive Directors;

Chief Executive Officers and Managing Directors of our various Agencies here present;

Management and Staff members of the Ministry and the Agencies;

Ladies and Gentleman;

Good Afternoon,

Firstly, let me take this opportunity to welcome you all from your vocational leave of the festive season. I hope you all had a wonderful festive season; and I wish you all complimentary well wishes in your work career and personal lives for the year 2021 and beyond.

The year 2020 was a rather a rough and tough year, a year preceded by COVID-19 pandemic which engulfed the entire globe and slowed down our work activities, our trade and commerce across the region and the globe, our own personal activities and that of our families and friends. The pandemic has negatively affected the already economic headwinds that we experienced over the past two years. The significance of this new year (2021) cannot be over-emphasized considering the Corona Virus pandemic (COVID-19), and that is why we are meeting virtually in this new normal instead of inContact meetings that we are used to.

Despite, the economic challenges, budget constraints, and the COVID-19 pandemic, we (*this Ministry*) have recollected our success and achieved some deliverable and milestones during last year (2020). Those achievements and milestones are as follow in no chronological order:

- Cabinet has approved the business model for the operation of 'National Single Window' (NSW) an electronic initiative that allows single-entry point for the fulfilment of all import, export and transit related regulatory requirements. This will improve the ease of doing business for domestic and international users. It will also reduce the time and cost in the

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movement of goods into, through and out of Namibia. Once implemented, the import and export permits will be fully automated. I hope the colleagues at 'Import & Export' office are happy and will fully embrace the National Single Window system through IMEX. The system is currently being piloted by sample of users and should be rolled in the first quarter of this year 2021.

- The 'Integrated Client Services Facility' which was under development for so many years was official launched in December 2020, and it will be rolled out soon upon interface of all the parties involved such as Social Security, Ministry of Home Affairs and NAMRA (*the Namibia Revenue Agency/Inland Revenue*). I urge the facilitators to finalise the integration of other stakeholders by March 2021.
- Approval of 'National Quality Policy' by Cabinet; and we set for launching during the first quarter of this year 2021;
- Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, we managed to do regional consultations with business communities and informal traders with a primarily focus on the impact of COVID-19; and the interventions needed for sustainable local entrepreneurial growth and post COVID-19 economic recovery strategies;
- We have launched successfully 'Buy Namibia Grow Namibia' Campaign during October 2020; and the second phase of the campaign will most probably start by April 2021 which will incorporate more SMEs to enhance the capability to access retail shelf space; It is expected to have regional representation focus on women and SMEs;
- The Ministry was able to ensure production of 454,894 masks for the most vulnerable members of our society including pensioners, children receiving disability grants and hospitalized patients in public hospitals. This exercise ensured 57 Small and Medium Enterprises where contracted and the domestic economy was boosted with a total of Nine Point Two Million Namibia Dollar (*N\$ 9,207,500*);

- The Ministry has also with the support of the EU through the SADC Trade Related Facility capacitated 45 Namibian firms through the Industrial Upgrading and Modernization Scheme to a total value of Eleven point three Million Namibia Dollar (*N\$ 11,308,000*);
- Working with our Development Partners, we rolled out the Katutura Start-Up Centre. During the reporting period we enrolled 120 Start-Ups of which 80% are female, we provided 600 COVID-19 Start-Up Grants of N\$ 15,000 each a total of Nine Million Namibia Dollar (*N\$ 9,000,000*) was disbursed to mostly informal Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and we distributed 1,600 PPE Kits to Informal Economy Operators across the 14 Regions of our country;
- We also established, with key partners the Sustainable Development Goals Impact Facility and disbursed Two Point Five Million Namibia Dollar (*N\$ 2,500,000*) to 32 Entities during December 2020;
- Through such dynamics partnerships programmes, we intend to encourage the private sectors to transform their traditional Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) into modern Corporate Social Investment (CSI) that have a greater measurable impact;
- Through EMPRETEC NAMIBIA, we have worked on enabling infrastructure in all our regional offices to allow for online trainings in the future. To this end we managed to install equipment to the value of Seven Hundred Thousand Namibia Dollar (*N\$ 700,000*) in our Regional Offices. We once again will thank our Developmental Partners for this.
- Because of the 'Brexit' from the European Union and the effect it has regionally, the Ministry managed to ratify SACU Mozambique United Kingdom Economic Partnership Agreement in order to secure market access for Namibian products to the UK market in the future.
- The implementation of the 'Retail Charter' and the GS1 accredited Bar Code Centre is very vital to ensure that Namibian products find shelf space in local retail shops and enhance traceability of locally manufactured goods
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within the global market. I urged NTF to follow up on our submission and give feedback;

- Namibia Competition Commission has launched the National Competition Policy 2020–2025. The policy can be broadly defined as a governmental policy that promotes or maintains the level of competition in the market;
- During the lockdown of the pandemic, the Ministry made some amendments to the legislations to allow certain business to operate as 'Essential Service Providers' for much needed services to our people. We also did some amendments on the sale of alcohol in order to maintain and minimise the risk of the Virus infection;

Our Policy and legislation interventions this year, should be:

- The Metrology Bill is amongst those bills to be tabled in Parliament this year;
- Namibia Property Practitioner Bill will be presented to Cabinet Committee for Legislation (CCL) during the first week of April 2021:
- Finalisation and implementation the revised Namibia Investment Promotion Act (NIPA) and its regulations;
- We are awaiting the Amendment on the Competition Act for Ministerial input by NaCC;
- The Ministry to start working on the Merchandise Act in order to transfer the function to BIPA;
- We intend to conclude the implementation strategy on AfCTA which will outline how we are going to optimise the benefits of this new market access;
- SADC EU EPA Agreement is set to be reviewed later on in the year as stipulated in clauses of the Agreement. Our focus will be more flexible rules of origin;
- Work on WTO is likely to gain momentum after the deadlock of the APPALET bodies has been resolved allowing for a more predictable rules based multilateral trading system;

Our priority areas for this year 2021 are amongst the followings:

- The finalization of the Special Economic Zones Policy and subsequently the law and regulations;
- Finalization of key Sectoral Masterplans such as on the Poultry, Automotive and Mineral Beneficiation Implementation Strategy;
- The finalization of the School Uniform design phase and immediate engagement of production phase;
- Finalization of the commissioning and installation phase of the Invader Bush Processing Plant at Otjiwarongo, in partnership with UNIDO;
- I want to see the finalisation of SME and Industrial Parks by NIDA without delays;
- Improve Namibia's competitiveness ranking by addressing ease of doing business through Integrated Client Service Facility;

As we strive into the new year, I urged the management of the Ministry to serve this nation with dedication, courage and commitment to the best of their ability based on our core values of: • *teamwork* • *transparent* • *innovation* • *professionals* • *integrity and* • *accountability*.

I also urge our Agencies [NIDA, BIPA, NaCC, NSI] to deliver on their mandate. I want to see your business and strategic plan; and I want to see how you are meeting your goals and objectives as agencies of this Ministry. I want to isolate NSI to start working on its financial prudence of resources given to them both by Government and their own revenues;

Let us deliver on our mandate to develop and manage Namibia's economic regulatory framework, promote economic growth that attract trade and investment and expand on the country's industrial base. We need to forge a greater spirit of Namibia first in order to accelerate the economic recovery and growth which is the greatest challenge we are facing as Government.

In conclusion, I have trust and confidence in all of you and I believe we will be a good team, we will collaborate, we will co-ordinate, we will co-operate and we will deliver on our mandate. I wish you all a productive year ahead.

I THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND ATTENTION

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