



Republic of Namibia

Statement by

Hon. Dr. Richard Nchabi Kamwi,

Ministry of Health and Social Services

**On the Occasion of Official Opening of Kavango Regional
Office of the National Federation of People with Disabilities in
Namibia (NFPDN)**

15 September 2008, Rundu

Director of Ceremonies

Hon Governor of Okavango Region

Hon Councilors present

NFPDN Chairperson - Mr. Martin Tjivera

Secretary General of the NFPDN - Mr. Londi De Wee

Representatives of VSO

Representative of the European Commission

Heads of Government Departments

Church Leaders and NGO'S

Media Practitioners

Members of the Police Force

All invited Guests

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is an honor for me to officiate at this special event, the official opening of the National Federation of People with Disabilities in Namibia (NFPDN) Kavango Regional Office. This is the third Regional Office to be established under the Namibia Disability Programme (NDP). The other two Regional Offices cater for the Kunene, Ohangwena and Omusati served from the Oshakati office.

Director of Ceremonies,

The five year Namibia Disability Program is supported by the EU and implemented in partnership between my Ministry, NFPDN and Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO). The opening of the NFPDN Regional Office here is in line with the Government's approach of bringing services closer to the people. I am informed that the ground work was done to open a fourth Regional Office in the Otjozondjupa Region.

In view of this achievement of bringing services closer to the people, the Namibia Disability Program supports Government efforts to empower people with disabilities in the most disadvantaged regions and to ensure their accessibility to services.

The MHSS will continue to provide support towards the establishment and development of Organizations of People with Disabilities and the social integration of people with disabilities into Society. To this end, I appeal to the all partners in the Disability Sector to work in unison to facilitate this vital process.

The Ministry of Health and Social Services launched the National Disability Council on 09 July 2008 in accordance with National Disability Council Act of 2004. The establishment of the Council symbolizes the Government's commitment to ensure self representation in the creation of a Society for All. The slogan "*Nothing about us with out us*" is clearly manifested in the composition of the council members.

Director of Ceremonies

The Ministry has an enormous task including the social integration of people with disabilities in the mainstream society. My Ministry will continue to consult with the partners on a regular basis. The MHSS will also continue to support the Namibia Disability Programme through its Programme Management Team (PMT) at national and regional levels through the regional committees. In addition my ministry will encourage

and exert pressure on the line ministries to implement the functions as stipulated in the National Policy on Disability.

Allow me to emphasize the fact that the MHSS is the custodian of disability matters and therefore, I call upon the regional staff members to support the National Disability Regional Office.

The MHSS has made reasonable resources available in support of the programme through the provision of staff members, infrastructure (office space is provided to the NFPDN Head Office and the Organizations of People with disabilities in Windhoek and Oshakati offices). I was reliably informed that a working relationship has been established with the Office of the Regional Director Ms. Muremi. Hence, it was instrumental in obtaining office space for the NFPDN regional office in Rundu. I comment this type of cooperation as it increases a sense of ownership and commitment among partners.

I call upon all the partners, more especially the NFPDN as an umbrella body, to continue to collaborate with my Ministry in ensuring the betterment of the lives of People with Disabilities.

Director of Ceremonies,

The challenges facing the disability sector now is to ensure the sustainability of programs for people with disabilities. The NDP is in its final year, and as you know the opening of Regional Offices will result in an increased demand for services by the people with disabilities. The challenge therefore is to ensure sustainability of the Program beyond the fifth year. I want to appeal for closer cooperation among Civil Society, line Ministries and the Private Sector for the benefit of the People with Disabilities. I also urge the Regional Council to monitor the programme implementation of this office in line with the Decentralization Policy.

In conclusion, I congratulate the NFPDN on the progress made in terms of accessing People with Disabilities to services in the most disadvantaged Regions.

It is now my distinct honor and pleasure to declare the **NFPDN Kavango Regional Office, officially opened.**

I thank you.