



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

BY

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

**ON THE OCCASION OF
THE OFFICIAL INAUGURATION OF
NEW NAMPHARM BUILDING**

15 MAY 2008

Prosperita, Windhoek

Director of ceremonies

Ms. Rwanda De Waal; Managing Director of Nampharm

Mr. Johannes #Gaeseb; Registrar of Medicines

Members of the media

Invited guests, Ladies and gentlemen

I am honoured this evening to officiate at this very important occasion.

We are here this evening to mark the launch of the new NAMPHARM building. This building is a tribute to your vision, hard work and dedication. It is truly a remarkable structure.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) the availability of essential medicines is one of the major pillars for the implementation of Primary Health Care (PHC). This demands that medicines should readily available and affordable to the clients.

It is for this reason that a Pharmaceutical Wholesaler would play a pivotal role. They serve as a link in the supply chain for medicines and other health care supplies by facilitating and buffering the transition of pharmaceutical products from the manufacturer to the retailer, and eventually to the patient. As a central unit for import and distribution of medicines, the pharmaceutical wholesaler is best placed to monitor the quality of imported medicines. Adequate quality assurance mechanisms at wholesaler level will protect the patients from fake, substandard and counterfeit products.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

For many in our communities, medicines are unaffordable. Wholesalers have a role to play in the various possible alternatives of making medicines more accessible to our people. For example, wholesalers can negotiate favourable medicines prices with manufacturers, translating to reduced prices for patients and thereby enhancing access to medicines for our population. This negotiation function requires unique diligence and an understanding of equity from you as wholesalers.

Furthermore, it is important to forge private/public partnerships between the pharmaceutical wholesalers and public health care system. Medicines, in general, play a key role in the promotion of health for all human beings and animals alike. In this regard, it is critical that as pharmaceutical wholesalers together with the Ministry of Health and Social Services could consider engaging yourselves in research, primarily addressing areas of consumption including a drug resistance and related costs. The results thereof would contribute in informed decisions on the drug supply in general.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As stated in our National Drug Policy, the professional skills of pharmacists are vital to the efficient and successful rendering of pharmaceutical services. We cannot serve our patients without adequate numbers of skilled pharmaceutical personnel. The government is hard at work to support the training of pharmacists and pharmacist's assistants. I acknowledge with thanks that Nampharm is collaborating with us in this, and already provides assistance for pharmacy students. I commend your efforts in this regard. I wish to call upon your colleagues in the industry to emulate your excellent example.

Indeed, Nampharm is up to the challenge of providing a good service to its clients. I am aware that Nampharm is one of the main suppliers of medicines to the Central Medical Store. This new building indicates that you have also managed your finances well, and retained some proceeds for future investments. Against this background, I take this opportunity to congratulate you for a job well done.

Director of ceremonies,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

Our head of State, His Excellency President Hifikepunye Pohamba, encourages economic self sufficiency for Namibians. Thus, I encourage fellow Namibians, those in the well established industry, to support the upcoming business sector especially in the pharmaceutical industry. In addition, I urge the pharmaceutical wholesalers to support the efforts of new pharmacy outlets by providing them with practical options for stock purchases.

Although pharmacy normally generates income by buying and selling medicines, we must not forget that pharmacy is a health profession. You must always consider the health needs of your clients as the most important reason for your existence as a profession, not monetary gains.

Once again I congratulate Nampharm for your achievement by opening these new premises.

I look forward to continued and productive working relations between our two institutions for the benefit of all Namibians.

I THANK YOU.