



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

Statement

By

Hon. Dr. Richard Nchabi Kamwi
Minister of Health and Social Services

At the

WHO Photo Exhibit
Commemorating 60th Anniversary of the WHO

National Art Gallery,
Windhoek

16 June 2008

Hon Minister of Finance, Cde. Kuugongelwa-Amadhila
The WHO Representative, Dr. Magda Robalo
Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
Senior officers of the Government of Namibia,
Heads of UN Agencies,
Invited Guests,
Members of the Press,

Director of Ceremonies,

I am pleased to associate myself with the official launch of this photo exhibition organized as one of the events to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the World Health Organization (WHO). I am particularly grateful to be in the company of my fellow colleague, the Hon Minister of Finance, who has always been a strong advocate for greater support for the health sector and as Acting Minister of Health and Social Services and who has kindly accepted to be with us today. This marks her unwavering commitment to continue to contribute to the improvement of the health of all Namibians. My sister, your being here today is a testimony of the cohesiveness of our Government and an example of how team work can go a long way in building better lives for our people. I am most grateful to you.

Director of Ceremonies, Distinguished invited guests,

A month ago, I had the honour and privilege to officiate at the Press Conference that officially flagged off the 60th anniversary celebrations and also announced the activities planned to commemorate the anniversary this year in Namibia. As you know, this photo collection spanning the 60 years of WHO will be exhibited around the world in 2008.

I am particularly pleased to see that Namibia is joining the rest of the world in exhibiting the photo collection, which includes snapshots from our own context in Namibia.

On behalf of the Ministry of Health and Social Services, I would like to congratulate WHO for its 60th Anniversary and for the remarkable achievements obtained with and on behalf of its Member States. Namibia is a proud member of WHO and we will continue strengthening our participation and contribution to deliberations that shape the international health agenda and collaborate on the “attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health”. By its membership and Governance mechanisms, WHO instils a sense of shared mission among its networks, Member States, partners and supporters.

Director of Ceremonies, Distinguished invited guests,

In Namibia, the Government places health at the centre of its development agenda. The Ministry of Health and Social Services has the steering role in the sector, but you will all agree with me that the health of individuals and communities is influenced and affected by many factors from outside the health sector. Education, environment, water and sanitation, food, shelter, are only but a few such factors that influence the health status of our nation. Hence, our determination to secure wider engagement of key stakeholders beyond the health sector. This is even more important as we are engaging in a course that will lead to accelerated health action and improved health outcomes, towards the achievement of the health related Millennium Development Goals. The Ministry of Finance is one such partner that is vital in this process and we will continue to work closely with them to ensure that Namibia gets out of poverty through contribution from healthy citizens.

WHO is another important partner in this endeavour and we would like to thank you for the fruitful collaboration that we have been enjoying over the years.

Director of Ceremonies, Distinguished invited guests,

Some of the work done by WHO is visible and familiar: the response teams sent to contain outbreaks such as Polio and Cholera, the emergency assistance to people affected by disasters, or the mass immunization campaigns that protect the world's children from killer diseases. Other activities are so visible to a naked eye for example, the technical support in addressing HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. These are diseases with a high profile as a global health challenge. But some activities undertaken by WHO are largely invisible, quietly protecting the health of every person on this planet, every day. WHO's norms and standards help protect the safety of everyone's food and the quality of medicines and vaccines. When pollution in air or water reaches a dangerous level, it is WHO standards that are used as the measure.

Another area of importance played by WHO is human resource development for developing countries. Indeed, some of us are indebted to WHO for the profession we have.

This photo exhibition will take you through some of the major milestones of WHO's work globally over the past 60 years and I would like to encourage you to spread the word and encourage people to come and visit, as it is a historical look into activities and milestones that touches everyone's life.

Director of Ceremonies, Distinguished invited guests

On behalf of the Government and people of the Republic of Namibia,
please join me in wishing the World Health Organization a big
HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!!!!!

I thank you for your kind attention.