

# REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**STATEMENT BY HONOURABLE ROYAL J. K.**

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**DEPUTY MINISTER: MARGINALISED  
COMMUNITIES**

**17TH SESSION OF THE PERMANENT FORUM ON  
INDIGENOUS ISSUES**

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**Your Excellency the Chair of the Permanent Forum on  
Indigenous Issues  
Your Excellencies  
Dear Delegates**

Namibia would like to congratulate The Chair for your election and wish to assure you of Namibia's full support during the session.

**Madam Chair,**

The situations of marginalized communities in Namibia has been a challenging one to address. Developmental interventions have at times been rendered ineffective by several factors such as inappropriateness of interventions that have created structural dependency; segregation and isolation of marginalized communities; tensions with other communities; alcohol abuse and other social problems; remote and nomadic lifestyles; neglect to build social institutions and leadership structures of marginalized communities; lack of supplementary support and inadequate extension services; low-levels of education among marginalized communities; lack of culture to keep and accumulate assets and lack of dedicated strategies that defines integration and mainstreaming, which results in an ad hoc approach to the plight of marginalized communities. Data on marginalized communities is particularly difficult to obtain, as by law data collection by ethnicity is prohibited and some marginalized communities are sub-groups within a larger ethnic group.

**Madam Chair,**

Namibia is however very committed to improving the lives of those left furthers behind, including many in the Marginalized communities. Alongside our commitment to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Namibia continues to provide various social and economic services to our marginalized communities. Namibia also continues to celebrate the International Day of the World's Indigenous People on the 09 August which affords the marginalized communities the opportunity to come together around the country.

In 2005, the Government of Namibia established the San

Development Programmed for the San, Ovatie and Ovatjimba communities as Marginalized groups in the Office of the Prime Minister. The main objective of this Program is to integrate San, Ovatie and Ovatjimba communities into the mainstream of the economy and society by providing access to services they would not otherwise have due to the virtue of living in remote areas.

**Madam Chair,**

To integrate Marginalized communities, the Government has identified and implemented Education, Land Resettlement, Livelihood Support, and the Special San Feeding Programs as key development components to poverty eradication amongst these communities.

Access to education remains our highest priority with regards to providing services to indigenous peoples. Within my department, at least 60% of the budget goes to educational activities, including for paying for student fees, monthly allowances and student accommodation.

With access to educations, we know that many indigenous communities are in vulnerable positions because oftentimes, their native languages are not used as a medium of instruction or first language. Namibia is therefore currently working on making different San languages, including Haillom, !Kung, Jul'hoansi, ≠Aulleisi and !Xoo part of the curriculum in schools as from primary school. This is important for several reasons, least of all that it enables children from these marginalized communities to hold onto their mother tongue in increasingly mono and bilingual societies.

**Madam Chair,**

Access to land also plays a vital role in the development of these communities in Namibia, therefore, the provision of land to the landless is regarded as an important development aspect and the government continues its program of resettling marginalized peoples on different farms that the government acquires.

At all the resettlement farms and village- post resettlement support

continues to be availed to the communities. These includes, Agronomic and Horticultural projects, distribution of livestock's, access to water and housing, education and health facilities, supplies of farming materials and equipment's, and general provision of post resettlement support;

**Madam Chair,**

In 2017, the government together with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs held a consultative conference in Namibia on the drafting of a White Paper Policy on Indigenous Peoples. We would like to acknowledge that we need to do more as a country for the marginalized communities but due to limited resources, we can only just implement actions within our means. We therefore, urge the United Nations through its agencies to continue and strengthen its support to member states in the implementation of its Programs. We also call upon the international community to support the efforts of governments as they strive to improve the lives of marginalized communities.

**I Thank You**