



**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

**OPENING STATEMENT**

**BY**

**HONOURABLE FRANS KAPOFI, MP,  
MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS AND IMMIGRATION,**

**AT THE  
OPENING CEREMONY OF THE SECOND IMMIGRATION  
FOUNDATION COURSE HOSTED AT LUCIUS  
SUMBWANYAMBE MAHOTO CORRECTIONAL SERVICE  
TRAINING COLLEGE**

**OMARURU**

**24 SEPTEMBER 2018**

Director of Ceremonies;  
Ambassador Patrick Nandago, Permanent Secretary of Home Affairs and Immigration;  
Commissioner-General Raphael Tuhafeni Hamunyela;  
Distinguished Resource Persons;  
Management Cadres of the Ministry;  
Dear Immigration Cadets and other respective Officials;  
Members of the Media;  
Ladies and Gentlemen, good afternoon!

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of July, I stood at this very venue to officiate at the opening of the foundation course for immigration officers who started their employment in the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration as immigration officers but did not have an opportunity to undergo the compulsory Immigration Foundation Course. It is again my pleasure to be with you at the start of this training course for the second intake of the series of the training programme. Let me at the onset congratulate you for having excelled in the interviews which allowed you to gain appointment and promotion in this Ministry. I hope the same excellence you have shown when seeking the employment and promotion will be equally displayed during the training and eventually when you continue your career as law enforcement officials.

The vision of the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration is, and I quote; **“Population Register and Migration Management that is rated amongst the best in the World”**. Having perused through the training programme, it is my conviction that it is designed to prepare you to make a meaningful contribution towards attaining that vision. The onus now rests on all of you to make the best of the training to be provided to you. The foundation course should equip you with necessary skills to ensure that you comply with the Constitution of the land and other laws. It is important to conform with the laws of the country in order to avoid judgments like one delivered early this year where we were found wanting due to omission of certain required steps in implementing the law.

**Director of ceremonies,**  
**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The phrase “Global Village” was coined by Marshall McLuhan ‘when he described that the world has been shrunk by modern advances in communications’. However, this phenomenon

can be attributed to other defining features such as the ever increasing mobility of goods, services, financial resources, as well as people. It is a known fact that International Migration continues to escalate and this has prompted very interesting debates everywhere in the world. To mitigate this challenge, countries are making all kinds of efforts to contain the avalanche of migrants. Yet the numbers of immigrants, both regular and irregular, continue to grow and no country is immune, including Namibia. Such movements bring challenges which will require new approaches in the way we manage migration today.

The relation between migration and development requires a polite, softer but firm approach to migrants on one hand, while the link between migration and transnational organized crime such as human trafficking and migrant smuggling demands continued vigilance by border officials. It thus calls for striking the right balance between the control of migrants entering our territory and the facilitation of business travelers the country dearly needs. This fact has been realized and all countries are now looking for the best response to address challenges from migration in a manner that allows them to maximize the benefits which are:

- Skills transfer and mobility of financial resources;
- While at the same time finding ways to ensure that those posing harm to the security of the land are identified and dealt with accordingly.

The right balance can only be realized if the officers dealing with migration are trained to take this challenge. This is the reason you are here for.

**Director of ceremonies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Border officials perform a function that is central to the security of the country. You will be making decisions whether to allow or not to allow entry of travelers, some of whom have good intentions while others have their own hidden motives. In this regard, you need to share information with all stakeholders such as NAMPOL and Custom Officials so that our efforts to combat violation of our ports of entry are enhanced. It is particularly very important that when faced with uncertainty, consult your immediate supervisor for guidance.

I therefore stress once more, that you take your training seriously so that you gain from the wealth of knowledge that will assist you in the future execution of your duties.

Similarly, as border officials you will be exposed to all kinds of people including those who will try to test your commitment, honesty and patriotism. These individual will go as far as offering you gifts with the objective of influencing your decision making process. Let me caution you against such people. Some officials who served before you fell into such traps and as a result, ended up losing their jobs. Do not place temporary gains before long term gains. You will suffer and eventually your families will lose income as result.

However my dear immigration and Government officials, the other extreme applies as well. It is an undeniable fact that our Country annually receives a sizable number of international visitors i.e. tourist, business personalities, diplomats, multinational organisations and government officials. In most cases, the benefits which the country derives from these, surpasses the undesirable repercussions.

Be that as it may, I will fail in my duty if I do not register with you some undesirable incidents which occurred over the past few months. Earlier this month, I was painstakingly informed by a fellow Cabinet Minister of an incident which occurred at Hosea Kutako International Airport. The core of this incident involved racial stereotyping of a South African tourist on the part of an Immigration Official stationed at the airport. Also, I continue to observe numerous complaints by visitors and Namibians who uses the same port of entry. The complaints which are sent to the Media and expressed on social media networks are amongst others; long and slow Immigration Control lines or queues; unpleasant customer service by immigration and border official etc.

I am in no way saying officials should adopt a laidback or never minded attitude when on duty because I ask you to be friendly to tourists and others entering our ports of entry; all I am advising you to do, is to be courteous, cordial, yet stern. When an individual arrives at the ports of our Country, the first person they encounter is you, the immigration official. When they leave the Country, the last person they encounter is you. You are therefore a *de facto* ambassador of Namibia. The impression you are making on that individual is one which lasts. What this simply means; is that you can make or break the image of Namibia and her people.

Therefore, use the opportunities such as this training programme to interrogate the essence of your duties and responsibilities and to broaden your understanding on the laws regulating matters of immigration et al. It is my wish that after two weeks of training, you will be ready for the task ahead, which is, to become experts in the field of migration management. This is the journey you have selected to undertake and we are there to guide and support you. I should also remind you that towards end of the course, you will be assessed by writing a test. So it is important that you pay attention during the sessions, and commit time during off-time to reflect on the lectures and material provided to you. Where is not clear, ask questions.

I will not end without thanking the Namibian Correctional Service through you Commissioner General for availing this facility to us to train our officials. This inter-agency cooperation is highly commented.

To our trainees, you are hosted at this facility to facilitate your training. This facility has rules and regulations guiding all who find themselves in it. My directive to you remains; that you observe the rules and regulations of our host.

**Director of ceremonies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is now my distinct honor to declare this training course officially open.

I thank you.