

**STATEMENT BY THE DPM AND MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION ON THE OCCASION OF GENERAL STAFF MEETING, 8 FEBRUARY 2017 AT 11H00**

Hon. Dr Peya Mushelenga Deputy Minister

Hon. Ms. Maureen Hinda Deputy Minister

Amb. Tuliameni Kalomoh, Special Advisor

Amb. Selma Ashipala-Musavyi, Permanent Secretary

Heads of Department and other members of Management

All Staff members of MIRCO

Ladies and Gentlemen of the media

**1. PLEASANTRIES**

The year have started in full swing and our work have commenced in earnest. Notwithstanding, let me take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy and Prosperous 2017 with the best of health. I trust that we all had a restful and joyous Festive Season and that we are in full mode of implementation and effective delivery. I also welcome back to headquarters all returning Foreign Service officials. I have no doubt, that during your diplomatic tour, you have broaden your knowledge and expertise and we look forward to your contribution as we continue to transform our Ministry into an entity of excellence. Let me wish to congratulate all of you who got promoted or confirmed in your positions. As you climb the ladder in your career or as you now have become full staff members, continue to work hard as you did during your probation. In the same vein, I welcome those who have joined the Ministry recently, we are looking forward to you injecting new energy into the work of our Institution.

**2. OVERVIEW OF THE REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM**

Namibia achieve her Independence 27 years ago, in the early nineties when the World was undergoing fundamental change. Fast forward to February 2017, we can safely say that there is movement and shift in our realm of operation, i.e. the

international system. At the continental level, the architecture of the Constitutive Act of the African Union was almost tested when the legitimately elected leader of The Gambia was sworn in as president in a neighbouring country, due to the outgoing President who almost thwarted the will of The Gambian people. After more than 20 years of voluntary exile from the OAU, Morocco joined the AU. The AU is having a new Chairperson of the Commission, so is the United Nations. In the USA, we have a new administration, sending waves across the world. The global economic slowdown is continuing and countries feeling the effects. Environmental is impeding sustainable development and Namibia is not left untouched on the home front, we have not received sufficient rains across the country and some of citizens are still facing water shortage.

These are just some of the domestic and international developments that we have to take into account as we chart our course for the New Year.

### **3. FOREIGN POLICY REVIEW**

Before I go further, let me take this opportunity to congratulate you all for having contributed to the successful holding of the Foreign Policy Review Conference. I was particularly impressed by the overwhelming interest shown by the public, especially the youth. Thanks to our collective efforts, the process is almost concluded and we are on course to submit the draft to Cabinet on schedule. This Review is timely as the International system is undergoing fundamental changes, both at Bilateral and Multilateral levels. The Conference brought to light many useful observations, new developments as well far reaching recommendations, which we need to take into account as we continue to optimize our Foreign Policy.

### **4. STRATEGIC PLAN AND PERFORMANCE AGREEMENTS**

Our Strategic Plan will come to an end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017. The first of April will mark the beginning of the New Strategic Plan 2017 – 2020. We must draw on all Policy documents to come up with a well versed and comprehensive Strategic Plan that will protect and promote Namibia's National interest as mandated by the Law of land. Let me take this opportunity to commend you all on your Performance Agreements and urge you to continue to implement them. I also urged you to continue submitting our quarterly reviews on the Performance Agreements on time.

Effective planning should always be accompanied by effective implementation and monitoring in order to detect where improvement is needed.

## 5. BILATERAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION

The past year was marked by resource challenges that hampered the execution of some of our programs. As a result some Official visits, Joint Commissions and other scheduled programs could not take place. However, we managed to have Joint Working Groups and Joint Commissions of Cooperation, such as the Inaugural JCC with Mali, JCCs with Ghana and Cuba, a Bi-National Commission with South Africa, and bilateral consultations with Algeria, among many others. At the ministerial level, we received several Ministers of Foreign Affairs / International Relations, and the two Deputy Ministers. Myself, I visited countries such as Belarus, Serbia, Russian Federation, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and Algeria. I was able to accompany H.E Dr. Hage G. Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia to bilateral and multilateral visits. While the Deputy Minister Dr. Peya Mushelenga visited Venezuela, Kenya, The Gambia, Cuba and Botswana, and Hon. Maureen Hinda also undertook visits to Kenya, China, Equatorial Guinea and United Kingdom. These visits were in pursuit of stronger bilateral relations. Some have resulted in MoUs and Agreements signed, aimed at strengthening economic and political ties which will yield significant benefits for our country. We also opened an Embassy in Algeria.

During 2017, we must combine vigour with innovation, as such we may consider to substitute some of the JCCs and Working Groups, with targeted bilateral visits that are less costly, but equally efficient. In this regard, we need to focus more on developmental activities in accordance with our national development priorities. It is not the quantity of agreements that matter, but impact of the implementation of these bilateral agreements on the lives of our people and the region as a whole. Furthermore, the intensity of bilateral cooperation between Namibia and her development and trading partners depend on the chain of coordination and initiatives between the Ministry and the Missions.

Domestically, it should also be understood that contact with the line Ministries is not only through letters signed by the Permanent Secretary, but very important to have **contact persons** in the line Ministries that we can contact directly. People to people contact is essential in following up issues.

**International Trade**  
**Economic diplomacy**

In our Strategic Plan, the promotion of trade and investment is a major objective. Our Performance Agreement also points to the importance of economic diplomacy. Together with Missions, General Consulates and Honorary Consuls we must continue to mobilise investors to take advantage of the investment opportunities in our country. We have also to encourage Namibians to have business interest outside Namibia to advance our Policy on economic diplomacy. We need to follow up on the successful invest in Namibia Conference that was held last year in Windhoek, as well as His Excellency's visits to different countries.

## **6. MULTILATERAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION**

### **SADC**

With regard to Multilateral Relations and Cooperation, let me point out that, at the regional level, in the SADC we adopted the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP), which is a comprehensive development and implementation framework guiding the Regional Integration agenda of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) over a period of fifteen years (2005-2020). It is designed to provide clear strategic direction with respect to the SADC programs, projects and activities in line with the SADC Common Agenda and strategic priorities, as enshrined in the SADC Treaty of 1992. The ultimate objective of the plan is to deepen regional integration, with a view to accelerate poverty eradication and the attainment of socio-economic development.

### **AGENDA 2063**

With regard to the African Union, Vision of Africa expressed in Agenda 2063 is one of an Africa whose development is people-driven, especially relying on the potential offered by its women and youth. Agenda 2063 builds on, and seeks to accelerate the implementation of past and existing continental initiatives for growth and sustainable development, therefore its implementation is crucial for Africa's development.

Namibia has embarked on a process of incorporating Agenda 2063 and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) or Agenda 2030 in our 5<sup>th</sup> National Development Plan (NDP5) that is near finalization. Which means domesticating

both Agenda 2063 and the Agenda 2030. The Harambee Prosperity Plan, which is a shared vision representing a Namibia where everyone feels a sense of belonging, where everyone is presented with a fair opportunity to prosper in an inclusive manner, is a mechanism aimed at facilitating the implementation of Vision 2010 as well as Agenda 2063 for sustainable development to be realised.

### **AFRICA PEER REVIEW MECHANISM (APRM)**

As you know Namibia has decided to accede to the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). The Mechanism is a bold and unique African initiative. As a country, we are proud to have taken that step. APRM is geared towards fostering the adoption of policies, standards and practices that lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development, and accelerated economic integration, an approach we need to achieve the noble aspirations and Developmental Goals of Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030.

### **NEPAD PRESIDENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE CHAMPION INITIATIVE (PICI)**

In our quest to promote regional integration through infrastructure development, President Hage Geingob, has accepted an invitation to become one of the Champions on the continent to promote infrastructure development in Africa. At the same time, Namibia submitted a consolidated proposal to the NEPAD-PICI Technical Committee consisting of the following projects, which were accepted: Katima Mulilo Railway-Line Development Project, the Baynes Hydro-Power Project, the Trans-Kalahari Railway-Line Development Plan and the Trans-Orange River Highway and Rail. It is therefore expected that Namibia will be formally admitted to the PICI during the AU Summit in July 2017.

### **THE UN REFORM**

The democratisation of the UN is very important to ensure a fair international system. Hence a need for the reform of the UN Security Council.

Against this background, Namibia reaffirmed the support to Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration on the reform of the UN Security Council.

## 7. LEGAL

What we do in MIRCO has a substantial legal dimension. It is therefore important that we continue to provide technical guidance on ratification of international agreements and conventions. What is of essence is that accession to conventions and agreements should meet the needs of Namibia and we should be able to fulfill our obligations. We cannot and should not accede to these instruments simply because other have done so. It is therefore pertinent that we continue to shape our legal expertise, and monitor developments around these international instruments.

## 8. INFORMATION AND RESEARCH

The public outreach that took us across many corners of our country during the previous year will continue. We must continue to engage in **public diplomacy** by communicating effectively our policy on international relations and cooperation to the public.

The communication methods set up to communicate with internal and external stakeholders such as, Email, WhatsApp Media group, Face book Page, E-newsletter, Website, Trade Fairs & exhibitions, Brochures & Pamphlets, Resource centre/ Library are all welcomed developments.

The **Ministry's website** plays an important role, considering the fact that it is the first point on "entry" for anyone who wishes to know more about the Ministry. Timely and constant update of the content of the website is therefore necessary. As part of my Performance Agreement, the number of Namibian serving in international organizations must be increased. Against that background, I still demand that international organization's advertised posts be posted in the Ministry's website.

## 9. ADMINISTRATION

### OPTIMISING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

With the rapid Technological advancement, it is incumbent upon us all to make full use of IT. While I continue to encourage staff to use the new tools at our disposal, it a must that official records must exist. I have also noted that, we need to improve in the communication of information between the Ministry and other government agencies and institutions in the country.

Communication among the Ministry, O/M/As and other stakeholders should be handled within five working days including acknowledgement, processing and feedback. It has come to my attention that some communications take up to a month to reach an office in Namibia. I believe with the coming into force of the customer service charter this situation will be something of the past.

## **DISCIPLINE AND CODE OF CONDUCT**

We together are the projection of Namibia's image, whether in Namibia or abroad. We individually and collectively mirror what Namibia is. It is therefore important that at all times we carry ourselves in a befitting manner. Indiscipline will not be tolerated. As indicated last year, we now have engaged the Public Service and we have the Draft Code of Conduct for MIRCO. I expect all staff members to abide by that code. As a highly esteemed Ministry, we should take pride in being part thereof. We should continue to uphold service standards and to conduct ourselves diligently and professionally. The observance of the provisions of regulations, staff rules and other directives, should be continually upheld. Supervisors and individuals alike, should take ownership of ensuring that only appropriate behavior is portrayed as a staff member of MIRCO.

## **POSTING POLICY**

We continue to successfully implement our Posting Policy and optimize our foreign service. It is however important that we not only perform well in preparation for posting but also while we are at post. In the spirit of Harambee, we must pull together at Headquarters as well as at Missions. Which now bring me to our Code of Conduct in the Foreign Service. At Foreign Missions there is staff from various O/M/As, but only one Head of Mission.

## **ROTATION**

Every staff member in MIRCO should be versatile. Hence in April this year, many of you are going to be rotated to be exposed to new issues and situations as well as specialization. A good diplomat is supposed to be versatile, only then shall we succeed as a Ministry and the country at large. Rotation is highly necessary, especially now that we are creating a culture doing more with less.

## **OVERTIME**

With regard to overtime let me once again state that henceforth overtime shall be fixed. Notwithstanding, we must ensure that all work is performed and streamlined.

## **WELLNESS CENTRE**

We can only deliver service when we are enjoying good health and wellness. I appreciate the proposals on how to bring about general wellness in the Ministry. Indeed drinking more water than soda is healthy and so is walking up the stairs than taking the elevator.

## **CAPACITY BUILDING AND SELF DEVELOPMENT**

The importance of capacity cannot be over emphasized despite the challenges encountered in implementing it. The Ministry however remains cognizant of the need to optimize human capital through capacity building and development, and will continue to foster partnerships to ensure that continued growth and development is sustained. International Relations are dynamic. They are not static. It therefore follows that we need to constantly be up to date with current affairs. We should sharpen our negotiations tools, our capacity to market our country and innovative ways to inform policy. To this end, we have engage NIPAM as well as our Bilateral and Multilateral cooperation partners to complement our efforts in availing the much needed training programs. We do not only learn by physically going out to foreign countries. We can build our capacity by using modern technology. That is online learning. Of course all these will be within the financial means available.

## **SERVICE DELIVERY, OPERATIONS AND PROCUREMENT OF GOODS AND SERVICES MUST MEET EXCELLENCE STANDARDS**

Namibia's economy is part of the global economy, as such we are not immune from global events. Therefore:

- The Ministry needs to exercise prudent financial discipline and to optimize available resources by reprioritizing its core budgetary provisions and to motivate employees to improve their performance, without compromising the Ministerial objectives. Such implies to do more with less, going forward.
- Let me reiterated that service rendering and service requests should done within turnaround times. Cooperation is sought from staff members when services and procurement is pursued. Limited financial resources or not, , we

must manage our resources carefully, we have people who are still living in poverty.

Effective cost cutting measures will be implemented to ensure adherence to the prudent management of resources for the entire Ministry. This includes key measures such as:

- The use of ICT to communicate, e.g. use of emails, as opposed to telephone calls when communicating especially with our Missions, within internet use protocol.
- Reduced printing, and only printing when necessary.
- The use of email to transmit correspondence and to avoid duplication by faxing of the same information.
- Reduction in the use of official vehicles for personal use
- Work redesign to optimize on work hours and reduce overtime as far as possible

## **OPTIMAL RECORD KEEPING AND REGISTRY SERVICES**

**Furthermore**, in order to streamline the effective record keeping, safeguard information and operations at the Registry, staff members are notified that procedural changes will be effected.

## **ENHANCING SAFETY AND SECURITY MEASURES IN THE BUILDING**

We live in a world of uncertainty and unpredictability. One can never be too safe and secure, hence the importance of security consciousness.

### **A commitment to excellence through our Customer Service Charter**

The Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation strives to deliver consistent professional, effective and efficient service delivery to our customers at all times. Hence, our Customer Service Charter expresses the set standards of service that can be expected when executing our duties. The Charter also provides a platform for our customers to provide feedback and suggestions on the service delivery standards that have been set. We therefore pledge and give assurance on delivering on our core values and mandate.

**I thank you**

**French      Merci**

**German     Danke**

**Arabic      Shukraan**

**Russian    Spasibo**

**Swahili    Asante**

**Portuguese Obrigada**

**Spanish    Gracias**

**Chinese    Xiexie**