



Republic of Namibia

**INTRODUCTORY REMARKS
TO KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY
H.E. PRESIDENT HIFIKEPUNYE POHAMB**

BY

**DR. RICHARD NCHABI KAMWI, MP
MINISTER OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

DURING THE

1ST NAMIBIAN MALE CONFERENCE ON HIV & AIDS

**WINDHOEK
20 FEBRUARY 2008**

Your Excellency, President of the Republic of Namibia, Comrade Hifikepunye Pohamba
Right Honourable Prime Minister, Comrade Nahas Angula
Honourable Founding Prime Minister, Dr. Hage Geingob
Honourable Ministers and Members of Parliament
Permanent Secretaries
Honourable Governors
Representatives of the Diplomatic Corps
Representatives of United Nations Family Agencies
Captains of Industry
Representatives of Non-Governmental and Community Based Organisations
Members of Civil Society
Dear Colleagues
Representatives of the Media
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is with a sense of honour and humility that I take the podium to invite the Keynote Address of His Excellency President Hifikepunye Pohamba, President of the Republic of Namibia, at this momentous Conference.

Your Excellency, allow me to first and foremost express my sincerest gratitude at your making time to attend this Conference, thereby investing it with the importance that this issue deserves, as you yourself continually affirm. I wish to further express admiration and gratitude for your demonstrated leadership in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Indeed, in December 2006 you joined supporters and People Living with HIV/AIDS in the World AIDS Day Commemoration in Oshakati, where you personally participated in the Walk of Hope. We remain grateful of the support shown, in particular, by the fact you remain committed to your word in which you instructed every local, regional and/or national leader to pronounce on HIV/AIDS at every event which he/she addresses. Indeed, this is bearing fruit by increasing awareness and responsiveness to HIV/AIDS treatment, care and prevention, as well as acknowledging the crosscutting nature of its effects.

Comrade President,

Allow me to cite an example of why we are here this morning. Caprivi region has registered the highest prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS in the country at 39%. Data from the Mapilelo ARV Clinic shows that out of 12,000 people in pre and post test counselling for HIV/AIDS, only 35% are men. In this region, only 30% of 3,800 people on highly active ART for AIDS are men. Less than 5% of the 1,500 people enrolled in PMTCT plus programmes are men in Caprivi.

As I stated earlier, it could be men were without sufficient platform to share, learn and be counselled on matters related to HIV/AIDS.

Comrade President, we created this pioneering national platform with the clear motive that the lessons learned from here will spread into all the regions. We hope to see regional such platforms for men to share and support their women folk in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Dear Colleagues

I now have the honour to invite Your Excellency, the President of the Republic, to address the Conference.