

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**STATEMENT BY HON. LUCIA IPUMBU, MINISTER OF
INDUSTRIALISATION AND TRADE**

**HANDOVER OF FACE MASKS AND FACE SHIELDS TO THE
MoHSS**

16 OCTOBER 2020

**VENUE: MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
(MoHSS)**

Hon. Dr. Kalumbi Shangula – Minister of Health and Social Services

The Chinese Embassy Representative

Members of the media

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning.

It is a great pleasure to join you here today, to handover the donation of medical supplies in support of the various Namibian Government's national efforts in response to COVID-19.

The entire world is battling with the threat of COVID-19 with millions of people infected and hundreds of thousands having succumbed to the disease. The situation in Namibia has not been much different, with thousands of people infected and more than 130 deaths. The pandemic has changed how we conduct our daily lives and, in some cases, generated fear and uncertainties in our communities. A pandemic of this magnitude requires concerted efforts from the national and international community to implement comprehensive strategies to suppress transmission, save lives, and minimize the social and economic impact of the virus.

The Ministry of Industrialisation and Trade (MIT) has done extensive work during the pandemic to strengthen the productive capacity for the much needed medical supplies in response to the pandemic. 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 and provision of hygienic kits and masks to informal traders.

The Ministry has last month acquired modern 3 - D Printers to be set up at FabLab at NUST. The training of the operators of these machines is ongoing after which we will start the manufacturing of medical masks locally in collaboration with stakeholders. 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 in the fight against the virus.

These initiatives are carried out in collaboration with various stakeholders. **The MIT is therefore donating today a total of 10,000 medical masks and 1,000 face shields to the MoHSS.** These much needed supplies will help frontline healthcare workers to provide care for patients with COVID-19 and strengthen public health capacity in Namibia to contain the pandemic and minimize its impact. Moreover, this donation will boost the collective effort aimed at managing and curtailing the spread of the deadly virus especially the Frontliners.

The donations were made possible by the Chinese Embassy in Namibia, which has continuously extended various support to the Namibian government to provide critical health supplies for healthcare facilities nationwide. In addition, the MIT through its commercial offices has provided the much needed support by seeking donations in the respective countries where they are

posted. A special mention must therefore be made to both the MIT commercial offices in London and Berlin who played a vital role in acquiring the 3 – printers and face shields and continue to carry out other mitigating activities needed to fight the impact of COVID – 19.

The MIT recognises and applauds the efforts of the government, particularly the Ministry of Health and Social Services, and other line ministries, in working with partners to provide high-quality, affordable care to the all citizens. Specifically, we commend the leadership and coordination that have produced measures to contain the COVID-19 pandemic.

We also recognize all Namibian frontline healthcare professionals who are working hard to keep us all protected from COVID-19. These health workers who provide emergency care, while not losing sight of their daily essential life-saving health responsibilities, need the continued support and encouragement of all of us.

I would like to also take this opportunity to remind us all to reflect on the progress we have made and the lessons we have learned, and to recommit ourselves to doing everything we can to save lives.

As MIT we will continue our commitment to helping Namibia respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. To do this, we need to remain vigilant and continue our good work together. I look forward to continuing our effective collaboration.

I thank you.