



**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

**SPEECH BY HON. LUCIA IPUMBU, MP**

**MINISTER OF INDUSTRIALISATION AND TRADE**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTATIONS ON THE  
DRAFT SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE BILL (SEZ), NATIONAL INFORMAL  
ECONOMY, STARTUPS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT  
POLICY (NIESED), NAMIBIA INVESTMENT PROMOTION AND  
FACILITATION REGULATIONS AND NATIONAL COOLING STRATEGY**

**VENUE: RUNDU TRADE FAIR CENTRE, RUNDU**

**DATE: THURSDAY, 24 APRILY 2024**

**Programme Director: Mr. Matheus Mukosho – Economist for MIT  
Kavango East Regional Office**

**Hon. Bonifatius Wakudumo - Governor: Kavango East Region  
Region**

**Your Worship Mayors present**

**Hon. Regional and Local Authority Councilors Present**

**Chief Executive Officers Present**

**Distinguished Captains of Industries and other invited guests;**

**Our Esteemed Businesses at all levels**

**Members of the Media;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

I am pleased to join you this morning at this momentous occasion where we are going to discuss important matters related to business and entrepreneurial development. The Ministry of Industrialisation and Trade (MIT) team is here today to engage you and seek your valuable inputs on our important legislative framework documents.

Today marks an important milestone in our journey towards economic growth and prosperity. We gather here for public consultations on some of the most pivotal policies that will shape Namibia's economic landscape for years to come.

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to everyone present today for taking the time to participate in this critical dialogue. Your insights, ideas, and concerns will undoubtedly play a crucial role in refining these policy documents, ensuring they are inclusive, effective, and aligned with the aspirations of the Namibian people.

Today, we are here to discuss the Special Economic Zone (SEZ) Bill and accompanying regulations, the National Informal Economy, Startups, and Entrepreneurship Development Policy (NIESED), Namibia Investment Promotion and Facilitation Regulations, and the National Cooling Strategy. These policies are designed to catalyze economic growth, promote entrepreneurship, and create a conducive environment for investment.

Let me begin by emphasizing the importance of the Special Economic Zone (SEZ) Bill. Special Economic Zones have proven to be effective instruments for attracting investment, fostering industrialization, and creating employment opportunities. Through the SEZ Bill, we aim to provide a conducive environment for businesses to thrive, by offering tax and non-tax incentives, infrastructure support, and streamlined regulations.

However, it's imperative to strike a balance between providing incentives for investors and ensuring that the benefits trickle down to local communities including here in Kavango East and West regions. Your feedback on the SEZ Bill will be invaluable in shaping a policy that is both investor-friendly and beneficial for our nation's development.

Secondly, the National Informal Economy, Startups, and Entrepreneurship Development Policy (NIESED) is another vital component of our economic strategy. Namibia's informal economy is a significant contributor to employment and economic activity. However, it faces numerous challenges, including lack of access to finance, limited market access, unsuitable operating space and regulatory barriers. The NIESED policy aims to address these challenges by providing support and resources to informal businesses, startups, and entrepreneurs.

MIT has over the years advanced various support instruments to assist especially our MSMEs and informal sector to thrive through various economic challenges. To date the Ministry continues to assist businesses through a series of initiatives such as Equipment Aid Scheme, Industrial Upgrading and Modernisation Programme, Entrepreneurial Training through Empretec

Namibia. Other business support undertakings includes the operationalisation of the Startup Centre, Constructions of Open markets and SMEs parks as well as guidance on packaging, standards and business registrations through agencies under our Ministry.

Your input will be crucial in ensuring that this policy is comprehensive, addresses the needs of our entrepreneurs, and facilitates the transition of informal businesses into the formal sector.

Furthermore, the Namibia Investment Promotion and Facilitation Bill is essential for creating an environment that attracts both domestic and foreign investment. The Draft Namibia Investment Bill will be tabled in Parliament soon following rigorous consultations including in this region. The regulations would therefore play a critical role in providing the necessary guidelines and frameworks for the effective implementation of the Bill. By seeking your input on these regulations, we can ensure that they are investor-friendly, promote sustainable investment, and contribute to the long-term economic development of our regions and nation at large.

Last but not least, the National Cooling Strategy is a forward - looking initiative aimed at promoting energy efficiency and sustainability. As our economy grows, so does our need for cooling systems. However, if not managed properly, cooling systems can have significant environmental and economic implications. The National Cooling Strategy seeks to address these challenges by promoting the use of energy-efficient cooling technologies, reducing emissions, and minimizing the environmental impact.

What is critical in this case is to ensure that we streamline the processes so that we join the value chain of manufacturing these components locally. Our graduates from Rundu Vocational Training Centre and others VTCs across they country must be fully equipped to fully leverage on the manufacturing opportunities in this sector. Your feedback on this strategy will be crucial in ensuring that it is effective, sustainable, and aligned with our climate goals

Generally, with sporadic rainfall being experienced over the year our two regions remain nascent in terms of overcoming food insecurity in Namibia if we commit to do things differently especially through investments in our green schemes and claim our full status of the agricultural hub and breadbasket for Namibia.

MIT is committed to supporting the region in this regard and yesterday, together with the Hon. Governor of Kavango East region, we handed over the Mayana Irrigation project at Mayana village. This is part of the Climate Resilient Infrastructure Development Facility (CRIDF), which is designed to improve livelihoods using community - based adaptation to alleviate poverty arising from increasing incidences of crop failure, and the inability to produce higher value crops, in combination with a declining economic climate.

The project presents an opportunity to deliver immediate irrigation water security and climate resilience benefits for the community. The project is focussed on improving the livelihoods within Mayana through market linkages and institutional organisation for long-term sustainability. This project is timely as Namibia continues to grapple severe droughts, which possess a risk of disrupting food security in our country. The Ministry of Industrialisation and Trade (MIT) has been supportive of this initiative since its inception

It is therefore important that we ensure that our regulative framework is fit for purpose and use it to guarantee that we create an avenue for value addition to our resources to create the much needed jobs.

These legislations are key in shaping the economic dimension of Namibia which can ultimately result in significant growth and development of our country. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to each one of you for participating in this discussion, as your insights are invaluable in shaping the future of our economic policies.

Let me therefore encourage each of you to actively participate in today's discussions, sharing your perspectives, concerns, and recommendations. This platform is an open dialogue and your input will contribute to the refinement of all the documents we are presenting here today to better serve the interests of our country at large.

**I thank you.**