

# REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**OPENING REMARKS BY AMBASSADOR SELMA ASHIPALA  
MUSAVYI, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE MINISTRY OF  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND CO-CHAIR OF THE SENIOR  
OFFICIALS, AT THE 9<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE NAMIBIA-ZIMBABWE  
JOINT PERMANENT COMMISSION OF COOPERATION,  
WINDHOEK, 22 JULY 2019**

**WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA**

My dear brother and colleague, Ambassador James Manzou, Secretary for Foreign Affairs and International Trade of Zimbabwe, and Co -Chair of the Senior Officials meeting

Executive Directors from Namibia, as well as your counterparts from Zimbabwe;

Ms Balbina Daes Pienaar, Ambassador of Namibia to Zimbabwe

Ms Rofina Chikava, Ambassador of Zimbabwe to Namibia,

Distinguished Senior Officials of the two respective delegations

Members of the media

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning!

It is with utmost delight that I on behalf of the Namibian Delegation welcome you all most warmly to Namibia and to Windhoek in particular, for the 9<sup>th</sup> Session of the Namibia-Zimbabwe Joint Commission of Cooperation.

We are indeed pleased to congregate here this morning to discuss issues of mutual concern and interest and, thereby, mapping the way forward in strengthening our bilateral relations and cooperation. Because, we view our bilateral cooperation as a building block to regional and continental integration. This is where it starts.

Therefore, this session provides us with yet another ample opportunity to review the implementation of our bilateral projects and programmes and thereby further enhancing our bilateral cooperation.

Our deliberations today are based on the premise that our two countries would become stronger and prosperous when we combine efforts to address common challenges and to take advantage of shared opportunities for mutual benefit.

During the 8<sup>th</sup> Session, our two Governments agreed to strengthen cooperation in a number of sectors, such as trade and investment, agriculture, fisheries, mining, energy, health, transport, culture and tourism. We are of the view that the outcome of the previous Sessions of the Joint

Commission of Cooperation, complemented by the exchange of high-level visits between our two countries has further consolidated our bilateral relations.

However, more needs to be done to fully exploit the trade and investment potential offered by our economies. In this regard, a more conducive environment could be created once we have agreed on the Terms of Reference for the Operationalization of the Joint Trade and Economic Committee and have concluded the MoU on Small and Medium Size Enterprises Cooperation. These are just some of the instruments to be finalized during our deliberations.

Furthermore, this Meeting is also expected to finalise the following legal instruments, which speak to the creation of a conducive and an enabling institutional environment for our business people:

- Reviewed MoU on Cooperation in the field of Information, Media and Broadcasting;
- Revised MoU on Science, Technology and Innovation;
- MoU on Fisheries and Fresh Water Aquaculture Conservation; and
- Twinning Agreement between the Kavango East Region of Namibia Mashonaland West Province of Zimbabwe.

We welcome the continuation of direct flights between our two capitals, as well as the increasing collaboration we are witnessing between our regional and provincial governments, thus emphasizing the importance of people to people contact.

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Climate Change is real. Our region has recently been hit by climate disasters, the worst we have seen in our lifetime. Most member states have declared national disaster emergencies due to devastating floods and drought. In this regard, we extend our solidarity towards the devastation caused by Cyclone Idai. As you may recall, President Hage Geingob, in his capacity as SADC Chairperson, launched a Regional Appeal in aid of the Victims of Cyclone Ida and Kenneth. It is time to call for the full implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement, and for all State Parties to

honour their commitments particularly to small states that are at the receiving end of climate calamities. More needs to be done in strengthening our regional capacity for disaster preparedness and response. In this regard, Namibia welcomes the decisions taken three days ago at the MCO of SADC, held in Lusaka, Zambia.

Co-Chair

We are pleased to note that the Joint Commission of Co-operation between Namibia and Zimbabwe has been meeting regularly, the last and 8th Session having been held in 2017. We have thus kept to the Joint Commission schedule as prescribed in the Framework Agreement which established the Joint Commission mechanism.

However, meeting regularly must also go hand-in-hand with timeous implementation of agreed decisions and signed agreements. I therefore urge all of us to redouble our efforts to ensure that we clear the backlog of all outstanding issues emanating from the preceding sessions of our Joint Permanent Commission in order to register progress aimed at the advancement of the socio-economic conditions of our two countries and peoples.

Co-Chair,

Distinguished delegates,

During the course of deliberations within the Sectoral Working Groups, it is expected of us to outline priority areas in which we would like to enhance cooperation and identify specific areas that we need to finalize, in order for us to report back to our Ministers on the progress made, as will be reflected in the Draft Agreed Minutes.

Let me conclude by once again extending a warm welcome to Namibia and to express the hope that we will fully make use of this opportunity to enhance our bilateral relations.

I wish us all fruitful deliberations.

I Thank You.