



22 April 2020

Joint Media Statement *(For Immediate Release)*

Subject: Response to fight the Covid-19 Pandemic in Namibia

COVID-19 is an unprecedented global health pandemic, which Namibia is also fighting to contain in order to save lives. It is in this context that, on 17th March 2020, His Excellency Hage G, Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia, stated that “The health of Namibians is the first priority” and subsequently declared a State of Emergency.

The government of the Republic of Namibia has therefore responded with urgent and determined measures, including a country lockdown to contain the spread of the novel Corona Virus into communities.

COVID-19 is not only a threat to the lives of the Namibian people and the public health system; it also bears serious negative economic impacts, thus threatening the survival of businesses and consequently jobs and livelihoods.

The President of the Republic of Namibia subsequently appealed to all International Cooperating Partners and stakeholders and the Private Sector to support Government’s response measures and mobilize resources to combat the further spread of the virus.

In response, the European Union and the Namibian Government consulted on available EU support to Namibia, to assist the country in its

fight against the pandemic. In this regard, the EU is pleased to announce that the following support measures would be extended to Namibia to fight the pandemic: Additional Budget support amounting to €8.400.000 (N\$172 Million) (grant funding without conditions linked to disbursement) will be availed to the Government of the Republic of Namibia to inter alia strengthen the country's health system and enhance resilient and responsive health and social protection systems. This will also include the purchasing of medical equipment and medical devices that are urgently required, as well as addressing some of the economic and social impact of the pandemic.

Furthermore and as part of an ongoing programme in support of education, with UNICEF as the implementing partner, contingency reserves of € 350,000 (N\$7.2 Million) would be used to support children and their families, specifically those in communities that are hardest hit by the Covid-19 lockdown.

The aim is to reach approximately 350 Early Childhood Centres (ECDs) with an estimated 15,000 children registered.

- The Covid-19 crisis has brought about new threats, demands and challenges to educators and learners. Moreover, Education systems and models need to gradually transform to move to online learning strategies. Education is a focal area of EU support to Namibia. The EU has made, as part of the EDF 11, a third and final payment of € 4.640.000 (N\$ 95 Million grant) to the Education Budget Support Programme recently.

This assistance is not directly related to the pandemic; however these are difficult times and Government may utilize these resources to deal with the *effects of the pandemic*.

“The coronavirus pandemic requires united and strong international and local collaboration by all. The European Union is doing everything we can to support our citizens and our partner countries in their time of need to address the impact of this health crisis on lives and countries’ economy. We are working closely with EU member states, other development partners and the UN system to make sure our inputs are

well coordinated for the pandemic and for the SDGs more generally”
said EU Ambassador to Namibia, H.E. Sinikka Antila.

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Namibia and in appreciation of the support from the European Union, Honorable Netumbo Nandi - Ndaitwah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of International Relations and Cooperation “hailed the long-standing cooperation with the EU, which has continued to complement the government’s developmental efforts. Multilateralism dictates that all governments come together in the spirit of the Sustainable Development Goals in order to save lives. The areas of focus of the assistance of the EU speak to the current priorities of government. The government commends the dedicated efforts of the EU office in Windhoek and look forward to continue working with the EU Ambassador for mutual interests.”

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