

**Republic of Namibia**



STATEMENT BY HONOURABLE ROYAL J. K. /UI/O/OO, MP

DEPUTY MINISTER: MARGINALISED COMMUNITIES

16<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS  
ISSUES

**PRESS CONFERENCE ON THE ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE  
THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLE**

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## **Good Afternoon,**

The General Assembly, in its resolution 65/198 of 21 December 2010, decided to organise a high level plenary meeting of the General Assembly, to be known World Conference on Indigenous Peoples that took place on the 22 – 23 Sept 2014 here at the United Nations, which was first of its kind. The objective of this conference was in order to share perspective and best practices on the realisation on the rights of indigenous peoples, including pursuing the objectives of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

- Namibia was pleased to have participated in this Conference.
- Namibia welcomes the efforts of the international community to address the rights of indigenous peoples and expresses full support and solidarity with indigenous peoples of the world.
- Namibia voted for the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in 2007 with other 143 member states of United Nations.
- The Government of the Republic of Namibia recognized that the San, Ovatie, Ovatjimba communities of Namibia are particularly marginalized groups and they have been identified in various Namibian laws and policies as groups that merit special attention and concern.
- Currently, the Division Marginalised Communities is operating in the Presidency headed by Hon. Royal J.K Ui/o/oo, Deputy Minister for Marginalised Communities. This is the first time in the history of our country that a representative from the marginalised communities has been appointed at a ministerial level by H.E Dr Hage G Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia to head this Division.
- Education, Resettlement and Livelihood Support programs were identified as key development components to poverty alleviation amongst these communities. Hence, the government has prioritised them as key priorities towards addressing the socio-economic situation of the marginalised communities in a spirit of Harambee Prosperity Plan and that nobody must left out in the Namibian House.
- These Programs also enjoyed throughout the years the continuous support and positive relations with local public and private stakeholders, and

multilateral organisations such as the ILO, Spanish Corporation (AECID), and Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA).

- In 2012, Namibian Government also invited the Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Peoples to visit Namibia and would like to thank him for his positive reporting on our achievements and his recommendations.
- There are 5 x Traditional Authorities from marginalised communities recognised by government which are also members of the Traditional Authorities Council
- This year 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.
- On the implementation of the Human Rights mandated area, the Constitution of Namibia provides for the Bill of Rights and all Namibian are treated equally before the laws and are allowed to practice their own culture without any discrimination.
- We would like to acknowledge that we need to do more as a country for the marginalised communities but due to limited resources, we can only just implement actions within our means.
- We therefore, urge the United Nations and United Nations Agencies to continue and strengthen its support to member states in the implementation of its Programs.
- We also urge the United Nations system to continue with the implementation of equal representations of all indigenous peoples from different continents in its decision making process.
- In conclusion, as we are gathering here as peoples of the World, at the United Nations celebrating the tenth anniversary of United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Republic of Namibia would once again affirm and commit itself to the implementation and ratification of all the United nations Declarations, Conventions, and Treaties as a Member state.

## **PROGRAMME AND ACTIVITIES EXECUTED BY THE DIVISION**

### **1. EDUCATION SUPPORT**

The high illiteracy rate amongst these communities are receiving attention to ensure that learners/Students from these communities are having access to education like all Namibians. The division coordinate amongst others the identification of beneficiaries for education support, facilitate enrolment of students in tertiary institutions and render financial, transportation support to learners and students. The Office also coordinate projects for construction of permanent building for schools, early childhood centres, and teachers houses at various settlement centres. The estimated budget used for this education support program constitutes 60% of the total allocated budget to Division Marginalised Communities during 2015/2016. It is worth mentioning that the current number of learners and students from these communities under the support of this Programme is standing at approximately 500 for the year 2016.

### **2. RESETTLEMENT AND RELOCATION**

Access to land 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.

- It is delighting to mention that the Government through the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement has procured various farms for the resettlement of San Communities in Outjo area. These include farms namely: Seringkop, Koppies, Ballalaika, Mooiplaas, Toevlug, Nuchas, Werda, where more than 800 households have been resettled.
- In addition, Farm Ondera in Oshikoto Region has also been purchased for the resettlement of approximately 350 x households San communities from Oshivelo resettlement area.
- The government has also resettled more than 278 households San community in Otjozondjupa region at Farm Uitkomst. These total to more than 65000 hectares of resettlement areas for these communities so far.

- During this period, the government has also resettled San communities in communal areas such Likwaterera (Kavango East Region), Oshandi (Ohangwena Region), and also in Omaheke Region.
- 20 x houses project for construction in Corridor 17 (Omaheke Region) has been launched.
- In Kunene Region (Epupa Constituency), the Ovaherero and Ovahimba communities have been resettled in three villages namely: Otjomurru, Otjikondo, and Otjiyenda.
- 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, access to water and housing, education and health facilities, supplies of farming materials and equipment's, and general provision of post resettlement support;

### **3. LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT**

The provision of coffins to these communities has been identified by the government to make sure that communities are receiving dignified burials and an amount for the provisioning of coffins is not less than N\$ 80 000 per month.

- Due to extreme poverty amongst the marginalised communities, the Office has continuous to distribute the food rations amongst these communities under the San Feeding Programme on a monthly basis.
- Income generation projects have been implemented in almost all resettlement farms and villages such as garden projects, wood projects, etc...
- The Division is also facilitating the employment opportunities for San, Ovaherero and Ovahimba young people in the private sector as well as in various Ministries including the Police, Namibia Defence Force and also in the National Youth Services.

**I Thank You**