



**NEW YEAR 2022
MINISTER'S STAFF ADDRESS**

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

**VIRTUAL MEETING
10 FEBRUARY 2022**

TIME: 09:00

"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;

A Very Good Morning,

First and foremost, let me take this opportunity to welcome you all from your well - deserved holidays and I hope you all had a wonderful festive season. It is therefore my utmost wish to you all to have a happy and healthy New Year, 2022. Allow me further to appreciate you all for your hard work and commitments demonstrated during the past year. The pandemic halted most of our activities however we have persevered. As you are aware, COVID-19 is still with us; and I urge all of you to adhere to health protocols at all times. Many lives were lost since the advent of the pandemic and it is indeed by the grace of God that we did not have casualties that fell victim of the pandemic; and it is my sincere hope that we will remain healthy as this year prevail with the pandemic amongst us.

As we are **reimagining** as a country and as a Ministry in particular, we must look at what lies ahead in terms of delivering on our mandate for the betterment of the lives of many Namibians. We were challenged by various impediments which deterred us from fully delivering on our set targets among others, the limited budget however we should resolve to innovate to do more with less to accomplish our mission.

Despite, the COVID-19 pandemic, the economic challenges facing our country and the globe as well as budget constraints that our Ministry experienced during the current financial year, notable successes and achievements were attained during the past year. Those milestones among others are as follow in no chronological order:

“Growth at Home”

1. In order to create a conducive and competitive environment for business growth,

- As part of our legal and regulatory mandate we have finalised and tabled the NIPA Act in Parliament last year following all due processes. The Act was rebranded "**Namibia Investment Promotion and Facilitation Bill**" from "Namibia Investment Promotion Act" in order to accommodate the establishment of the Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board (NIPDB). We have all witnessed the unsubstantiated outcry that followed which culminated in the withdrawal of the Bill to undergo another process. I therefore urge all of us to provide the necessary support to address the issues raised in the Bill as well as finalising the accompanying regulations before re-tabling in Parliament soon.
- The Ministry launched the Revised National Quality Policy 2020-2025 on the 23 April 2021 to improve the business environment and the quality of products and services being locally manufactured, imported and exported, and in doing so, boost investor's confidence. Businesses today, particularly on the international market are required to meet standardized quality requirements.
- The Ministry further launched the High-level Inter-Ministerial Core Group and the Technical Committee on the 21 October 2021. The High-level inter-Ministerial Core Group and the Technical Committee aimed at spearheading the implementation of the revised National Quality Policy 2020 -2025 by executing the key functions.
- Launched the National Consumer Protection Policy 2020-2025 on the 22 September 2021.
- Hosted successful engagements with stakeholders pertaining to the Property Practitioner's Bill in June 2021.
- We receive comments for incorporation by Cabinet Committee on Legislation (CCL) on the Namibia Property Practitioner Bill. Public consultations were held especially in Khomas and Erongo Region on this

Bill. I am aware that NEAB is going through policy transformation, however I urge NEAB to finalise this bill within the coming financial year of 2022/2023.

- The finalisation of the amendment of Liquor Act is at an advanced stage.
- Equally, we are also busy finalising the National Consumer Protection Bill. I urge Namibia Competition Commission (NaCC) to finalise this crucial bill in the coming financial year as well.
- From an Institutional perspective, the Ministry has initiated three key interventions-a Start - Up Hub and Digital Centre, EMPRETEC Namibia as well as an SDG Impact Facility. In terms of Programme specific interventions, the Ministry along with various partners carried out various programmes such as: Charcoal trainings for SMEs in collaboration with the Namibia Charcoal Association. So far 40 MSMEs has received training in the charcoal value chain. Our aim is to train at least 100 MSMEs. 15 of those were done in 2021. Gemstone Trainings for MSMEs and youth, the Ministry has so far trained over 200 beneficiaries since 2010 and of which at least 60 found employment in the diamond polishing and cutting sector. We trained another 25 beneficiaries in 2021 and of which 16 are now placed in employment and hope to train 5 of them as Trainer of Trainers this year.
- Through the "Pitching for Resilience" program a collaboration with GIZ Namibia, based on the "Pitching for Recovery" format, Participating MSMEs receive advice, support and a grant for the economic recovery of their company. Pitching for Resilience distributed grants of between 6 and 60 thousand N\$ to 840 MSMEs in all 14 regions of Namibia by December 2021.

2. In order to improve manufacturing base and realise industrialisation in Namibia,

- As a Ministry, we have developed the legal frameworks around the Special Economic Zones (SEZ) Policy; and the policy has already undergone public consultation through physical meetings and written submissions. Let us

therefore speed up all the pending activities to ensure the completion of this policy.

- The Ministry is waiting for the response from the Ministry of Public Enterprise and subsequently Office of Attorney-General on the International Trade Management Bill (ITMB) before we could re-submit to CCL.

3. In order to promote and secure market access of Namibian products across Africa and the globe at large,

- The Ministry participated in various trade negotiations at International level such as OACP and WTO level as well as at the continental level through negotiations of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) as well as regionally under SADC and SACU.
- Launched Namibia's Online Import and Export System (IMEX) - a digital platform for trade facilitation that enable traders to submit online permit applications. The objective of the tool is to streamline and ease cross border trading.
- Launched GS1 Namibia Barcode Centre - Namibia's own product identification code (numeral and characters) attached / allocated to products and services locally produced. Namibia will now be able to administer, facilitate and allocate bar codes which is 631.
- Launched AGOA Utilization Strategy - the strategy seeks to boost economic cooperation and trade between Namibia and USA. It focuses on how Namibia can secure market and grow its exports to USA by taking advantage of preferential trade under the AGOA facility. Under this program, Namibia secured a market for Charcoal and exported about 350 tons to USA. Additionally, Namibia has been able to secure a market for firewood and exported two consignments to Dubai.
- We successfully launched the Phase 2 of the 'Buy Local, Grow Namibia' Campaign during May 2021; the campaign is progressing well and I implore on Namibia Trade Forum to double our efforts and make sure that this campaign culminate in our local produce finding shelf space while sensitising Namibians to consume what we produce in order to grow our economy. I Namibian products on shelves-space of our retailers countrywide.

Our priority areas for this year 2022 are amongst the followings:

- The finalisation of the Special Economic Zones Policy and subsequently the law and regulations;
- The Metrology Bill This Bill which is aimed to provide for the regulation on the national system of units of measurements in legal and trade metrology will be tabled during the current session of Parliament after it was certified by Attorney General last year.
- Finalisation of key Sectoral Masterplans such as on the Poultry, Automotive and Mineral Beneficiation Implementation Strategy;
- The finalisation of the School Uniform design phase and immediate engagement of production phase;
- Finalisation of the commissioning and installation phase of the Invader Bush Processing Plant at Otjiwarongo, in partnership with UNIDO;
- Cement the establishment of the endowment fund for the SDG Impact Facility.
- Roll out entrepreneurial trainings under EMPRETEC NAMIBIA.
- Finalise the construction of the Start-up Hub centre at the Bokamoso Centre in Katutura, Windhoek.
- I want to see the finalisation of SME and Industrial Parks by NIDA without delays. Completion of Industrial and SME Parks under the sites and premises especially in Opuwo, Omaruru and Tsumeb is very critical.
- Fully operationalise the Integrated Client Service Facility to improve Namibia's competitiveness ranking by addressing ease of doing business.
- Finalisation of the Informal Economy and entrepreneurial Policy
- Finalisation and Tabling of the National Property Practitioners Bill (NEAB)
- Amendment of the company registration Bill and Copy rights Bill (BIPA)
- Implementation of the Revised National Quality Policy and development of the National Standardization Strategy.
- Promulgation of the Competition Act (NaCC)

- Finalization of the Consumer Protection Bill and Roll out a Consumer Education Campaign.
- Promulgation of the Liquor Amendment Bill.
- Implementation of the Revised National Quality Policy
- Finalisation various pending trade agreements
- Launch the National AfCFTA Implementation Strategy and Action Plan that will drive our implementation and enable Namibia to take full advantage of market access in the continent.
- Develop Namibia's Export Trade Promotion Strategy - to promote and secure more/ new markets for Namibian products.
- Finalise the National Trade in Goods and Trade in Services Policies - that will serve as guiding documents for Namibia's trade in goods and services engagements.
- Completion of the regional office in Nkurenkuru – Kavango West Region
- Ensuring adequate funding to Commercial Offices to ensure smooth operation.

I therefore direct that we must all provide monthly progress reports on all our activities. Let us also identify critical policy issues as they come up and all policy initiatives must be submitted and filter through all necessary channels of the Ministry. Let us all remain cognisant of the prevailing budgetary constraints therefore I expect each Agency under the Ministry, Commercial Offices, Divisions and Department to submit proposals on their cost cutting measures. While we are at the very beginning of the year, I urge the management of the Ministry to serve this nation with dedication, courage and commitment to the best of our abilities while maintaining our core values of: *teamwork, transparency, innovation, professionalism, integrity and accountability.*

I also urge our Agencies [NIDA, BIPA, NaCC, NSI] to deliver on their mandate. I want to see you all delivering on yours business and strategic plan; and further meeting your goals and objectives as agencies of this Ministry.

“Growth at Home”

Equally, I urge all department to hit the ground running in executing their duties. Administration, as you are called 'General Services' beef up your administration issues so that you create a conducive environment for all of us to operate on, whether is cleaning our offices, providing printing papers all the time, avoiding delay in payments for utilities, this year I don't want to hear any of our office being disconnected whether is electricity or water or telephone or internet. You are the heart of this Ministry, if you start limping, we will all be affected.

The year 2021 has been a challenging year due to Covid-19 pandemic, travel bans and again due to the fact that the 4th wave picked up and hindered our recovery progress. All these issues impacted the economic activities in the country especially that it happened when the world economic growth was expected to recover. However, despite all the challenges, as a Ministry, we have striven to fast-track programmes, activities, and service delivery to ensure that our mandate as a Ministry is achieved yet considering the limited resources at our disposal.

Let us try our level best to 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