



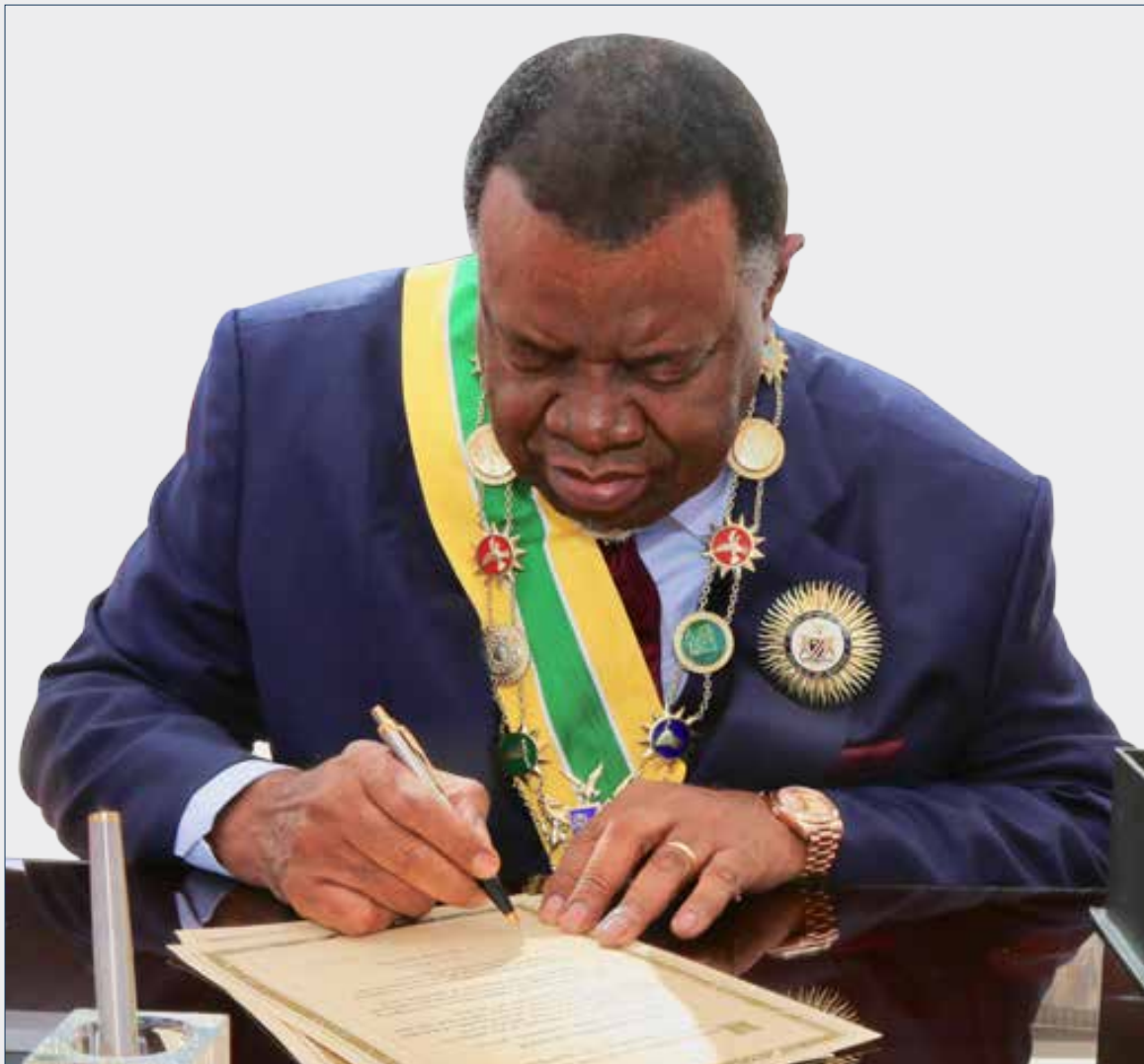
THE PRESIDENCY

NEWSLETTER



VOLUME 15 | OCTOBER 2020

NAMIBIA @



2020 THE YEAR OF INTROSPECTION



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EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear readers,

Welcome to Volume 15 of the Presidency Newsletter.

On 21 March 2020, His Excellency Dr Hage G. Geingob was inaugurated for his second term as the third President of the Republic of Namibia. On the same day, Namibia celebrated its 30th Independence Anniversary; thirty years of peace and stability, enjoyed by all Namibians. As proud citizens of this great nation, we wish to congratulate His Excellency Dr Hage Geingob for his inauguration as the President of the Republic of Namibia, and, on that note, we wish him wisdom as he continues to lead the Namibian House to prosperity, peace and tranquillity.

This reader-friendly issue offers you snapshots of various activities, and it highlights the main events in the Presidency during the first half of 2020.

As is his custom, the President declared 2020 'The year of Introspection'. In turn, the President announced the new government structure and the appointment of new Cabinet Ministers. In view of this, the new Minister in the Presidency, Hon. Christine //Hoebes, a vibrant, hardworking and dedicated public servant, was appointed.

This issue also offers you interesting highlights of the 2020 State of the Nation Address (SONA), which was delivered according to strict adherence to the regulations of social distancing as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. We hope that you will enjoy the glimpses of these highlights.

In an unprecedented manner, we offer you updates from His Excellency's announcement of the State of Emergency. What a busy first half of 2020 it has been for the President and the entire Government at large. Together as a country, we continue to support Government in its intensified efforts to curb the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. The aim is to protect the lives of all Namibians.



IVEN CHILINDA
Editor

It was recently said that we need to adapt to the new normal, to the new way of doing things under the current circumstances of the pandemic. As such, the new normal has been realised in the way working environments are being conducted. In view of this, His Excellency has been participating in high level virtual meetings with various Heads of State around the world. Please enjoy the highlights of the issues that were deliberated by the President during these virtual meetings. Additionally, we also offer you major activities from the Office of the First Lady. Indeed, this is a fully loaded edition, designed to give you a glimpse of the Presidency's engagements.

Last but not least, on behalf of the entire Newsletter team, please stay safe, adhere to the social distancing protocols, wear your masks correctly, and wash your hands at all times. Let us join hands together in the spirit of the Namibian House as we strive to curb the spread of COVID-19 in our country and beyond.

Enjoy the read!

PRESIDENT GEINGOB STRESSES NATIONAL PRIDE AND UNITY

“As President, I shall never depart from the narrative of Nation Building. I am cognizant that national pride and unity are the two cardinal pillars that bind the people of our country. As we continue our march towards a common destiny, let us do so in a spirit of unity, galvanized by hope and perseverance”.

During the swearing in ceremony for his second term as President of the Republic of Namibia, His Excellency Dr Hage Geingob underscored the need for unity among Namibians, and he thanked the presidents from other African countries for attending the inauguration.

President Geingob said, “I am glad you are here to celebrate our triumph over oppression. The independence of Namibia will not have been attained without the front-line states and Nigeria. I pay tribute to the international community for their support. I call on the nation to perpetuate the narrative of One Namibia, One Nation. Let us own this narrative for it defines our identity and speaks to the spirit of our struggle for independence.”

The President recalled fond memories from thirty years ago when a new sovereign nation was born: “Thanks be to God for the liberty, unity, peace and stability that we enjoy every day in our country. It was on this day, thirty years ago, that we witnessed the hoisting of the Namibian flag, symbolising the birth of a Sovereign nation. It is on this day that we celebrate the gift of freedom and the opportunity we have to pursue our common aspirations.”

The President further reminded fellow country men and women of the significance of the Day of Independence, stating that the 21 March marks an important milestone in the birth of Namibia’s democracy and national identity: “As we reflect on the path traversed, we have covered significant ground together. We have matured in our Constitutional Democracy, and we are stronger, more resilient and determined to prevail in this second phase of our struggle for economic emancipation. Indeed, we have come of age.



DR HAGE GEINGOB
President of the Republic of Namibia

Namibia today and Namibia at independence are miles apart. Today, as we commemorate the milestone of our Pearl Jubilee, we do so with a sense of humility and introspection. We look up toward the horizon with hope and expectation. We look back with pride, at three decades of peace, unity and stability.”

THE PRESS IN A DEMOCRACY NOT ABOVE CRITIQUE AND INTROSPECTION



DR. ALFREDO TJIURIMO HENGARI
Press Secretary

Following the release of the 2020 World Press Freedom Index on 21 April 2020, Namibia spectacularly retained the number one position in Africa in press freedom. Moreover, it is impressively in the top tier globally. An incredible achievement, but one omitted by the press corps of journalists, which ought to cherish this feat. Unsurprisingly, the Namibian media does not take pride in this achievement of patriots. To the faultfinding journalists, it only matters for the front-page when Namibia falls in the World Press Freedom or Transparency Indexes. Worryingly, analysts are indifferent to these and don’t rush to the pages of newspapers to opine this achievement or comment when President Hage G. Geingob repeatedly guarantees media freedom for as long as he is Head of State. There ought to be a new path forward for the local press corps.

The media plays an indispensable role in buttressing democracy. It gives citizens a voice, it articulates their interests; and it brings to light the interests of transparent governance. In Namibia, the press carries out this role unhindered and without intimidation, which ought to be a source of pride for journalists. Journalists ought to be pleased with our standing, as the country with the freest

press in Africa because President Geingob acts consistently within norms, believes unequivocally in the role of the media as a transmission belt of our nation’s core values, which are eloquently captured in our Republican motto, Unity, Liberty and Justice. Without question, our press corps, with all its strengths and known limitations, exploits and operates fully within the framework of our Constitution, and its foundational value of Liberty. Moreover, it also stretches, as it should, a certain conception and idea of what press freedom, and its twin, freedom of speech entails. In stretching the limits of a press freedom, as it should, it is bound to infringe, if not undermine some of the values and norms we have all committed to live up to, including unity, fairness and justice.

What should happen when the press and the media falls short in respect of these? This is a practical question, to which responses from learned professors, including Andre du Pisani should emerge. What should we do when the press is no longer respectful of the values of equality, fairness and justice? Is the one-man shop of the Press Ombudsperson sufficient or just a smokescreen to reinforce self-regulation? Should we keep quiet because we are in Government, and we are the guardians to be watched in that famous Latin phrase: Quis custodiet ipsos custodes? In accessible English – who is guarding the watchmen?

Just like the “watchmen”, the press as an instrument of modern communication has colossal amounts of power, and if left in its dangerous echo chamber and comfortable shadow of self-righteousness, without critique and public scrutiny, it is bound to abuse its power. Are these guys in the press, who are able to make and destroy, capable of fairness, accuracy and objectivity? Can we trust that they will act impartially? Of course not! Just like all forms of power, in the words of Lord Acton, absolute power corrupts absolutely. Through that absolute power, abuse is likely; bad things that undermine our collective progress are likely to be visited upon us. And they have been visited upon us.

The ferocious campaign by the press against the person of President Geingob over the past five years reached a nadir during the electoral campaign of 2019. It is instructive for students and teachers of media ethics (if we have) and our nation’s political history. If we proceed and assess performance of the media against its own Code of Ethics, the comportment of the press is a case study of some of the bad things that should not happen in a democracy. There was without question a well-timed manhunt, a disinformation



The principle of a multiplicity of voices is hardly respected; the views of the subject of critical reportage hardly sought out in advance; retractions and corrections never getting the required prominence as per norms in countries where the press is free. In light of these, and in 2020, the Year of Introspection as President Geingob summoned us, the media as a professional class through the Editors Forum of Namibia has the responsibility to reflect about its place and practice of the craft in society, thinking beyond dangerous partisan, sensational, self-righteous and self-serving considerations.

This exercise of introspection is urgent to avoid loss of credibility and faith in an important estate in the democratic compact. The press is not a sacrosanct island outside political critique and societal evaluation. As journalism marches towards 30 years of the inspiring Windhoek Declaration on 3 May 2021, and Namibia retaining the top African country ranking in the 2020 World Press Freedom Index, local journalism and media practitioners should urgently commence to labor critically about their journey and evolving role in a democratic state. At the heart of that journey lie the vital questions of fairness, accuracy, balance in reporting, and openness to critique.

campaign, whose objective was to shape the minds of Namibian voters and determine the electoral outcome in this or that direction. Unfortunately, based on what we saw with our own eyes, the vote for President Geingob and the Ruling Party that he leads had to be significantly reduced.

Ordinarily, there is nothing odd for this or that media house to become partisan as a politically biased press. Democracy is about choice. But the rest of us should not be blind to the reality that such media, engaging in news as political and ideological activism would have deviated from its own Self-Regulatory Code of Ethics and Conduct for Namibian Media. This document, which calls for accountable journalism is consistently neglected, its articles are flouted with news presented inaccurately, if not out of context to advance a predetermined narrative and agenda.

NAMIBIA JOINS OTHER NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT MEMBER COUNTRIES IN A VOW TO JOINTLY FIGHT THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC



COVID-19 is a formidable challenge, WHICH has had a negative impact on the economy, especially in the tourism and mining sectors, which are crucial for economic growth.

- President Geingob



On delegation by the President, H.E. Dr Hage G. Geingob, the Vice President, H.E. Dr Nangolo Mbumba, together with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Hon. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah participated in a virtual summit on 4 May 2020.



H.E. Dr Nangolo Mbumba and the Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Hon. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, participating in a virtual summit on 4 May 2020.

During the summit, government leaders from Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) countries pledged their commitment to implementing an effective global response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Summit was dedicated to international solidarity in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, and the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, which was established at the initiative of the NAM in line with the General Assembly Resolution 73/127 of 24 April 2018. Initiated by Azerbaijan's President, H.E. Ilham Aliyev, the United Against COVID-19 Summit was attended by over 40 Heads of State and Government, which were each allocated a seven-minute speech time slot. The NAM is an alliance of 120 countries globally and was established during the height of the Cold War.

The meeting addressed the ongoing efforts led by the United Nations (UN) and the World Health Organization (WHO), and concluded with a call for international cooperation in order to control and defeat the pandemic through knowledge sharing and the implementation of best practices.

In addition, the NAM Member States adopted a declaration, which, among others, includes the establishment of the Non-Aligned Movement Task Force, which is aimed at working out a database that will include the basic humanitarian and medical needs and requirements of NAM Member States.

TELEPHONIC CONVERSATION WITH THE CHINESE PRESIDENT

NAMIBIA TO LEARN FROM BEST PRACTICE – HOW TO ERADICATE POVERTY



H.E. President Hage Geingob in telephonic conversation with President Xi Jinping,
President of the People's Republic of China

In a recent telephone conversation, President Geingob informed his Chinese counterpart, President Xi Jinping, that Namibia wants to learn from China's successful experience in poverty eradication, and that Namibia would like to do the same in order to eradicate poverty by the year 2030.

The President expressed his appreciation for the special financial assistance package of an estimated N\$3, 5 billion for the construction and expansion of Namibia's main airport, the Hosea Kutako International Airport.

Moreover, President Geingob informed his Chinese counterpart that he was impressed by the way China handled the COVID-19 situation, which has been declared a world pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO), and that no country should be blamed for the pandemic. The

President stated that, in this regard, the world should hold hands in order to address the pandemic. President Geingob informed President Xi that Namibia is a small developing country and needs support from its best friends in order to deal with a world pandemic that the country does not know how to handle. He acknowledged President Xi's outstanding leadership of the Chinese people with regard to controlling the pandemic, and he referred to China as the 'best friend' of Namibia and Africa.

President Geingob expressed his appreciation to President Xi and the Chinese government for providing care to more than 500 Namibian students in China during the outbreak of COVID-19, and for his unconditional support towards Namibia's well-being.

TELEPHONIC CONVERSATION WITH THE CANADIAN PRIME MINISTER

STRENGTHENING THE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP

On 2 June 2020, President Geingob held a telephonic conversation with the Prime Minister of Canada, H.E. Justin Trudeau. The two Heads of State and Government agreed to strengthen the existing bilateral relationship between their two nations. Prime Minister Trudeau called President Geingob to check on him, to hear how Namibia was doing, and to congratulate him on the excellent job in handling and containing the spread of COVID-19 in the country. Namibia had only two recorded cases of COVID-19 at the time. Prime Minister Trudeau commended Namibia for taking drastic steps in order to contain the virus.

President Geingob thanked Prime Minister Trudeau for the friendship they share and for the warm welcome he accorded him during his official visit to Canada in 2018. President Geingob expressed his appreciation to Canada for their support during Namibia's liberation struggle, particularly their moral support which led to the implementation of Resolution 435. President Geingob also shared concerns with regard to the classification of Namibia as an upper-middle-income country, including how this has penalised the country in terms of access to grants, favourable loan conditions and developmental assistance. Prime Minister Trudeau pledged support to President Geingob regarding the issue of Namibia's classification as an upper-middle-income country, and informed him that with climate change, other countries, particularly those in the Caribbean, are also faced with a similar challenge regarding the upper-middle-income classification.

During their discussion, President Geingob communicated that COVID-19 is a formidable challenge, and that it has had a negative impact on the economy, especially in the tourism and mining sectors, which are crucial for economic growth. The President singled out the Canadian investors in Namibia, such as B2Gold and Dundee Precious Metals, as responsible businesses that are exemplary in their corporate social responsibilities.



Despite COVID-19, Prime Minister Trudeau informed President Geingob that Canada would work with International Financial Institutions such as the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to support economies, not only in Africa but globally. President Geingob extended an invitation to Prime Minister Trudeau to visit Namibia to strengthen further cooperation. Prime Minister Trudeau accepted the invitation and promised to visit Namibia post-COVID-19.

PRESIDENT GEINGOB CALLS FOR A NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER



We can only defeat COVID-19 through unity of purpose.



During a special briefing held at State House, President Geingob called for a National Day of Prayer where he urged the country to unite in prayer for the protection and welfare of all Namibians.

“I further call upon all Christians and believers to set aside Wednesday, 8 April 2020, as a Day of National Prayer. I request all churches that wish to participate, to ring their bells at 12 noon on this day. All Namibians who wish to participate, must unite in faith, humble themselves and lift their voices to pray for the protection and welfare of our country.” – President H. Geingob

With regard to the regulations that have been put in place in order to curb the spread of the pandemic, the President urged all Namibians to obey and cooperate with the authorities, adding that the virus does not respect social strata, race, and ethnicity boundaries.

The President stated that “We can only defeat COVID-19 through unity of purpose.”

The President also thanked all the companies and individuals who have contributed towards the effort of curbing the outbreak of COVID-19:



The Government has received monetary contributions and pledges to the value of N\$36 million towards the National Disaster Fund account for COVID-19, as well as in-kind donations such as water tankers, testing kits and ventilators.



SADC VIRTUAL CONSULTATIVE MEETING

On 8 May 2020, the President of South Africa and the African Union Chairperson, H.E. Cyril Ramaphosa, convened and chaired a virtual consultative meeting with SADC Heads of State and Government of neighbouring countries to South Africa to discuss responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The aim of the meeting was to share views on coordinated responses in order to curb the spread of COVID-19. Among other issues, the discussion included consular and immigration matters regarding cross border movement, the economic impact of COVID-19 on SADC countries, as well as financial support and international pledges. Countries that participated in the SADC Heads of State and Government virtual consultative meeting include Angola, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia, Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

During the virtual consultative meeting, President Geingob expressed his appreciation to President Cyril Ramaphosa for championing the African continental responses and for convening the virtual meeting for neighbouring countries to deal with the shared challenge of COVID-19.

President Geingob informed the meeting on Namibia's health status, and that the first two cases of COVID-19 in Namibia were confirmed on 13 March 2020. He further informed the meeting that Namibia acted swiftly the following morning (14 March 2020) by suspending outward and inbound flights to and from Doha, Qatar, Frankfurt and Addis Ababa, and on 17 March the country declared a State of Emergency to contain the spread of COVID-19.

President Geingob affirmed that since 28 March 2020, Namibia has been in Stage 1 of the lockdown period, which commenced with the affected Erongo and Khomas Regions including the contingent local authority areas of Okahandja and Rehoboth; that the lockdown period was extended countrywide from 18 April to 4 May 2020; and that Namibia rolled out a Stimulus Package at around 13% of the budget to ease the loss of income for businesses and the most vulnerable sectors of the population, who received an Emergency Income Grant (EIG).



President Geingob emphasized that during this crisis period of COVID-19, the health of Namibians remains a priority and the prompt action to close entry points and issue comprehensive restrictions on the movement of people helped to contain the spread of the virus; and that as of 8 May 2020, the incidence curve flattened at 16 cases, with 9 recoveries, no community transmissions, and no COVID-19 related deaths in Namibia. As of 6 August 2020, Namibia recorded 2,652 confirmed cases, 2,074 active cases, 563 recoveries, and 15 deaths. Namibia relaxed the countrywide restrictions on the movements of people, goods and services, which was done to strike a balance between protecting lives and economic activities. On 31 July 2020, Namibia put in place the necessary measures and responded to the situation by extending the lockdown period, and the Stage 3 level of restriction remained in force for the Erongo Region, which is the epicentre of the virus. This action was necessary to curb the spread of the virus and improve tangible results on the ground.

Moreover, President Geingob informed the meeting that as COVID-19 is a global pandemic, it requires coordinated regional, Pan-African and global action. As Namibia recognises how interdependent and interconnected SADC countries are as neighbours, he informed the meeting that Namibia will continue to keep ports and harbours open to facilitate the movement of goods to landlocked neighbours and beyond.

THE PRESIDENCY ENGAGEMENTS

12 August 2020



Farewell Courtesy Visit by H.E. Mrs Clair Bodonyi, outgoing Amb. of France

11 August 2020



17th COVID update, Virtual Public Briefing

17 September 2020



Amb. Sen Pang, UN Resident Coordinator presenting his letter of Credence to President Geingob

15 July 2020



H.E. Berlin Tulan, Amb. of Turkey to Namibia paying a Courtesy Visit to Hon. Christine //Hoebes

24 July 2020



Ancestral Land Report handover

10 July 2020



H.E. President Geingob in a virtual meeting with the Regional Governors

3 June 2020



Inauguration of the new Central Hospital Isolation facility

3 August 2020



H.E. President Geingob inspecting the WHK-Hosea Kutako Road

16 August 2020



Meeting with National Housing Enterprise (NHE)

25 August 2020



Meeting with Public Office Bearers Commission (POBC)

21 March 2020



Celebrating on Namibia's 30th Independence Day

17 July 2020



National Day of Prayer

4 June 2020



State of the Nation Address in Parliament

16 August 2020



United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Briefing

31 March 2020



Appointment of Vice Air Marshall, Martin Pinehas as Chief of the Defence Force

21 March 2020



Scene from Namibia's 30th Independence Day

COVID-19 OUTBREAK

MEASURES TAKEN TO MITIGATE THE PANDEMIC



The Country's Perspective

Social Protection

On 31 December 2019, China notified the World Health Organization (WHO) about the COVID-19 outbreak in Wuhan City, Hubei Province of China. Subsequently, on 30 January 2020, the outbreak was declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) by the WHO Director General. Since then, the COVID-19 outbreak has evolved rapidly within and outside China, involving the majority of countries around the world.

Namibia registered its first two confirmed cases of COVID-19 on 13 March 2020. In direct response to these primary infections, President Geingob called off the 30th Independence Celebrations. The financial outlay for the Independence Celebrations was diverted to the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. The Government also suspended inbound and outbound travel from and to various COVID-19 infected countries.

On account of the COVID-19 pandemic, President Geingob declared a State of Emergency for the entire country on 17 March 2020. The State of Emergency was set for a period of six months, with the provision of extension subject to the country's situation. Following the increase of confirmed COVID-19 cases, the Khomas and Erongo Regions were placed under lockdown from 27 March 2020 (which commenced at 23h59) until 17 April 2020. The intention of this lockdown was to maintain maximum suppression of transmission through minimising exposure of these regions to international travel.

In conformity with global guidelines for COVID-19, Namibia adopted 4 stages of restrictions. STAGE 1 comprised a countrywide lockdown for a period of 38 days, from 28 March until midnight 4 May 2020; STAGE 2 allowed gradual re-opening under strict precautions from 5 May to 2 June 2020; STAGE 3 permitted more moderate precautions from 2 June to 30 June 2020; and STAGE 4, which came into effect on 30 June 2020, introduced a new normal to continue until the end of the State of Emergency. Each stage of restriction included an average observance period of two incubation periods, which constitutes 28 days. Following the COVID-19 outbreak in the country, President Geingob, on several occasions, held press conferences to update the nation on COVID-19 national response measures.

The Ministry of Health and Social Services activated the Health Emergency Management Committee in order to prepare the country for a possible outbreak of COVID-19 in the country. A Response Plan was developed and has been implemented. The Response Plan raises public awareness and disseminates information about the disease and preventive measures.

Health personnel received training with regard to various aspects of COVID-19. The capacitation of the Namibia Institute of Pathology enabled them to conduct local confirmatory tests, and infrastructure was developed in order to provide facilities for quarantine, screening, diagnosis, treatment and counselling. Contact tracing was intensified, and medical equipment, medicines and personal protective equipment were sourced. The Ministry of Health and Social Services, together with the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, launched a

COVID-19 Communication Centre. The Centre provides a platform where all sectors can engage the public on key issues affecting their respective sector in relation to the COVID-19 lockdown guidelines. The Centre is interactive, where journalists are given the opportunity to ask questions during each daily live press conference as well as through a dedicated email address.

Economic Stimulus

On 1 April 2020, the Government, through the Ministry of Finance, announced the First Phase of the Economic Stimulus and Relief Package, worth N\$8.1 billion in total. The objective of the package is to address urgent funding needs in the health sector, to mitigate the negative impact of COVID-19 on the economy and jobs, and to support livelihoods at a household level. In addition, the Social

Security Commission, in conjunction with the Ministry of Finance, launched the National Employment and Salary Scheme for COVID-19. The Scheme includes two objectives: 1) the Employer Wage Subsidy Programme for selected hard hit industries – this programme aims to save jobs; and 2) the Affected Employees Programme for those who have lost income – this programme invites people to apply for a grant designed to provide compensation, and it aims to provide a safety net for those who have been adversely affected by COVID-19.

The spectre of the COVID-19 pandemic has ravaged the economic landscape and has reversed most of the gains from financial adjustment reforms. However, Namibia responded in a swift and timely manner to combat COVID-19, and shall continue to do so while enabling economic activity to regain traction and protecting the lives of all Namibians.

HEALTH TIPS FOR COVID-19

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus. This new virus was unknown before the outbreak began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. COVID-19 is now a pandemic, and it has affected many countries globally.

What are the most common symptoms of COVID-19?

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, a dry cough, and tiredness. Other symptoms that are less common include aches and pains, nasal congestion, headaches, conjunctivitis, a sore throat, diarrhoea, loss of taste or smell, a skin rash, or discoloration of the fingers or toes. These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually. Some people become infected but only have very mild symptoms.

What must I do if I have COVID-19 symptoms and when should I seek medical care?

If you have minor symptoms, such as a slight cough or a mild fever, there is generally no need to seek medical care. Self-isolate by staying at home and monitor your symptoms.

Should you feel unwell, with symptoms of a dry cough, high fever of 38°C or greater and shortness of breath, please call this **Toll-Free number: 0800 100 100**, or consult a health facility or community health worker for advice on what to do.

How does COVID-19 spread?

People can catch COVID-19 from others who have the virus. The disease spreads primarily from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth, which are

expelled when a person with COVID-19 coughs, sneezes, or speaks. These droplets are relatively heavy, do not travel far and quickly sink to the ground. People can catch COVID-19 if they breathe in these droplets from a person infected with the virus. This is why it is important to stay at least 1 metre away from others. These droplets can land on objects and surfaces around the person such as tables, doorknobs and handrails. People can become infected by touching these objects or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose or mouth. This is why it is important to wash your hands regularly with soap and water or to clean them with alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

How to prevent the spread of COVID-19

- Clean your hands often. Use soap and water, or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Whenever possible, maintain at least a 1 metre distance between yourself and others.
- Wear a mask when physical distancing is not possible.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Cover your nose and mouth with your bent elbow or a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Stay at home if you feel unwell.
- If you have a fever, cough or experience difficulty breathing, seek medical attention.

Can COVID-19 be prevented?

A vaccine is not currently available to prevent COVID-19.

Where to get credible information?

For authentic information contact this **Toll-Free number 0800 100 100**, or the nearest health facility. Stay informed by getting the facts, and do not disseminate rumours and fake news.

PRESIDENT GEINGOB URGES CORPORATES AND INDIVIDUALS TO DONATE TO THE COVID-19 NATIONAL RESPONSE ON HIS BIRTHDAY

“For those of you who are planning to contribute to marking my birthday, I wish to thank you in advance for your generosity. Yes, together we can defeat COVID-19.”



In light of the accelerated response to fight COVID-19, President Geingob, on the occasion of his 79th birthday on 3 August 2020, urged corporates and individuals not to place paid adverts in newspapers and other publications to wish him well on his birthday, but to rather divert these funds towards fighting the COVID-19 pandemic.

“For the occasion of my 79th birthday on 3 August 2020, I encourage corporates and individuals not to place adverts in newspapers and other publications. Instead, and in light of the gravity of COVID-19, I urge corporates and individuals to contribute monetary resources or in-kind donations to the national response. In the form of COVID-19, we are faced with a deadly and invisible enemy. During this period, the health of Namibians remains the biggest priority. The Government alone cannot defeat the virus and needs everyone to play a role in arresting the spread and assisting the vulnerable among us.”



President Geingob receiving a portrait from a young entrepreneur



H.E. Hage Geingob, H.E. Nangolo Mbumba, Vice President and Hon. // Hoebes viewing a young entrepreneur's display



H.E. Hage Geingob cutting his birthday cake

EXCERPTS FROM THE PRESIDENT'S 2020 STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS



2020 – The Year of Introspection

During my inauguration on March 21, I took an oath before God and before you to strive to the best of my ability to uphold, protect and defend the Constitution, and to obey, execute and administer the laws of the Republic of Namibia. I took an oath to protect the independence, territorial integrity, and the material and spiritual resources of the Republic of Namibia. I swore that I would endeavour, to the best of my ability, to work towards justice for all the inhabitants of Namibia. Therefore I stand before you today, in fulfilment of my constitutional mandate, to deliver the first State of the Nation Address of my second and last term as President of the Republic of Namibia.

While the past five years have been challenging as a result of the global economic downturn and protracted drought, the past four months have been particularly daunting. All of humanity has been affected by COVID-19 and there is no doubt that survival will require a collective effort. Our lives have been disrupted and our financial security placed in jeopardy, with uncertainty and anxiety looming large. This is the defining hour for this generation. This is the challenge of our time, one we must overcome as a united people.

End of First Term Report

We have come to the end of the first term of this Government, and I will present a progress report highlighting the key accomplishments and challenges that were encountered during the term. The details are presented in the Harambee Prosperity Plan final report. At the end of the first term, the Harambee Prosperity Plan recorded an average 70 per cent overall execution rate of set goals and outcomes. This

has been calculated against the implementation outcomes of activities per pillar. Despite a number of independent intervening variables that adversely affected our ability to obtain the set target of an 80 per cent execution rate, we achieved this relatively high rate by focusing on key deliverables with lesser financial implications.

The President's Stance on Corruption

We have made a good start with regard to the implementation of our National Anti-Corruption Strategy. All forms of corruption are destructive and, regrettably, they continue to taint our country. Contrary to erroneous perceptions, we do not lack the political will to fight corruption. We have taken action and will continue to take decisive action to tackle this scourge.

You may recall that long before the so-called Fishrot exposé during February 2018, I requested several Cabinet Ministers to respond to allegations of corruption levelled against them. Their responses were subsequently forwarded to the Anti-Corruption Commission for investigation, consistent with my conviction to strengthen processes, systems and institutions. Today, two senior former Ministers are in jail for seven months, with no interference from the Executive. This confirms my firm belief in the principle of the Separation of Powers, and in allowing the law to take its course. I often state that truth does not change. Concrete actions have been taken during the term to confront cases of perceived and alleged corruption. These include the following:

- The decision to cancel the awarding of the Hosea Kutako International Airport upgrading tender, which was inflated from 3 to 7 billion Namibian dollars. This

was challenged in the High Court. We initially lost the case and appealed to the Supreme Court, which subsequently overturned the decision.

- We launched investigations into alleged irregularities in the contracts for the National Oil Storage Facility and Neckartal Dam, which exposed the Government to currency fluctuations. The investigations resulted in a Disciplinary Hearing: some implicated officials were cleared, while others received appropriate sanctions due to administrative shortcomings.
- The Government, through the Ministry of Finance, launched lifestyle audits and investigations into tax evasion and money laundering. The charges that were brought against individuals ended up at the Courts.
- The ongoing cases of alleged corruption, such as the SME Bank, the Offshore Development Company and the Development Capital Portfolio of the GIPF and the KORA Music Awards, are all at the Courts.

We will only prevail in the war against corruption when transparency is nurtured within governance systems. Each and every Namibian has a role to play in uprooting corruption. I caution that we should protect the dignity of fellow citizens by guarding against accusations of corruption in the absence of evidence. In the fight against corruption, the due process of law must prevail.

Media Freedom



The Reporters Without Borders's World Press Freedom Index of 2020 ranked Namibia at Number 1 in Africa and 23rd in the world, outranking long established democracies in other parts of the world. Going forward, this Government will continue to champion Media Freedom. However, as we undertake much-needed introspection as a Government, we also expect that the media reflects on its role in society. We rely on the media, as the Fourth Estate, for truth and fairness. The role of the media in providing factual reporting is therefore of paramount importance.

Economic Headwinds



Since 2016, the Namibian economy continues to experience unprecedented headwinds. These challenges include declining economic growth and per capita income, low investments and a high public expenditure ratio compounded by the global economic downturn, declining commodity prices, and exchange rate fluctuations. The five-year drought that ravaged our agricultural sector has exposed thousands of Namibian households to food insecurity, which has necessitated the reallocation of funding to the Drought Relief Programme in line with our commitment that no Namibian should die from a lack of food.

As promised in my 2019 State of the Nation Address, in March this year I announced a reduced Government structure from 25 ministries down to 19 ministries. We achieved the reduction of six ministries by merging some of the existing ones to align government functions for efficient and effective service delivery.

In light of ongoing Government measures to reduce public expenditure, reforms were undertaken to eliminate wastage with regard to the conditions of service and benefits for Public Office Bearers. As a result, there will be no new Government vehicle fleet for the term, and no new off-road vehicles will be purchased for Public Office Bearers. This will translate into a saving of approximately 200 million Namibian dollars. Furthermore, we have abolished the positions of Special Advisors to Governors.

Poverty Reduction and Social Safety Nets

Namibia has made progress and poverty has declined. According to the Namibia Statistics Agency, poverty has declined in Namibia from 70 per cent in 1994 to 37.7 per cent in 2003 and to 18 per cent in 2016. According to the 2017 World Bank Report, and as endorsed by Oxfam International, Namibia's decline in poverty is attributable to a targeted policy framework. The Government allocates a high percentage of resources to social sectors, including

universal access to education, a highly subsidized healthcare system and Social Safety Nets that reverse the effects of a skewed economy. Namibia, South Africa and Botswana are among the few African countries that provide the Old Age Social Grant as a cash transfer, which directly contributes towards arresting poverty and childhood stunting. The Government has increased this grant by more than 100 per cent over the past four years.

Other Social Safety Nets implemented by the Government include the Foster Care Grant for vulnerable and orphaned children; Marginalised and Disability Grants; the School Feeding Programme; Food for Work; and the Veterans' Grants. In total, the Government spends 3.9 billion Namibian dollars on social grants per annum, benefiting 1 million people or 41 per cent of the total population.

During the period 2015 to 2019, the Government redirected resources to the value of 2.1 billion Namibian dollars towards the drought relief programme, which has benefitted, annually, an average of 564,983 people throughout all 14 regions. During the same period, the Government introduced the Food Bank in order to reduce hunger among the extremely poor citizens in urban and peri-urban areas.

The Food Bank has been rolled out to all 14 regions, and it covers 10,156 households or 42,081 individual beneficiaries and 219 Street Committees. Due to ongoing refinements to the eligibility criteria of beneficiaries, the figure has decreased and the programme is now serving the truly needy members of our society. Looking ahead, the Government will work actively to consolidate Social Safety Nets by automating processes in order to remove duplications and reduce transaction costs.

Housing



Housing remains a challenge. However, the delivery of serviced land, housing and sanitation has progressed in line with targets set during the term. The Harambee Prosperity Plan target to deliver 20,000 new houses was achieved by 82

per cent with the delivery of 16,464 houses by March 2020. These houses were constructed in collaboration with various stakeholders, including the Namibia Housing Enterprise; GIPF; the Shack Dwellers Federation; Build Together; and a number of Public Private Partnerships.

The delivery of residential erven was achieved by 89 per cent or 23,194 plots out of the targeted 26,000. The national housing backlog remains above 300,000 units. Despite these achievements and considering the persistently high national demand, I am conscious that we need to accelerate our efforts in the area of housing and land provision, particularly in major cities and towns. While the bucket toilet system was not entirely eliminated by the end of the period envisaged, we did achieve an elimination rate of 74 per cent. Urban land reform is both a moral and political imperative. Our efforts to restore dignified life will be incomplete without the delivery of decent shelter and sanitation. Rural economic development, through the delegation of key central Government functions and the decentralisation of industries, must be implemented in tandem as a means of addressing the factors that drive rural-urban migration.

Health

Namibia is on the verge of achieving total HIV/AIDS epidemic control. In line with the triple 90 goals, our HIV response stands at 94:96:95. This means 94 per cent of people who are HIV positive know their status; 96 per cent are on ARV treatment, and 95 per cent are virally suppressed. As a result of this success, the Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission yielded encouraging outcomes, where 97 per cent of babies born to HIV-positive mothers are HIV-free. The cooperation agreement between Namibia and the Government of the United States, through PEPFAR, continues to materially support our HIV/AIDS management programmes, which has enabled us to achieve these gains. Following the outbreak of Hepatitis E in 2017, we mobilised a national response in 10 regions, providing safe water, sanitation and hygiene, where reported cases have been mostly from informal settlements. To date, a total of 7,703 Hepatitis E cases and 65 deaths have been reported. While Namibia has done relatively well in its response to eliminate Malaria, the country is beginning to record some reversals, with an upswing in new cases following the last transmission season of September 2019 to April 2020. This increase is due to good rainfalls and insufficient Indoor Residual Spraying coverage.

As we mobilise resources into the immediate public health emergency of COVID-19, I caution stakeholders not to redirect all efforts and funding at the expense of other public healthcare responses. Maintaining a balance will be critical to preserving the gains made.

Infrastructure



Modern and reliable infrastructure is critical for high and sustained economic growth. The following infrastructure projects were completed during the term:

- The Port of Walvis Bay was deepened and expanded, positioning our country as a strategic logistics hub and gateway into the region.
- The construction of the Neckartal Dam was completed and inaugurated in March 2020. Following good rains, the current water level in the dam stands at 86 million cubic meters. At full capacity, this dam will become the largest water storage facility in the country.
- According to MTC, its telecommunications network has been upgraded from 2G to 3G. To date, 83 per cent of our population has access to 3G broadband services, while 34 per cent have access to 4G services. This is a notable achievement, considering the vastness of our country. I am proud of MTC, which we inaugurated in 1994 with the Prime Minister of Sweden. It is therefore disappointing that, lately, network connectivity reliability is diminishing.
- The remaining roads that are due for completion during the second term include the following dual carriageways: Windhoek-Okahandja, Swakopmund-Walvis Bay, and the Windhoek-Hosea Kutako International Airport,.
- Significant progress has been made to increase the national road network and to upgrade roads from gravel to a bitumen standard. During the term, an additional 819 kilometres of bitumen standard roads and 373 kilometres of gravel roads were added to the national road network of more than 44,500 kilometres. According to the World Economic Forum – Global Competitiveness Report of 2019, Namibia remains Number 1 in Africa concerning road infrastructure.

International Relations



Crossing over to International Relations, the world is undergoing major transformations and our Foreign Policy must be adequately geared to deal with these new challenges. The multilateral order is the best guarantor for world peace. The Namibian Government remains committed to strengthening the multilateral system through supporting international accords and problem solving. During the period under review, we endeavoured to strengthen mutually beneficial relations with friendly nations at regional, continental and international levels through State Visits, Working Visits, Joint Commissions of Cooperation, and Political and Diplomatic Consultations. Engagements with dignitaries from Africa and the world demonstrate our commitment to bilateral cooperation in order to advance global peace and our domestic economic interests.

2019 witnessed Namibia handing over the SADC Chairmanship to Tanzania at the 39th SADC Summit, which was held in Dar es Salaam on 17 August 2019.

During Namibia's tenure, we continued to witness significant progress in the entrenchment of democratic values and constitutionality in our region. The Kingdom of Eswatini, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Republic of Madagascar, the Union of Comoros, the Republic of Malawi, and the Republic of South Africa held successful elections during Namibia's chairmanship. For the first time since her independence, we witnessed a peaceful transfer of power in the DRC, marking what we all hope will be a new era of prosperity, peace and political stability for the country.

The COVID-19 Information Centre



I thank the Ministers of Health and Information and their Deputies for keeping the nation informed through the COVID-19 Information Centre. We made history with the appointment of the youngest Deputy Minister on the continent, and the appointment of a Deputy Minister from an opposition Party was also well received. The two of them have been running the Information Centre effectively. This is a sign of the Namibian House we are building, where the youth and the opposition work together as One Namibia, One Nation. I thank the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister and the entire Government for pulling together during this time of crisis.



Unlocking the Future: Economic Recovery Plan

The economic crisis that has been spurred by COVID-19 presents us all with the opportunity to reflect and redesign our future. We will use the lessons from the current challenges and reframe them into opportunities for recovery and growth. Together with the Cabinet, I am in the process of finalising the Harambee Prosperity Plan II, which will provide a roadmap for accelerated implementation of Government programmes that are geared towards economic recovery in the second term.

The Plan will be informed by prioritised commitments from the 2019 SWAPO Party Manifesto; existing funded Capital projects; and recommendations from the High Level Panel on the Namibian Economy. The Economic Recovery Plan, at a high level, will aim to achieve the following:

- Regained fiscal stability
- Structural economic reforms
- Public sector reforms
- Improved productivity

Central to these reforms is a need to craft a pragmatic economic growth plan that will identify new economic growth opportunities. In March 2020, I announced the establishment of the Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board in the Presidency to fast track Investment Promotion and SME Development by facilitating conducive business environments, investment promotion, and sustainable SME development.



BREAKING THE STIGMA OF INFERTILITY

“ *Having a child requires a family bond, as every woman is more than a mother and every man is more than a father.* ”
– Madame Monica Geingos, First Lady of Namibia



The One Economy Foundation, together with the Merck Foundation, launched the 'Merck More Than a Mother' campaign on 11 March 2020 at the Safari Hotel in Windhoek. The launch constituted over 120 attendees, which included Policy Makers, Civil Society Organisations, Merck Foundation Alumni, Health Care Professionals, Merck Heroines, Academia, and the Media fraternity.

There is overwhelming recognition that a collective effort is needed to address the stigma of infertility. The campaign was a response to the call to raise awareness on the challenges and possible solutions to empower infertile men, women and couples, as well as their families, through access to information, health and a change of mind-set.



The three-day programme aimed to empower those directly and indirectly affected by infertility. In her keynote address, Madame Monica Geingos, the First Lady of the Republic of Namibia and Ambassador of the Merck More than a Mother, said: "Having a child requires a family bond, as every woman is more than a mother and every man is more than a father." Women are more than mothers. Madame Monica Geingos also called for cooperation between private and public health practitioners to ease financial burdens, which add to emotional stress, on couples and families.

The campaign also highlighted the need for effective infertility care as the current available services are not affordable, which places a financial burden on those seeking treatment. It is critical to initiate a cultural shift to destigmatise infertility on all levels.

STAFF APPOINTMENTS AND TRANSFERS

Staff turnover in the Presidency 2018-2020

	2018	2019	2020
New Appointments	20	23	5
Service Terminations	5	14	8
Promotions	9	24	13
Transfers	1	1	1

11 August 2020

Amb. Zed Ngavirue Briefing on the negotiations on Genocide, Apology and Reparations between Namibia and Germany, 11 August 2020







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