



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

STATEMENT

BY

HON. DR. RICHARD NCHABI KAMWI, MP

MINISTER OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

DURING THE

HANDOVER CEREMONY OF OUTREACH VEHICLE

DONATED BY NAMDEB DIAMOND CORPORATION

KATIMA MULILO

1 FEBRUARY 2008

Director of Ceremonies

Your Worship, the Mayor of Katima Mulilo, Honourable John
Likando

Regional Director of Health and Social Services, Mr. Michael
Likando and your Management Team

Mr. Hilifa Mbako, NAMDEB Group Manager for External Affairs

Officials from the NAMDEB Head Office

The Community of Katima Mulilo

Members of the Media, Ladies and gentlemen

I am honoured to be here this morning at this very important
handover ceremony. In opening I would like to express sincere
gratitude to NAMDEB for its response to the urgent need for an
outreach vehicle in this community.

Indeed, I personally experienced the dire need of emergency
transportation when in early 2007 I was in this area in need of a
vehicle.

At the time the government garage had no available vehicle and so I was offered the outreach services vehicle from our Regional Directorate. Unfortunately, that vehicle had already reached and passed its lifespan, and failed on me. It became crystal clear to me then, how potentially dangerous, life-threatening and devastating the situation would be if, for example, that very same outreach vehicle was transporting vaccines in a medical emergency and broke down! Moreover, after it had broken down on me Katima Mulilo basically remained without an outreach vehicle. This meant Primary Health Care (PHC) services in particular EPI for remote areas, was at a stand still.

Upon my return to Windhoek I immediately took up the matter with a close colleague of mine, Dr. Juno Nashandi, who is currently Chief Medical Officer at Oranjemund. Indeed he and the community of Oranjemund took up the challenge, the gain of which we see today with our own eyes. Our sincerest thanks go to the entire Oranjemund community, and the rank and file of personnel at NAMDEB.

As I understand, the funds for the procurement of this outreach vehicle came from the Oranjemund Trust – a Trust established by NAMDEB workers. This is indeed a commendable gesture of good will and national unity, as we witness one community helping another.

It is therefore, on this background that I lay an urgent appeal to the people of the Caprivi region. Here we are today, receiving a donation from a community of Namibians in the far South of our country, regardless of tribal or cultural affiliation, but in earnest response to the urgent need of the community here.

Dear community members, let us regard ourselves first and foremost as Namibians. The situation here in Caprivi is indeed worrisome and disgraceful, that regional peace and development are being jeopardised by showing of intolerance, injustice and prejudice.

Yes, each one of us has a tribal background, of which we are proud and maintain allegiance to; however of what benefit is that allegiance when it's ruining the potential for development; people are suffering. Development cannot succeed where there is strife and disunity.

Let us emulate the examples from other regions in our beloved country, where allegiance to tribal backgrounds does not surpass our national allegiance as Namibians.

I appeal most sincerely with the health workforce. Stand together as health workers, united as professionals providing the much needed care and medical treatment to the community. Furthermore, I urge everyone to respect and work with the leadership at all levels, from Councillors to Honourable Chiefs. Demonstrate your professionalism; refer back to these lines of address and redress that exist within our democratic society so that we overcome our challenges peacefully.

In conclusion, I would like to once again thank NAMDEB Diamond Corporation and the Oranjemund Community in particular for the donation of this outreach vehicle. We at the Ministry remain well aware that emergency vehicle shortages still exist. Over the holidays, I myself witnessed the inadequate emergency transfer vehicles between Katima Mulilo and Rundu; rest assured that I have taken to task on the urgency of the matter.

Please let us all continue to work together, united, for the betterment of the health for all.

I thank you.