



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

STATEMENT

BY HONOURABLE PENDUKENI IIVULA-ITHANA, MP

MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS AND IMMIGRATION

OPENING OF KAVANGO WEST REGIONAL OFFICE

31 JULY 2017

- Director of ceremonies,
- Honorable Governor Sirkka Ausiku
- Honorable Regional and Local Authority Councilors
- His Worship Erastus Kandjimi–Mayor of Nkurenkuru Town
- Permanent Secretary of MHAI, Amb. Patrick Nandago
- Senior Staff members from O/M/As
- Residents of Kavango West Region
- The Media
- Colleagues
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning!

It is my singular honour and privilege to be with you this morning. As the last born region in our country you might feel left out on so many other areas of human endeavor but they say even the last animal sleeps in the kraal, must give you the encouragement that you will also catch up with the rest of the regions in the country.

I am pleased to stand before you today to perform a noble task today and of the inauguration of this new regional office for Kavango West. The opening of Kavango West regional office denotes the presence of the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration with full-fledged regional offices in all fourteen (14) political regions of our country - this footprint is worth noting. Despite the prevailing economic conditions, the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration is doing more with less and the opening of this new office shows the commitment of the Ministry in ensuring that those who meet the applicable

requirements are issued with the necessary national documents. I am inviting the residents of Kavango West region to visit the new office of the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration here in Nkurenkuru to register for birth certificates and ID cards. The birth and ID services you were in need of for the past years are now a thing of the past. From now on they can be obtain here on your door steps.

Director of ceremonies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me take this opportunity to remind you that not only is birth registration a universal human right but a developmental issue as well. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16.9 state that by 2030 national governments must provide legal identity for all, including birth registration. The inclusion of SDG target 16.9 means that the provision of legal documentation is being recognized and addressed as a global development issue.

In order to ensure “legal identity for all” the government of the Republic of Namibia being a member of the United Nations continues its efforts to further reduce the late registration of birth, a practice which in fact contradicts Article 15 (1) of the Namibian Constitution. Article 15 (1) states that all children have right to a name immediately after birth. The Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration in collaboration with the Office of the Prime Minister, and the Ministry of Health and Social Service jointly agreed to introduce the e-birth Notification System. The aim of the e-birth registration is to notify the e-National Population Registration System electronically when a birth has occurred at a dedicated hospital to secure the birth details of the child. The

notification will be done immediately after birth by the nurse who facilitated the delivery of the baby. The e-birth Notification System ensures verification of the mother's identity as it is linked to the NPRS as well as improve data quality and production of vital statistics. As the system of recording births in the country is not yet comprehensively covering the whole country the government is still relying on birth projections for the calculation of birth statistics and birth registration statistics.

For the parents and parents to be, -it is your responsibility to ensure that your children are registered immediately after birth. We should remember that it is a child's right to be registered. The registration of children ensures that they get access to essential health, educational and other social services. In order to protect children, who are our leaders of tomorrow, from social ills such as early marriage, child labour and child trafficking, we must play our role as parents and citizens in ensuring that children are registered at birth. Success stems from proper planning, for government to do proper projections it relies on accurate data and statistics, thus, the absence of requiring statistics hinders proper planning and development which in turn disadvantages the citizens of our country.

I must register my concern here; the regions of Kavango West, Kavango East and Ohangwena have the highest statistics of late birth registration compared to other regions, a situation which must not be allowed to continue. If the reasons for late birth registration were the absence of Home Affairs Office in Kavango West, now the office is here, so let us register our children on time. We must be patriotic citizens and protect our country jealously by ensuring that we do not write letters as community leaders; make Police declarations,

issue baptismal certificates supporting individuals who claim to be Namibians knowingly very well that those people are not Namibians. It is disheartening to note that the prevalence of falsification of birth certificates and death certificates is higher in the two Kavango Regions than anywhere else in the country.

The Department of Civil Registration has made great strides in the past few years in its effort to take Civil registration services to far lying rural areas and today we are in the town of Nkurenkuru. I can assure and promise you, should resources allow, in the next few years, Kavango West region will have a sub-regional office in one of its far flanked constituencies.

Director of ceremonies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am sure you are aware that, the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration participated in recently ended first ever Nkurenkuru Expo. We are proud that the Ministry scooped the trophy for best government institution exhibitor - an indication that we are serious about service delivery to our people. Indeed we are doing more with less, as I am talking to you right now. School mobile registration is taking place in this region (today the ministry mobile registration team is at Rupara Combined School) ensuring that our children have the ID cards as required by law when they turn 16 years of age.

Let me at this juncture reiterate that the phasing out of the old South West African ID was extended to 31 March 2018; I therefore urge all those who are still using the old brown SWA IDs to visit one of our offices at the earliest

convenience to apply for a National ID. In the event, that your particulars are not correct, you can apply to get your ID record amended accordingly. I urge all Constituency Councilors to identify senior citizens who are still in position of the old SWA IDs in order to expedite their acquisition of the new Namibian ID cards.

For those of you who belong to different church denominations I would like to inform you that for one to become a marriage officer and legally permitted to solemnize marriages as per the provisions of the Birth, Marriage and Death Registration Act (Act 81 of 1963) you must have been trained and certified by the Department of Civil Registration of the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration to be a marriage officer. If you are interested in becoming a marriage officer kindly submit your application to the Ministry for consideration.

Director of ceremonies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Lastly, I wish to extend a word of appreciation to Team Home Affairs which has worked hard for this event to materialize. Keep up the good work as we continue to serve this great nation and our visitors at large.

With these few words, it is now my honour and privilege to declare the new regional office officially open.

I thank you.