



MIT
Ministry of
Industrialisation
& Trade

Remarks

By

**Hon. Lucia lipumbu (MP),
Minister of Industrialisation and Trade**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE
LAUNCH OF THE AGOA UTILISATION STRATEGY**

10 May 2021, 10H00

Hilton hotel, Windhoek, Khomas Region

Director of the Proceedings;

Your Excellency Lisa Johnson Ambassador of United States of America to Namibia;

Hon. Verna Sinimbo, Deputy Minister of Industrialisation and Trade

Senior Officials from the USAID and USAID Trade Hub

Officials of the Ministry of Industrialisation and Trade As Well As Representatives of Various Ministries

Eminent Business Community;

Distinguished Invited Guests;

Media Fraternity

Ladies and Gentlemen

A very Good Morning to you all!

1. I am honoured to be part of this important event this morning and I would like to start by appreciating the U.S Government through the USAID Southern Africa Trade and Investment Hub for having assisted the Ministry of Industrialisation and Trade with the development of Namibia's Utilization Strategy of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). The Embassy of the United States and by extension the USA Government and its United States Agency International for Development (USAID) has been a key partner to the government of Namibia and have collaborated with our Ministry in developing various aspects of the Namibian economy. Our hope as a country is that through the application of this strategy, Namibia will be able to maximize AGOA's trade potential, in trade, investments and skills transfer.

Ladies and Gentlemen

2. Though as country we were part of AGOA at the onset, we never had a strategy in place. Our efforts to fast-track the craftment of the strategy got ignited in 2019 when we attended the AGOA forum in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. It was also at this platform where we were informed of the possible extension of this very important framework. Now with a strategy in place, we will unleash the full potential market the USA have to offer.
3. This strategy seeks to increase Namibia's exports under the AGOA program, which allows Namibia to export over 6,400 products on a duty free to the United States. The strategy further provides a prioritized roadmap on how Namibia can increase its exports to the United States under the duty-free market access under AGOA, and it recommends

steps to address the policy, supply-side, and market challenges faced by potential Namibian exporters. Namibia's total trade with the United States has shown a stagnate growth over the past 10 years. In 2019, Namibia's overall exports to the United States market were valued at 1.97 billion Namibia Dollars accounting for only 2.1% of Namibia's exports to the rest of the world. The main export products for Namibia to the United States market are Uranium Ores, Diamonds and Art work.

4. The strategy identifies priority sectors and categorises them into short-term (e.g., beef and fish, semi-precious stones, grapes, dates, devil's claw), medium-term (e.g., specialty foods/organic pearl millet products, handicrafts, leather products), and long-term (e.g., indigenous natural products) export potential.
5. The strategy concludes with a proposed action plan covering implementation, monitoring and evaluation framework, and an institutional structure. Their body is composed of private and public sector representatives, who will drive the implementation of the AGOA strategy. The strategy hinges on a number of national policy documents, particularly the outward looking Growth at Home Strategy (Namibia's Execution Strategy for Industrialisation) which is the implementation strategy for Namibia's Industrial Policy which provides the nuts and bolts of Namibia's industrialization and export value addition.

Directors of Ceremonies

6. The Namibian government believes that an integrated and advanced manufacturing sector can bring about higher levels of economic growth and development across the economy. Namibia has been making significant progress in the development of key policies, legal frameworks and physical infrastructure such as the port, rail, and roads as part of development corridors to create a conducive environment and facilitate trade for the private sector to be competitive both locally and globally. This is creating enormous opportunity for the private sector and will hopefully send positive signals to international investors that there are great investment opportunities in the country. The private sector is called upon to take advantage of all these opportunities in order to export their products to the United States under this agreement. I also call upon the private sector to diversify their production capacity in order to enhance trade with the United States on eligible products for preferential trade benefits under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).

Ladies and Gentlemen

7. Allow me to conclude by once again underscoring our strong belief in AGOA and our strategic partnership with the United States. The enhanced AGOA that we envisage should go beyond market access by strengthening technical assistance and capacity building initiatives to the Namibian entrepreneurs and businesses. From our vantage point, I strongly feel that we have a notable footing to utilize the opportunities presented to us by AGOA to access the United States market.

I THANK YOU.