



Republic of Namibia

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

BY

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

DURING THE

**On The Occasion of the Launch of the National
Disability Council**

Windhoek Country Club and Resort, [Oryx 2](#), Windhoek
9th July 2008

Programme Director – Mr. Gerson Mutendere
Director: Development Social Welfare Services
Members of the National Disability Council
Distinguished Men and Women with Disabilities who are
present today
The Chairperson of National Federation of People with
Disabilities in Namibia
Distinguished invited Guests
Members of the Media
Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me a great pleasure to officiate at this important and an historic occasion, Launch of the National Disability Council and introduction of members of the Council. This indeed, bears testimony to Government's commitment towards the upliftment, improving and enhancing the quality of life of people with disabilities.

Director of Ceremonies,

According to Article 10 of the Supreme Law, the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia "all persons shall be equal before the law and that no person may be discriminated against on the grounds of sex, race, colour, ethnic origin, creed or social or economic status". This statement is paramount in addressing issues related to Namibians with disability.

It is for this reason that, I remain indebted to the wise men and women who wrote the Namibian Constitution for the foresight. As a result, the SWAPO Party Government responded by ensuring that measures are put in place to ensure that

People with Disabilities get the opportunities to participate fully and actively in the different social and economic activities.

To that end, the National Policy on Disability was adopted by the National Assembly as early as July 1997. The National Policy on Disability made provision for the establishment of the National Disability Council and in fulfilling that responsibility the National Disability Council Act, 2004 (Act 26 of 2004) was passed. Indeed, today, we meet here to launch the Council as a juristic person in terms of Section 2 of the Act. This is not only historic but a milestone to nation building.

I must admit, my Ministry has been inundated with requests and demands to speed up the process to establish the Council. Clearly, the launch of the Council is long overdue. However, I remain grateful that finally the historic moment is now. I want to appeal to you to work hard and to ensure that the Council does not exist in name but in full action. Similarly, I would like to take this opportunity to pledge my unconditional support to the Council.

Director of Ceremonies,
Ladies and Gentlemen

Allow me to enumerate the following functions of the Council:

- a) monitor the implementation of the National Policy on Disability in the manner provided in this Act;
- b) identify provisions in any law, which may hinder the implementation of the National Policy on Disability and make recommendations in that regard to the Authority;

- c) advise any person responsible for the enforcement of existing legislation which provides for equal opportunities for all people in Namibia on the enforcement of that legislation;
- d) comment on proposed legislation which may affect persons with disabilities in any manner;
- e) consult with persons with disabilities, organisations of persons with disabilities and organisations rendering services to persons with disabilities, and take any other steps in order to obtain necessary information on the implementation of the National Policy on Disabilities,
- f) initiate amendments to the National Policy on Disability in order to ensure that it takes account of changing circumstances; and
- g) in general take all necessary steps in order to improve the situation of persons with disabilities in Namibia.

Director of Ceremonies,
Ladies and Gentlemen

I want to make it crystal clear, I appointed you as members of the Council in terms of Section 5 of the National Council Act 26 of 2004 taking into consideration your unwavering support and commitment to the course. Given that, you are affected in one way or another beyond any reasonable doubt, I am convinced that you will deliver in terms of the provisions of this Act.

Director of Ceremonies,
Ladies and Gentlemen

Allow me at this juncture to invite the Members of the Council to the front as I call them by names:

1. Ms. Tuuliki Nekundi Namibia Federation of The Visually Impaired
2. Mr. Joseph Ndinomupya Albino Trust
3. Ms. Alexia Manombe-Ncube Namibia Association of Differently Able Women
4. Ms. Beata Shihepo Namibia National Association of the Deaf
5. Mr. Manfred Howaeb Organisation of Youth with Disabilities
6. Ms. Pamela Somses Namibia Association of Children with Disabilities
7. Mr. Tjiueza Tjombumbi Namibia Association of People with Physical Disabilities
8. Ms. L. Conradie The Employer's Federation
9. Ms. M. Kufuna Ministry of Health and Social Services
10. Dr. Lisony Kahikuata-Kariko Ministry of Education
11. Mr. Strauss Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
12. Mr. Meliherius Haukambe Namibia Public Workers Union (NAPWU)
13. Mr. William Bekker Expert on Disability related issues.

I am presenting to you members of the National Disability Council. Congratulations! I wish you well and look forward to your reports.

Director of Ceremonies,
Ladies and Gentlemen

I now have the distinct honour to declare the National Disability Council in terms of Section 2 of the National Disability Council Act, 2004 (Act 26 of 2004) officially commissioned.

I thank you.

