



MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

KEY NOTE ADDRESS BY:

**DR. RICHARD N. KAMWI, MINISTER OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL
SERVICES AT THE 11TH GRADUATION CEREMONY OF THE
MINISTRY'S TRAINING NETWORK, SAFARI HOTEL**

24 APRIL 2008



Programme Director

Hon. Deputy Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Petrina Haingura

Ministers/Members of the Cabinet present

The Permanent Secretary, Mr. Kahijoro Kahuure

Dr. N. Forster, Deputy P.S. Ministry of Health and Social Services

Mr. P.K. Ndaitwa: Undersecretary-Policy Development and Resource Management, Ministry of Health and Social Services

Member of Diplomatic Corps

Senior Government Officials

Development partners

Delegates from other Ministries

Senior officials and staff members of the Ministry of Health and Social Services

Members of the Media

Distinguished Guests

Dear Parents

Graduants

Ladies and Gentleman

I feel very honoured and privileged to address you on this auspicious occasion: the 11th graduation ceremony of the Ministry's Training Network.

First and foremost, I would like to congratulate and applaud the graduants for making our Ministry proud by successfully having completed their courses of study, it is indeed a great achievement.

Namibia, as a Sub-Saharan country is faced with human resources for health challenges that are believed to be one of the factors hampering the achievement of the Health Millenium Development Goals (MDG's) if not addressed promptly. These challenges are among others: shortages of health workers, skill imbalances of available health workers, maldistribution of available health workers with urban concentration and shortages in rural areas, poor working environments due to poor management of existing resources, inadequate suppliers and facilities resulting in low morale and unmotivated health workers, and lack of incentives to retain and motivate health workers.

**Director of Ceremonies,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

In order to address these challenges, and for us to meet the goals of Vision 2030 Government through the Ministry of Health and Social Services have put in place the following strategies.

These strategies are among others:

The acceleration of the training of health personnel through increment of health related student's intakes locally and international. This is evidenced

by the numbers of health related students under training during this academic year.

Currently there is a total number of **709** students at the Ministry's Training Centres, of which **634** are pupil enrolled nurses, **34** Pharmacist Assistants, **16** Environmental Health Assistants, **10** Radiographic Assistants and **15** Medical Laboratory Technicians. In addition, the University of Namibia has **879** health related students under training during this academic year pursuing studies in the following fields: Nursing Science **666**, Degree in Social work **164**, Diploma in Radiography **10**, and **39** Premed/Pharmacy.

In addition, I am pleased to announce that through the Polytechnic of Namibia, we established B-Tech degree/diploma in Environmental Health with **28** students and Med. Lab. Technology with **29** students.

It is encouraging to note that, many more Namibian students are pursuing health related studies at foreign academic institutions in countries such as Cuba, Russia, Kenya, Ghana, Tanzania and South Africa. Among these students, **117** are studying Medicine, **38** Pharmacy, **9** Clinical Engineering, **30** Environmental Health and **30** Med. Laboratory Technology.

Director of Ceremony

Ladies and Gentlemen

I now have a pleasure to inform you that a total number of **379** students are graduating today in the following fields:

362 Enrolled nurse/midwives, 10 Pharmacy Assistants, 6 Radiographic Assistants, and 1 Environmental Health Assistant

These graduates were trained and qualified from the Ministry's Training Centres. I am also proud to announce that a total of 113 Registered nurses of which 100 took up employment with this Ministry also completed their studies at the University of Namibia.

Whereas, a total of 23 Medical interns commenced with their second year medical internship at Katutura and Windhoek Central hospitals this year, while another group of 23 are expected to commence with their first year internship.

This is indeed a great achievement to this Ministry and to the entire Namibian Government and population, to be served by these young Namibian health workers.

Director of Ceremonies

Ladies and Gentlemen

Accelerating health personnel training is not the only strategy my Ministry has put in place to address human resources challenges, there are many more, such as the provision of financial assistance to health related students. During the financial year 2007/08, this ministry financially assisted 525 health related pre-service students to a tune of N\$ 3,927,679.

At this juncture, wish to inform you that currently the Ministry is in a process of conducting a health systems review, which will result in the development of the Ministry's Strategic Plan and other relevant strategies including those of human resources management and development.

Furthermore, the Ministry is working on other initiatives such as determining workload base staffing requirements for health facilities. To do this, programmes including, computerized Human Resource Management Information System, in order to have accurate, and readily available human resource information for planning and decision making purposes are being put in place.

Director of Ceremonies,

Ladies and Gentlemen

We remain grateful to our development partners who are supporting the human resources for health development function. My sincere appreciations go to the Centre for Disease Control (CDC), International Training and Education Centre on HIV (I-TECH), Global Fund, Management Sciences for Health (MSH) and other relevant development partners not mentioned here.

In the same vein I wish to express our gratitude to stakeholders in training including the University of Namibia, Polytechnic of Namibia as well as the National Institute of Pathology. Indeed, as a Ministry we remain grateful to the Ministry of Education for the financial support provided to students through the Namibian Students Financial Assistance Fund (NSFAF) to enable them to pursue their field of studies at easy.

Director of Ceremonies

Dear Parents

Allow me to address the graduants. This is a jubilant event to honour you who have attained your objectives. After very hard work and dedication, we have a reason to join you in celebrating this day.

For nursing graduants, I consider the oath which you will take today as being of the utmost importance, since it underscores your commitment and dedication to serve the Namibian population through this noble profession, and describes to the rules and regulations that govern your profession.

Today is the beginning of another chapter in your life as you are now responsible for own actions as dedicated by your scope of practice. Furthermore, I wish to remind you, in addition to Clinical and Theoretical knowledge you acquired during your training, you are also expected to possess the following important attributes as health workers:

- Good communication and listening skills
- Caring, compassion, humanity, humility, empathy and honesty
- Commitment, loyalty towards the patients, clients, colleagues and entire public.

You are therefore expected to be there when needed the most.

Sons and daughters of this brave land, allow me to congratulate you as you have made us proud and confident about the future of the Namibian nation. I am confident that you will serve the Namibian people with dignity and

respect. Furthermore, I wish you all the best in your career development and progress.

Director of Ceremonies

Ladies and Gentlemen

In conclusion I would like to thank my officials-Mrs. Sam and your colleagues for achieving this objective of human resource development, particularly the Directorate: Policy, Planning and HRD, National Health Training Centre and Regional Health Training Centres and their lectures who are charged with the responsibility of training and Human Resource Development in this Ministry and for making necessary arrangements to make this occasion a success.

I thank you