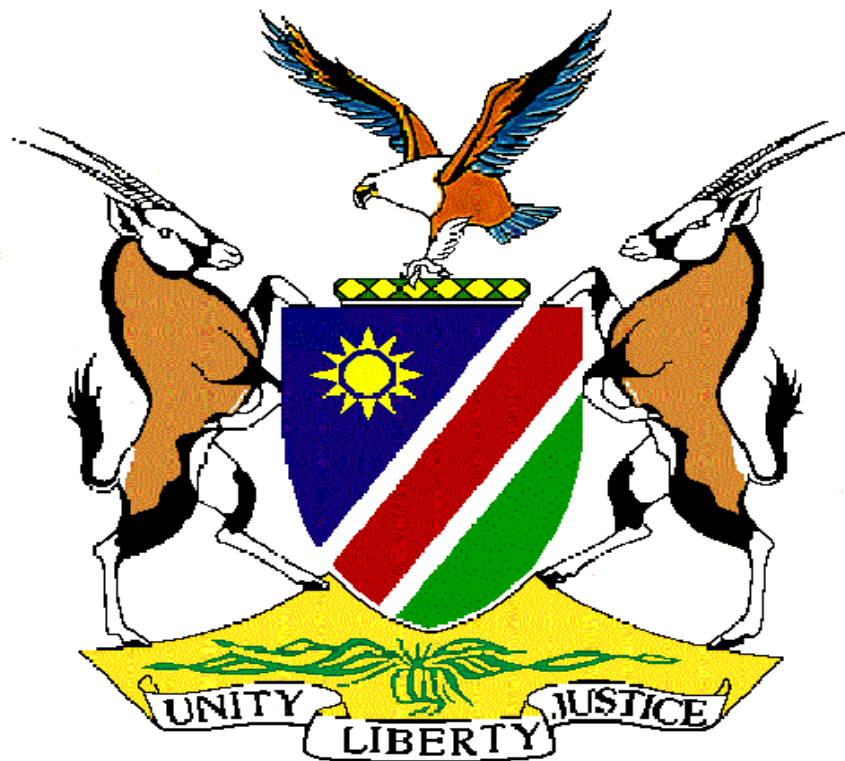


REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY
HIFIKEPUNYE POHAMBWA, PRESIDENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA,
ON THE OCCASION OF THE
GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY OF
OMUTHIYA HOSPITAL**

15 NOVEMBER 2009

**OMUTHIYA HOSPITAL
OSHIKOTO REGION**

Director of Ceremonies

Honourable Ministers

Her Excellency Madame Ren Xiaoping, Ambassador of the
People Republic of China

Honourable Governor of Oshikoto Region,

Honourable Regional and Local Councillors

Traditional and Community leaders

Heads of Government Departments from the MoHSS and
other Ministries

Distinguished invited Guests

Members of the Press

Ladies and Gentlemen

Today marks yet another milestone in the development of Omuthiya town. I am delighted to be part of the history as we gather here for the groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of Omuthiya district hospital in partnership with the Government of the People's Republic of China through a grant totaling **sixty eighty million eight hundred and thirty three thousand and three hundred Namibian Dollars** (N\$ 68,833,300), equivalent to RMB 63,450,000.

The SWAPO Party Government has maintained education, health and housing as top priorities in our quest to develop Namibia. At independence, Namibia adopted the Primary Health Care Approach as a policy for quality health care

services. In the context of primary health care, this Omuthiya health facility will be classified as a district hospital, charged with general family medical care.

Director of Ceremonies,

Omuthiya town is the Headquarters of Oshikoto region and located on the centre as you travel from Tsumeb to Ondangwa. Therefore, Government identified the need for a district hospital to be constructed to serve as a referral for outreach points for primary health care clinics and health centres within the boundaries of Omuthiya. The hospital is designed by China IPPR International Engineering Corporation in collaboration with the Ministry of Works and Transport technical personnel, the Ministry of Health and Social Services and the Oshikoto Regional Council.

The total area of the hospital which is to be constructed by China Jiangsu International is 6442m² with a bed capacity of 64 inpatients. The hospital comprises among others the following:

- Medical building which constitutes of outpatients department, emergency department, pharmacy, laboratory, operation theatre, Central Sterile Supply

Department, maternity and pediatric wards, general male and female wards, male and female TB wards

- Kitchen
- Laundry
- Administrative buildings
- Logistic function house (mortuary, incinerator)
- Doctors and nurses living quarters

Director of Ceremonies,

In line with the World Health Organization guidelines, the Primary Health Care Approach transformed the provision of health care service by making it more equitable, accessible, cost effective, and comprehensive. As a result, Government has continued to upgrade and renovate the existing hospitals, health centres and clinics.

To date, Government has constructed, upgraded and renovated a total of **269** Clinics and **46** Health centres country wide. We upgraded a total of 34 district hospitals of which Kongo, Eenhana, Andara, Nankudu and Nyangana were constructed as new modern district hospitals. The emphasis has been placed on the renovation and upgrading of the existing hospitals to create a conducive environment for quality health care provision.

We are currently renovating Oshakati Intermediate referral hospital Class B1 to a state-of-the-art referral hospital for the northern regions of Oshana, Ohangwena, Omusati and Oshikoto. Once complete, it will have a special TB referral hospital within the complex, which will have specialized wards for both Multi-drug Resistant (MDR) TB and Extreme Drug Resistant (XDR) TB.

In addition, Government had decided to support several Church-owned hospitals through the provision of 100% subsidy for salaries. We have also decided to give a further 95% subsidy for infrastructure maintenance. The primary objective is to bring health care services closer to the community.

In this regard, I wish to inform you that the upgrading of Onandjokwe to an Intermediate regional referral hospital Class B2 is receiving attention.

Improving access to health and social services is one of the SWAPO Party Government strategic priorities. Indeed, the SWAPO Party Election Manifesto of 2009 provides amongst others the maintenance of programmes of primary health care for increasing community participation as well

as the construction of hospitals, clinics and health centers in urban and rural areas where such services do not exist. The commencement of the Omuthiya hospital construction will therefore enable Government to reduce the challenges of communicable and non – communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS pandemic, TB and malaria.

Furthermore, the health facility will provide for other health services such as routine immunization of all infants and children as well as the improvement and expansion of reproductive health care for expecting women in order to reduce maternal mortality rates.

Director of Ceremonies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Government is committing enormous resources to health and social services, however the needs outstrip available public resources. I therefore call upon the stakeholders to keep supporting our efforts to improve the quality of our health services from the primary to the tertiary levels of care. In this regard, I wish to thank the Government of the People's Republic of China for the continued support we have received from time to time, to the liberation struggle of Namibia and nation building. Today, we are gathered here for a groundbreaking ceremony of Omuthiya district

hospital, thanks to the Government and people of the People's Republic of China.

I also commend the efforts of the National Planning Commission, Ministry of Works and Transport, Ministry of Health and Social Services and the Oshikoto Regional Council for the realization of this project which has culminated in this groundbreaking ceremony.

It is now my distinct honour and privilege to lay the brick for the commencement of the construction of Omuthiya hospital.

I thank you