



ADDRESS

BY

HON. MAUREEN HINDA,

**DEPUTY MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
AND COOPERATION,**

ON THE

**OCCASION OF THE GALA DINNER TO CELEBRATE
AFRICA DAY,**

25 JUNE 2015

GIVEN AT SAFARI COURT HOTEL, WINDHOEK

Directors of Ceremony
Chairperson of National Council Hon. Asser Kapere & Madam
Honourable Bishop Zephania Kameeta
Honourable Mc Henry Venaani
Honourable Members of Parliament,
Dean African Diplomats
Your Excellencies Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
Director of Nipam Joe Diesho
Distinguished Invited Guests,
Members of the Media,
Ladies and Gentlemen, Fellow Pan-Africanist

It is an honour for me to represent His Excellency President Dr. Hage G. Geingob here this evening.

I would like to acknowledge everyone present, and on behalf of our President, commend the African Diplomatic Corps for organising this dinner event. This is truly a reflection of the collective appreciation of our African identity and the importance of the Africa Day. I am happy that this year our Africa Day celebration at the Sam Nujoma Stadium witness a strong turnout and we all appreciated the soccer match and looked forward to the match for next year.

African cuisine is an important aspect of our African culture and a projection of the diversity of the cultures and peoples of our continent. It is, therefore, fitting that we come together this evening to celebrate our identity and the founding of the

Organisation for African Unity (OAU) on 25 May 1963 at a gala dinner.

Africa Day accords us the opportunity to pay tribute to the heroes and heroines of our continent who made the ultimate sacrifice for our victory against colonialism and apartheid as well as the protection of African dignity. It is on Africa Day that we reflect on the state of the continent, together with the roles that we as individuals play in realising Africa's integration.

Ladies and gentlemen,

May we remind ourselves that at the turn of this century African Leaders declared the 21st Century as Africa's Century. Fifteen years down the line, we are yet to see tangible signs of the prospects for prosperity. Africa has the potential, we have what it takes to realize the Objectives and Targets as per Africa's Agenda 2063. It is our continued responsibility to pursue within the market economy, a window for social justice.

In fact, it is recognition of 2015 been declared the "Year of Women's Empowerment and Development towards Africa's Agenda 2063" by the African Union Assembly that I was offered to take this stage in the presence of Senior Cabinet Members, I am honoured.

As Africans, let us stand together to promote the principles engendered in this powerful statement, for gender parity and for

the involvement of women in the development of our national agendas, in peace building and conflict resolution.

It is on the same note, that two weeks ago the 25th Assembly of the African Heads of State and Government met in Johannesburg, South Africa. The major preoccupation of our Heads of State and Government was the First Implementation Plan of the Agenda 2063, as well as the process of ensuring that Africa takes full financial responsibility for its budget. This will also enable us Africans to take full responsibility for our programmes and projects. Following on from implementing the Agenda 2063, our leaders began the process.

The First Ten Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063 makes reference to development in several areas including the greater involvement of women and youth and the need for strengthening ownership, domestication and value addition to our resources by member states and regional institutions. As a pan-Africanist, I am particularly pleased that the Assembly has taken a major step in this direction by agreeing that 25% of raw materials originating from the African continent should henceforth be processed for value addition.

The AU Assembly also launched the **Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA)** in order to boost intra-African trade. It is a reflection of the mood across Africa that we are increasingly taking control of our resources and our trade.

**Honourable Members,
Your Excellencies,**

While the first 50 years of the OAU were dedicated to Africa's decolonisation, it is unfortunate however that, the people of Western Sahara are still denied their right to self-determination and independence. Namibia will continue to call on the Kingdom of Morocco to allow the people of Western Sahara to exercise their inalienable right to freedom and independence, and to discontinue its occupation of Western Sahara.

As we dedicate ourselves to our collective aspiration as embodied in the African Union, we commend our partners for their contribution towards a united and prosperous African Union.

Thank you to the African Group of Ambassadors and High Commissioners here in Windhoek for organising this auspicious event

I Thank You.