



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

STATEMENT BY HONOURABLE JOHN MUTORWA, MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, WATER AND FORESTRY (MAWF) ON THE OCCASION OF THE SIGNING OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA ON COOPERATIVES DEVELOPMENT, 17 MARCH 2016, 10H00, WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA.

- Director of Ceremonies;
- Your Excellency, Mr. Isaac Njenga Gatitu, High Commissioner of Kenya to Namibia;
- Dr. Jeremiah Nyatichi, Deputy Commissioner of Cooperatives of Kenya and your esteemed delegation;
- Mr. Ronny Dempers, Chairperson of the Cooperatives Advisory Board (CAB) of Namibia;
- Mr. Abraham Nehemia, Acting Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry;
- Mr. Andries Leevi Hungamo, Permanent Secretary: Economic Planning and National Planning Commission (NPC);
- Ms. Erica Shafudah, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Finance (MoF);
- Members of the Co-Operative Advisory Board of Namibia;
- GRN Officials;
- Distinguished invited Guests;
- Members of the Media;
- Ladies and Gentlemen.

1. Namibia and Kenya continue to enjoy extremely excellent bilateral, political, economic and diplomatic relations. In our case, as Namibia, These relations date back to the years of our struggle for the liberation and political Independence of Namibia; during which times, the Government and Peoples of the Republic of Kenya rendered support to our Political Movement, SWAPO of Namibia, then and the ruling SWAPO Party, since 21 March 1990. Kenya also successfully and visibly participated in the operations of UNTAG, which had the responsibility to oversee the implementation of the United Nations' Resolution of 435 and the historic first ever Democratic Elections, that were held in Namibia in November 1989. Namibia remains thankful for this gesture and support. As Government, representing our two respective Nations, we should continue to harness these good relations, in order to further strengthen our socio-economic and political relations, for the benefits of our two peoples.

- **Director of Ceremonies**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**

2. Namibia and Kenya recognize the immense contributions that cooperatives can make, towards economic and social development. This is demonstrated by the fact that: the two countries have policies and legal frameworks in place that support and facilitate the development and operation of cooperatives.

3. In the case of Namibia, the establishment of cooperatives, as a tool for economic development, is provided for under Article 98 (2) (d) of the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia, which defines the “Principles of Economic Order”, in our Country, and indeed recognize

co-operatives as one of the forms of ownership, on which the Namibian economy is based and shall be based. In line with this constitutional provision, the National Co-operative Policy was formulated in 1992, and subsequently the Co-operatives Act, 1996, (Act 23 of 1996) was passed in 1996 by Parliament, to provide for the formation, registration and winding-up of co-operatives, and to deal with other matters associated with cooperatives. The Co-operative Policy is currently being reviewed with the objective of accommodating new developments in the dynamic co-operative sector.

4. In Namibia, we have co-operatives that are involved in the various economic sectors, covering the following economic activities: sewing and tailoring, livestock marketing, savings and credit, small scale mining, marketing of semi-precious stones, arts and crafts, mahangu (pearl millet) marketing, seed multiplication, provision of agricultural inputs such as seeds, ploughing services and first level oil processing from indigenous fruits, such as marula kernels, melon seeds and ximenia. I am informed that there are currently 142 co-operatives registered with the office of the Registrar of Cooperatives; with a total membership of approximately 28 000 members.

- **Director of ceremonies**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**

5. I am also informed that the first cooperative society of Kenya was established in 1908, and picked up momentum in the 1960s and 1970s. I am further informed that the first post-independence Cooperative Development Policy was formulated in 1970 with the

main objective of consolidating the activities of cooperatives. It was also brought to my attention that Kenya has the strongest cooperative movement in Africa, consisting of 15 000 registered cooperatives and a total membership of at least 12 million members. In addition, the cooperative movement in Kenya is one of the key drivers of the economy, contributing approximately 43% to the Gross Domestic Product and employing more than 300 000 people. Like in Namibia, the scope of co-operatives in Kenya cover a wide range of sectors, such as agriculture, banking, credit, agro-processing, storage, marketing, fishing, housing and transport.

- **Director of Ceremonies**
- **Ladies and gentlemen**

6. It is well known that cooperatives in Kenya, particularly those in the financial sector, are more developed than in Namibia and contribute significantly to the economy of that country. Equally, Namibia has also made significant strides in the development of cooperatives in some sectors. This difference in the development of our cooperatives, presents an opportunity for our two countries to draw benefits from each other by sharing experiences and best practices in this sector.

It is precisely for this reason, that our two respective Governments decided to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperative Development that we are about to sign today. The following are some of the areas of cooperation identified in the Memorandum of Understanding: Capacity building of cooperatives, Exchange of technical expertise, Technical assistance, and Promotion of income generating activities.

- **Director of Ceremonies**

▪ **Ladies and Gentlemen**

7. In conclusion, I would like to point out that the Memorandum of Understanding that we are signing today, does also refer to a Working Team, which will oversee the implementation of the agreed Annual Action Plan (AAP). Namibia is committed to the full practical implementation of all aspects of the MoU and it is thus my and our Government's hope that after signing this Memorandum of Understanding the said Working Team will be formed urgently, in order to practically implement the identified activities, for the mutual benefit of the people, in our two respective Countries and Nations.

I thank you