



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

Key note address

by

Hon Leon Jooste, MP Minister

of Public Enterprises

At the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Public Enterprises CEO Forum

2nd June 2016

Safari Court Hotel

Director of Ceremonies,
Dr Audrin Mathe, Acting Chairperson of The Public Enterprises CEO Forum,
Chief Executive Officers and Representatives of SOEs present,
Distinguished Guests,
Members of the Media,
Ladies and Gentlemen;

As a country we have achieved a lot over the last 26 years. We have matured as a democracy by consolidating Peace, Stability and the Rule of Law. As a government, we acknowledge that much has been done in consolidating our democracy through putting in place institutions for good governance and brilliant service delivery. In the same vein, we are aware that the country is facing many challenges such as unemployment, poverty, poor institutional governance, HIV-Aids and a high rate of inequality. These challenges are hampering our quest to become a prosperous nation by the year 2030.

Addressing these challenges will require all Namibian citizens, men and women alike, and in particular our State-owned Enterprises, to rise up to the occasion and make their contribution, in order for the country to achieve the overarching goal of Vision 2030.

The meeting that you are about to commence today is of historical significance as it has come after the launch of the Harambee Prosperity Plan (HPP), at a time when the Government has come up with clear objectives and performance indicators that must to be achieved over the next 4 years. Public Enterprises are an important component for achieving the HPP as they are equipped with technical, financial, commercial and legal resources to carry out the tasks required under HPP.

Director of ceremonies, I would like to thank you for the invitation to address this groundbreaking AGM and I am pleased to note the presence of many CEOs from the different State-owned Entities. Your presence signifies the importance that you attach to the work of this Forum. This is an important communication platform for engaging SOE's by the relevant stakeholders, through which we intend to constructively tackle some of the challenges I mentioned earlier. My Ministry will make use of this Forum to communicate and engage the Accounting Officers responsible for Public Enterprises, in order for us to move forward, in the spirit of Harambee.

I trust that this Forum will assist all stakeholders to deal with some of the difficult governance challenges facing public enterprises today. Indeed, this platform will provide an opportunity for CEO's to share their views and to put in place formal structures through which stakeholders can engage with the various Public Enterprises.

Directors of Ceremonies, I have already made a commitment that my Ministry will assist in setting up the formal structure of the Forum, a Section 21 Company, as it was resolved in your previous AGM. I also want to announce today that I plan to meet with the Forum, through the Committee or otherwise, at least once every quarter. This will provide the Ministry with another avenue to communicate to the various public enterprises. In the coming weeks we are busy with the survey on the re-classification of various public enterprises into Tiers. Indeed, this platform will also give the Ministry the opportunity to discuss issues such as performance of Boards, CEOs and Senior Management. We have already issued a circular on the suspension of CEO's. No CEO should be suspended without following procedures and without approval from the

Minister of Public Enterprises.

Director of Ceremonies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

You have your task clearly cut out for you by the enabling legislation as well as by the agenda placed in front of this AGM. In your deliberation, I want you to break new ground on how we can turn the tide when it comes to the governance issues facing many public enterprises today. You have been presented with the opportunity to develop clear action programs that will enable public enterprise to address challenges facing our country today.

There are limitations in terms of funding and skilled manpower in the country. However, this should not stop you from coming up with smart solutions on how you will handle any challenge that you may face. There is no doubt that you play an important role in accelerating the development of the country and the successful implementation of the HPP. The success of HPP depends on the successful execution of all projects by Public Enterprises

Director of Ceremonies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you set out your programs and priorities for the year, you should bear in mind the priorities of the country as well, that of Social Development, Effective Governance and Service Delivery, Economic Development and Infrastructure Development. Time is of the essence, and I urge you to work diligently and to propose solutions that that the nation will be proud of. It is now my pleasure to declare this AGM officially open.

I thank you.