

TOAST BY

HONOURABLE MS. MAUREEN MAGRETH HINDA

DEPUTY MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL

RELATIONS AND COOPERATION

ON THE OCCASION OF THE DIPLOMATS' DAY OF

THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

10TH FEBRUARY 2017

Your Excellency, Mr. Alexander Khudin,
Ambassador of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Namibia,
And Madame Khudin,
Hon. Deputy Minister, Dr. Peya Mushelenga
Honourable Ministers, and Members of Parliament,
Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
Members of the Russian Community in Namibia
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good afternoon, it is my distinct honour and privilege to extend my congratulations to the Russian Diplomatic Service and to celebrate with you today, 10th of February 2017, Diplomats' Day.

Today we are celebrating 468 years of effective diplomatic practice. On this day in 1549, the first foreign service institution was established in Russia – the Ambassadorial Office. It was set up by order of the Tsar of Russia, Ivan IV and it was headed by the church minister Ivan Mikhailovich Viskovatov, who was tasked to deal with "the work of ambassadors."

Russian diplomacy has over the years become a major factor in the promotion of international understanding and cooperation. We in Namibia are celebrating a diplomacy that advanced the right of nations to self-determination and that was instrumental in delivering freedom

and independence for our country. SWAPO and the people of Namibia enjoyed political, diplomatic and material support from the then Soviet Union that speeded up the independence of Namibia.

Your Excellency,

The Government and the people of Namibia are today celebrating longstanding ties of friendship that have persisted through thick and thin. I am proud to have witnessed and to have contributed in my own humble way to the consolidation and deepening of the relations between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Namibia.

In October last year, the Hon. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of International Relations and Cooperation paid an official visit to Moscow where she, inter alia, co-chaired the 6th Session of the Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation. That session was successful and saw the conclusion of key agreements, particularly in the area of mining.

Your Excellency,

The partnership between the Federation of Russia and the Republic of Namibia will go a long way in contributing to the social and economic development of Namibia as outlined in the Harambee Prosperity Plan and Vision 2030.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I invite you to join me in raising your glasses as we toast to the continued prosperity and growth of Russia and Namibia.

Spasiba – Thank you