



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF INDUSTRIALISATION AND TRADE

KEYNOTES ADDRESS

BY

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

LAUNCH: BUY LOCAL, GROW NAMIBIA CAMPAIGN

01 OCTOBER 2020, 10H00

UN HOUSE, WINDHOEK

- 1. DIRECTOR OF THE PROGRAMME: MS. JANE KANDETU**
- 2. MR. SEN PANG – UN NAMIBIA: RESIDENT COORDINATOR**
- 3. MS. PATRICIA HOEKSEMA – TEAM NAMIBIA BOARD MEMBER**
- 4. STACEY PINTO, THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF NAMIBIA TRADE
FORUM AND YOUR ABLE TEAM**
- 5. MR. TANGENI AMUPADHI – EDITOR IN CHIEF: THE NAMIBIAN
NEWSPAPER**
- 6. EMINENT SPEAKERS AND PARTICIPANTS**
- 7. DISTINGUISHED INVITED GUESTS;**
- 8. FRIENDS FROM THE MEDIA;**
- 9. LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,**

It is my profound gratitude that I am here today to witness the buy Namibia campaign launch. A platform started to promote local products consumption. I begin my statement in the spirit of appreciating all Namibian entrepreneurs and manufacturers who are working very hard to ensure that we continuously enjoy our proudly Namibian products despite the various challenges faced every day. As a Ministry of Industrialisation and Trade, we are doing all we can to ensure that there is indeed “Growth at Home” to grow and prosper, and our point of departure is really to ensure that Namibian made products have market access both locally and internationally.

Director of Ceremony,

Today we launch a national campaign to support the recovery of Namibia’s local businesses by calling on all Namibians to #GoLocal and #GrowNamibia by purchasing local products first. The campaign aims to help Namibian businesses promote their products and services and encourages Namibian’s to support their community by shopping locally.

The dynamics of COVID – 19 which we have observed has had a hard knock since early March when the World Health Organisation declared the COVID-19 outbreak a global pandemic. The Government of Namibia acted quickly by declaring a State of Emergency and issuing order for strict physical distancing and for businesses. As these restrictions were slowly lifted, the impact to local business has been dramatic.

The coronavirus pandemic has a created an existential crisis for not only Namibia but across the world as well as to locally owned business, which are the backbone of the nation’s economy. The Ministry of Industrialisation and Trade is mostly regarded as the centralized point for all resources being offered to businesses by different levels of Government as well as local and regional support organizations. The Ministry called on its’ agencies to drive the revival of the local economy and the concept of the “Buy Namibia Campaign” came to be.

In particular MIT has done extensive work during the pandemic to strengthen the productive capacity of local manufacturers and other businesses. Among others, the Ministry has made available the standards and specifications for manufacturing of face masks and sanitisers including working with local SME manufacturers to produce public face masks, provision of relief grants to SMEs and hygienic kits to informal traders. The Ministry is further collaborating with the City of Windhoek to upgrade informal traders' facilities and infrastructures for ease of adherence to COVID – 19 pandemic regulations. These are but just a few initiatives which the Ministry continues to implement as the pandemic unfolds and in ensuring that local capacity is enhanced.

The campaign will highlight the vital role of local businesses in our nation's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. At this juncture, allow me to thank our campaign partners such as the United Nations Namibia, The Namibia Trade Forum, Team Namibia, The Namibian Newspaper as the official media partner and Weathermein as the partner who sponsored branding and graphics.

The Buy Namibia campaign recognises the crucial role SMEs, women owned businesses and local businesses in general play in creating jobs, strengthening community cohesion and build a long lasting culture of LOCAL FIRST which helps local entrepreneurs thrive. The Buy Namibia initiative is crucially engineered to help local SMEs access retail space. I am confidently informed that there will be phase II of this initiative which will entail a call out to all SMEs that are looking into accessing retail space. The initiative will be a working workshop with retailers as well as the Namibia Standards Institution to help SMEs understand what it takes to have their products shelved in key retail stores.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The Buy Namibia campaign would not be possible without the partnership with our private sector. I want to give a special recognition to the retail partner members of the Namibia Retail Charter Council who under the stewardship of Mr. David Namalenga as Chairperson, have come on board as partners for this initiative namely Spar Namibia, Woolworths, Food Lovers Market , Pick n Pay , OK Foods, Agra and Shoprite/Checkers. These retailers not only create a jobs, they have invested extensively in procuring locally manufactured and produced goods.

A special mention must also go to Team Namibia for their extensive work over the years in mobilising Namibian consumers to buy local, as well as driving the promotion of the production of quality local products and services. These initiatives has enabled Namibians to advance their own economically sustainable future by promoting the use of local products and services.

Governments, foundations, and non-profits everywhere are scrambling to help local, small and medium businesses stay afloat during this crisis but everyone can help. I call on each and every Namibian to support this campaign, keep shopping safely, buy gift cards, buy something extra, support workers in restaurants by tipping a bit extra if you can, contribute to charities – let us grow Namibia from the inside and out.

Please go on social media and share an image of you with your Namibian products, if you are a local business and want to promote the goods you are selling, tag the campaign team by using the hashtags #BuyLocal #GrowLocal. Fellow Namibians, now is the time to really Go Local when buying products and services, to grow local, small businesses can grow their business, create local jobs and help their communities. More than ever before, we need to step in showing our support by buying from local, independently owned businesses.

The ultimate goal of the Buy Namibia campaign is to create a thriving local campaign by maximizing the potential of local businesses and increasing their market share and most importantly, creating the environment for Namibia to become a self-sustaining economy.

I thank you