



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
THE PRESIDENCY

**STATEMENT BY HER EXCELLENCY DR. NETUMBO
NANDI-NDAITWAH, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC
OF NAMIBIA, ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL
OPENING OF THE 18TH EDITION OF HELAO NAFIDI
BUSINESS EXPO**

**HELAO NAFIDI TOWN,
OHANGWENA REGION
1 NOVEMBER 2025**

- **Director of Ceremonies;**
- **Honourable Kadiva Hamutumwa Governor of Ohangwena Region,**
- **Your Worship Councillor Darius Shaalukeni, Mayor of Helao Nafidi Town;**
- **Ms. Inge Ipinge Chief Executive Officer of Helao Nafidi Town Council;**
- **Honourable Regional and Local Authority Councillors;**
- **Traditional and Spiritual Leaders;**
- **Business Community;**
- **Distinguished Guests;**
- **Leaders of various political parties;**
- **Members of Media;**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

As I join you here today in Helao Nafidi, a town that has grown remarkably over the years into a vibrant centre of activity and a key contributor to the growth of the Ohangwena Region and our nation as a whole, I call on all of you to make a commitment to contribute to the economic growth of our economy .

I extend my profound gratitude to the Council and Management of Helao Nafidi Town for their leadership and unwavering commitment to local

development. I equally wish to thank the organisers of this Expo for inviting me not only to officiate this important occasion, but also to appreciate how the Town Council contributes to the broader development agenda of our country.

This year's theme, "Ignite the Future: Unearthing Youth Potential and Innovation at the Heart of Helao Nafidi Town," captures a vital message. It reminds us that our future rests in the hands of our youth. It calls upon us to recognise and nurture the talents of young people, whether in sports, innovation, entrepreneurship or the creative industries among others and to fully integrate their potential into the economy of our nation. This is talking to the center of our priorities, youth empowerment. That is why the government has not hesitated to operationalize the National Youth Fund, that is capitalized with N\$257 million. We embarked upon this endeavor understanding that the youth is the future of our country.

Helao Nafidi is not only a name on a map. It carries the legacy of a true Namibian, a fearless freedom fighter and a believer in one Namibia one nation. Comrade Nabot Helao Nafidi, affectionately known as Camilo, a son of this soil who served as a PLAN political commissar and freedom fighter during our liberation struggle. He dedicated his life to the cause of Namibia's independence, and through his courage and sacrifice, his name became a symbol of resilience and self-determination. Particularly amongst the residents of Helao Nafidi.

Wherever his spirit rests, we can be certain that he would take pride in seeing this town grow, united and prosperous. As we gather here today, let us draw inspiration from his example and commit ourselves to the values for which he stood: hard work, unity, sacrifice, and an unyielding belief in a better tomorrow.

In that spirit, we must remember that it cannot be business as usual. We must embrace innovation and find new ways to deliver services more efficiently and equitably. Our people expect and deserve improved access to land, housing, sanitation, water, and electricity. As Government, we remain committed to ensuring that every Namibian, regardless of where they live, can enjoy a decent standard of living.

However, we need the private sector as much as the private sector needs the government. On the 24th October 2025 , we have launched the

Namibia Public Private Forum (NPPF) that will be held annually. The purpose of the Forum is to create space for the government and the private sector in a formal setting to engage, in order to appreciate each other's responsibilities in the process of national building, economic advancement, to grow our economy, create jobs and take our people out of poverty for a balanced shared prosperity.

The outcome of the Forum is encouraging. In the course of the coming week I will appoint the three Task Forces; 1. Economic Recovery, 2. Health and 3. Housing, as agreed at the Forum. The government has also to make some adjustments to create a conducive environment for the private sector, while the private sector will respond to the government priory areas for social and economic development. It is my hope that next year the forum will even be better, in organization and outcomes. Equally important, one of the Forum outcome is that, the government and the private sector have agreed to work together for the good our people.

Director of Ceremonies,

I have observed with concern the conflicts that sometimes arise between local authorities and residents. These conflicts delay service delivery and weaken community trust. I call upon all stakeholders to engage one another with honesty and urgency. Let us build partnerships, not divisions. Let us find practical and lasting solutions to challenges that compromise local development. Without collaboration and understanding their will be no winner, both the community and the council will lose. Remember unity is strength.

The town of Helao Nafidi occupies a strategic location as a gateway to our neighbour Angola. This position offers tremendous potential for cross-border trade and cooperation. This Expo therefore presents a unique opportunity to strengthen business ties and promote regional growth through the movement of people, goods, services, and knowledge. You can choose a friend but you can not choose a brother or sister just as you can not chose a neighbor. Their is a lot we can benefit from all our neighbors including Angola and our neighbors from us. As your president I want to see good neighborhood along all our borders, and I am asking you to join me fully in this endeavor, in words and action.

Director of Ceremonies,

Our path to sustainable development depends on how well we empower our entrepreneurs and small businesses. This Expo is not just a social event. It is a platform for collaboration, learning, and growth. It is a space where ideas are exchanged, partnerships are formed, and opportunities are unlocked. Let all the exhibitors and visitors have a take away from here.

I am informed that this year's exhibition period has been reduced from seven to three days due to limited community support. I therefore call upon all residents and stakeholders to take ownership of this event. Support your town. Participate actively. The success of such initiatives depends on collective commitment.

To the organisers, I encourage you to benchmark against other trade fairs across the country and explore new strategies to revitalise and strengthen this Expo in the years ahead. Remember every fallback is a learning experience, to come back with a better approach.

To the business community and investors, I say, work closely with the Helao Nafidi Town Council and the Regional Authorities. Invest in the socio-economic development of this town. Together, let us build a stronger, more inclusive economy that leaves no Namibian behind. As border town you are a potential candidate to benefit from the Africa Continental Free Trade Area. At the NPPF, I have learned they are many projects waiting the doors to be opened to enter Namibia, look for them and bring them in your town and the region at large.

Director of Ceremonies,

As we enter the election month, Namibians will once again demonstrate the strength of our democracy. On 26 November 2025, our people will head to the polls to elect regional and local authority leaders. I urge all eligible voters to participate peacefully and responsibly in this important democratic exercise. For me those elections are critical as those to be elected must believe in the policies of the 8th administration as articulated in NDP6 in order to work with me to deliver on the commitments I have made to the Namibian people. Those commitments include quality service delivery, youth empowerment, job creation, eradication of poverty among others.

At this point, I wish to acknowledge and commend the outgoing regional and local authority councillors for their dedicated service to the Helao Nafidi community and the Oshana Region. You have laid a solid foundation upon which the next generation of leaders will build. I am confident that those who come after you will continue to advance the development of this town and region with the same passion and dedication.

Let us continue to work together to grow our local economy, strengthen community unity, and build a prosperous and sustainable future for all Namibians.

Let me end by wishing the exhibitors both large, SME, the vendors and the visitors to make the best out of 18th Addition of Helao Nafidi Business Expo.

I now have the honour and privilege to declare the 18th Addition of Helao Nafidi Business Expo 2025 officially open.

I thank you.