



Republic of Namibia

Statement

By

**Dr Richard Nchabi Kamwi, MP
Minister of Health and Social Services**

At

**The Handing Over of Medical Equipment by Ohorongo
Cement, Otavi, 25 August 2009**

Programme Director

The Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Schwenk Group

The Managing Director of Ohorong Cement – Mr. HW Schuette

The Permanent Secretary – Mr. Kahijoro Kahuure

The Guest Speaker – Mr. G. Hirth

The Management and Staff of Ohorong Cement

Director for Otjzondjupa Health and Social Services – Mr.

Taapopi

The Chairlady – Madam N. Nambili

The Nursing Staff of Otavi Health Centre

The Community of Otavi

Ladies and Gentlemen

I wish to join the Chairlady, Madam Nambili in welcoming the Chairman and the Chief Executive Officer of the Schwenk Group together with his entourage at this special occasion where we receive the generous support of medical equipment to the Otavi Health Centre.

The Ministry of Health and Social Services is entrusted with the promotion of health of the Namibian population. This can only be done when there are trained health personnel and the necessary medical equipment in place. In addition, there should be space, conducive environment for the personnel to operate in. Similarly, the logistics which includes transport and the related drivers have to be in place.

The SWAPO Party Government had been hard at work since independence by placing health as its second priority in terms of the national budget. Indeed, several health facilities including clinics, health centres and district hospitals had been built and renovation and upgrading continues country-wide.

However, given the competing priorities of Government and the time factor from independence to date, it is still not yet possible for the Ministry of Health and Social Services to realize this dream. Challenges related to shortage of skilled personnel especially medical and nursing practitioners is still being experienced. Indeed, modern and sophisticated medical equipment, logistics including transport are still in short supply in some of our health facilities.

Clearly, some Namibians still walk long distances for them to reach nearest medical health facility. For example, the community of Otavi, for those who are affected by HIV and on ARV still travel to Otjiwarongo , a distance of more than 100 km for them to receive treatment. Otavi is one of the districts affected by both HIV and TB.

Programme Director, it is for this reason that two years ago we realized the need for us as a Ministry to speak to our stakeholders for them to join efforts of Government in addressing some of our deficiencies in this regard. I am glad that the response to our meetings had been very successful as evidenced by a number of ambulances, outreach service vehicles; medical equipment and infrastructure upgrading had been overwhelming.

This morning, I am glad to join the community of Otavi, on behalf of Government to receive several medical equipments including, anaesthetic machine, ultrasonic apparatus for mammographic (ECG), apparatus for continuous veno-venous hemofiltration, Fluorescent screen, Vital signs monitor (ECG, pulls, heart rate, BP, SpO₂, Examination chair/couch for gynaecological or urological examination, Examination couch, Suction apparatus ~for operation theatre, bedside suction apparatus for secretion, operation theatre table electromechanical, beds for children and medicine trolley. These medical equipments could not have come at an opportune moment than this as we needed them most.

I wish to use this opportunity on behalf of Government, the community of Otavi and indeed myself to heartily thank the Managing Director and staff of Ohorongo Cement for the consideration of this maximum support given to the Ministry of Health and Social Services. This will take us a long way in response to the health challenges in Otavi district.

This consignment demonstrates the knowledge you have that for your company to realize maximum delivery, your manpower has to be in good health.

You can be rest assured; we will do our best to meet with your expectation in terms of quality health care delivery services. We are mindful of the fact that once Ohorongo Cement reaches maximum production of cement to serve the Namibian industry and the neighborhood countries, you would have created much

employment opportunities. This in itself calls on us as a Ministry to address the shortage of medical personnel to meet the demand.

Again, I am pleased to report that our Health and Social Services System Review is complete and had assisted us in identifying the number of staff to be provided at every health facility including Otavi Health Centre. Similarly, our Ministry's Strategic Plan addressing the concerns related to quality health care service delivery is now in place.

I therefore wish to call upon the health personnel of Otavi Health Centre to please put to good use these medical equipments in order to make a difference in our health care service delivery. This is the only payment in kind to impress on our stakeholders.

To the Managing Director of Ohorongo Cement and staff, you made a giant step in the right direction. You can be rest assured that the presence of the Permanent Secretary, the Director of Otjozondjupa region and myself clearly demonstrate how much we value this consignment.

As your company expands in production and demand for personnel increases, do not hesitate to call on our attention if the need arises for more space at our health centre. No doubt one of a consideration in this regard calls for more nursing and medical practitioner to be in place. I wish to encourage more dialogue in this regard between the Managing Director and the Permanent Secretary.

Once again, thank you most sincere.