

**ACCEPTANCE SPEECH BY THE PERMANENT SECRETARY  
OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND  
COOPERATION, ON RECEIVING A DECORATION FROM  
THE KINGDOM OF SPAIN, DURING THE SPANISH  
NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATION, 11 OCTOBER 2018**

**“Honourable Deputy Prime Minister and Minister,  
Your Excellency Ambassador Javier Romera and Madam  
Borggreve,  
Members of the Diplomatic Corps,  
Members of the Ashipala family  
Senior Government Officials,  
Friends of the media,  
Ladies and Gentlemen**

It is with great pleasure and humility that I stand here to accept this Order of Isabel la Católica

I would therefore like to thank the Government of the Kingdom of Spain, as well as everyone else who has been involved in organising this auspicious event, for honouring me with the Order of Isabel la Católica.

I feel honored because this gesture speaks to the longstanding association of the people of Namibia with the people of Spain. It is testimony to the growing bilateral relations and cooperation between our two countries and the importance we both attach to these. It behoves on me to preface my brief remarks by referring to our bilateral relations because without that I would not be standing here.

For, whatever I do in my professional life is informed by the foreign policy of Namibia. It is informed by the principles of friendship and solidarity, promotion of international understanding to minimize and

avoid conflict and to promote peace and stability for sustainable development.

I am touched and, indeed moved to have been chosen as a recipient of this prestigious Order on behalf of the Namibian nation. In accepting this honor, I wish to state that the Order is not just a tribute to me personally. It is also a commendation to the Namibian Government's efforts to create an inclusive society, globally. I have learned as a young diplomat that one does not have to be from a big country to make an impact in global diplomacy. You simply need to believe in multilateralism.

As a contribution to the global inclusive society, Namibia spearheaded the negotiations that led to the adoption of UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, during its presidency of the Council in October 2000.

This resolution recognized the link between peace and gender equality, and the fact that women's full participation in peace operations was essential to sustainable peace. As a country, we take pride that the historic and ground-breaking resolution 1325, adopted following a successful seminar on the gender perspectives of multidimensional peacekeeping missions that led to the development of the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Operations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a commitment to the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, Namibia, Spain and Germany in collaboration with UN Women, hosted a side event on the Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network, under the theme "The Security Council and Women, Peace and Security: Fostering Practical Action", on the margins of the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly. This meeting discussed issues related to how focal points can strengthen follow up on the implementation of

the Security Council's normative framework on Women, Peace and Security, and which actions will focal points take to ensure a systematic approach to the Women, Peace and Security Agenda at national level.

Some of the challenges identified in implementing the women, peace and security agenda fully, are the lack of women mediators, lack of sufficient investment by member Governments, as well as the backlash that exists in the face of the progression of women. These are all challenges that must be tackled.

Similarly, Namibia participated in the 1st Women Foreign Minister's meeting on 21-22 September 2018, in Montreal, Canada, co-hosted by the Foreign Minister of Canada and the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the Vice President of the Commission. This meeting discussed issues pertaining to, women's empowerment; political participation and leadership; strengthening democracy and resilience in peaceful and inclusive societies; engagement with civil society; advancing global peace, security and prosperity within the framework of a rules-based international order and, global efforts to eliminate all forms of gender-based violence, including in conflict and post-conflict situations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a recipient of this prestigious Award, I hope that the outcome of the processes we have started will act as a catalyst to renew our commitments, and address obstacles that have emerged in the implementation of 1325 and subsequent resolutions, and accord us an opportunity to learn from the best practices.

Peace is the main foundation and guarantor for sustainable economic growth and development. As such, the women peace and security agenda is gradually being mainstreamed in peacekeeping operations, be it at regional level or the United Nations. We welcome the attention being given by the Secretary General on Women Peace and Security and

regards peace building and peacekeeping operations.

Let me thus announce that in April 2019, Namibia will host the third meeting of the Focal Point Network on Women Peace and Security, under the theme 'Women, Peace and Security: Towards Full Participation. This meeting will build on the outcomes of Alicante and Berlin, and will emphasize on the implementation of the recommendations from these preceding meetings.

Namibia wishes to see the network growing, and will continue to advocate and encourage more members to buy in and join the network.

Let me once again, express with humility, my deep gratitude to the Government of the Kingdom of Spain, for the distinct honour bestowed on me and my country, Namibia. This honour will serve as a great source of inspiration and profound encouragement for me, Namibia, and Africa in general to strive even harder, for the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda.

I thank you for your attention.