

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY
DR. HIFIKEPUNYE POHAMBWA, PRESIDENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA ON THE
OCCASION OF THE INAUGURATION
OF THE OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL
OF TRADITIONAL LEADERS**

24 NOVEMBER 2014

WINDHOEK

**Check Against Delivery*

**Director of Ceremonies,
Right Honourable Dr Hage G. Geingob, Prime
Minister of our Republic,
Honourable Deputy Prime Minister,
Honourable Minister of Regional and Local
Government, Housing and Rural Development,
Esteemed Chairperson of the Council of
Traditional Leaders, Tatekulu Immanuel
Kauluma Elifas,
Esteemed Deputy Chairperson of the Council
of Traditional Leaders, Gaob Immanuel
/Gâseb,
Esteemed Senior Traditional Councillors,
Honourable Ministers,
Honourable Members of Parliament,
Your Worship, Agnes Kafula, Mayor of the
City of Windhoek,
Honourable Regional and Local Authority
Councillors,
Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic
Corps,
Members of the Media,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

On 8 September 2014, I officially opened the 17th Annual Meeting of the Council of Traditional Leaders, which took place here in Windhoek. Today, I am delighted to inaugurate the Head Office of the Council of Traditional Leaders. The construction of this building is in line with the broader strategy to improve and strengthen the administrative operations of the Council of Traditional Leaders, who are part and parcel of our Regional and Local Government structures.

Our Government recognizes and acknowledges the important role that our Traditional Authorities continue to play in spreading the message of unity, tolerance and national reconciliation in the country. We also recognize that they are the custodians of our diverse cultures and traditional values. As part of their roles and responsibilities, they provide guidance to our communities on matters that affect their daily lives.

There is no doubt that strong cultural and traditional values are critical in shaping our society and guiding our people, especially the youth. With such values, our young people will be empowered to avoid negative forms of behaviour such as the abuse of drugs and alcohol, violence and criminal activities.

In this context, it is important that our traditional leaders, parents, guardians and indeed all adults should lead exemplary lives in order to inspire our young people to always do what is right.

It is important to ensure that in exercising their rights to profess and practice culture in terms of Article 12 of our Constitution, our people should do so in a manner that respects the rights of others and contributes to the process of nation building and national reconciliation. In this manner, we can build a better society.

Director of Ceremonies,

Traditional Authorities are important stakeholders in the socio-economic development of our country. Our Government will, therefore, continue to work with you through the established channels and structures, to achieve our shared goal of improving the living conditions of our people and developing our country.

The Council of Traditional Leaders, which was established in terms of Article 103 of the Namibian Constitution carries out an important task, namely to advise the President on matters pertaining to the control and utilization of communal land, and on other matters referred to it by the President. Our Government will continue to enhance the capacity of Traditional Leaders to effectively fulfill their mandate.

It is for this reason that resources have been allocated for the construction of facilities such as this building, which was built at a cost of N\$40 million. Resources have also been allocated to build operational Head Offices of recognized Traditional Authorities.

In addition, Government will continue to provide other forms of assistances to our Traditional Authorities, which include:

- Monthly allowances to 14 members of each recognised Traditional Authority.**
- Provision of official vehicles to recognized Traditional Authorities.**
- Provision of official vehicles to the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Council of Traditional Leaders for the performance of their official duties.**
- Payment of salaries of the drivers of the official vehicles assigned to Traditional Authorities.**

- **Provision and facilitation of Training and capacity building programmes for Traditional Authorities.**

Director of Ceremonies,

I am confident that this facility will go a long way in facilitating smooth planning, administration and management of the activities of the Council of Traditional Leaders.

I, therefore, urge the staff members who are employed at this Office to ensure that it is well maintained and that it is managed effectively to enhance the operations of the Council.

Once again, I would like to urge our Traditional Leaders to continue sharing their wisdom with the nation as we strive to achieve our national development agenda.

It is now my honour to declare the Office of the Council of Traditional Leaders inaugurated.

I thank you.