



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

STATEMENT

BY

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MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE EENHANA TRADE AND BUSINESS EXPO 2012

AUGUST 01, 2012, EENHANA

Check Against Delivery

**Director of Ceremony,
Fellow Hon. Ministers,
Hon. Members of Parliament,
Hon. Governor(s),
Hon. Regional and Local Authority Councilors,
Your Worship, the Mayor of Eenhana,
Distinguished Traditional and Community Leaders,
Distinguished Captains of Industry,
Members of the Media,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am privileged not only to witness this event, but also to deliver the official opening statement at this auspicious occasion.

This year's Eenhana Trade and Business Expo 2012 is special. It is special due to the fact that it is being hosted for the 5th consecutive year, hence, we are also celebrating the fifth anniversary of this very important event.

The Eenhana Trade and Business Expo was launched in 2007 and hosted for the first time in 2008, with the aim of attracting much needed investment to Eenhana and the entire Ohangwena region in order to promote trade, develop and promote entrepreneurship thus hopefully creating employment.

I am also delighted to observe that over the years, various developmental projects have taken place at Eenhana and these could be linked to the initiatives of the Town Council to promote trade and investment at Eenhana.

The following are some of the developmental projects that have taken place at Eenhana which I can proudly mention:

- Construction of the Eenhana Open Market phase 3**
- Construction of a shopping complex and apartments by Nett Investment**

- **Construction of various hardware and building materials warehouses**
- **Development of the Eenhana Entertainment and resting park**
- **Construction of two major hotels in town which are currently underway**
- **Construction of a modern 24 hour filling station**

Ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me to use this opportunity to inform you that the Ministry of Trade and Industry has contributed funds to the construction of the Convention City - Eenhana's prime business and conferencing facility, which would also host the Eenhana Expo in the near future.

This Convention City is envisaged to be an internationally acclaimed multi-functional conference and business centre that will undoubtedly be the epitome of business tourism in the North and the country at large.

This centre, which will house various businesses, is important to the residence and visitors of Enhana, being the Regional Capital of Ohangwena Region, as it will enhance the economic activities and the socio-economic up-liftment of the community in this region.

Director of ceremony

Trade Fairs are very important events that bring producers and suppliers of goods and services as well as potential customers together to provide the necessary exposure and opportunities for sales and business linkages.

We at the Ministry of Trade and Industry value and believe that SMEs development is the catalyst for the development of the industrialization base of any nation.

It is in this connection that we recognize the critical role of Small and Medium – sized Enterprises in the socio-economic development and economic diversification of the country.

The Government of Namibia has put in place various policies and programmes for the development of SMEs such as the Sites and premises; Equipment Aid Scheme, training and mentorship and others.

For some of you these programs are well-known, but for those to whom this is new, please do not hesitate to approach the Ministry to obtain information.

The SME development promotion remains high on our agenda. I therefore invite you to exploit the opportunities provided by the Ministry of Trade and Industry, to grow your businesses and create jobs and wealth for Namibia and its citizens.

I am therefore, pleased to inform you that the Ministry has supported 30 SMEs with stand rental payment to enable them to participate at this auspicious event under the Ministry's Export Marketing Assistance Programme (EMAP) which assists exporters/manufacturers to attend

trade fairs and exhibitions locally, regionally and internationally.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

The Ministry's Equipment Aid Scheme, where the Ministry provides machinery to qualifying businesses, is a classical example of the consultative approach which the Ministry introduced through the Open days concept – whereby the Minister, Deputy Minister, Permanent Secretary and the head of departments / directorates toured all 13 regions country-wide to reach out to the public.

At these open day exercises the public could walk-in without making any appointments to see the whole ministry at one location – that is the Minister, Deputy Minister, PS and Departmental Heads. Various problems and suggestions were presented during these consultations, thus leading to the inception of the Equipment Aid Scheme, which thus far has become very popular and subsequently created approximately 1600 jobs during the 2009-2011 financial year.

Another programme offered by the Ministry is the Business Support Service Programme (BSSP) where business plans and feasibility studies are produced and entrepreneurial trainings and mentorship services among others are offered free of charge to the entrepreneurs.

It is therefore important that entrepreneurs and prospective entrepreneurs come up with viable business ideas and approach the Ministry of Trade and Industry to help them to develop these ideas into viable business ventures.

You are also encouraged to visit MTI's Regional Offices in your respective regions to acquaint yourself with the Ministry's programmes and assistance on offer.

I am informed that over 180 exhibitors are participating at this year's event; and these include exhibitors from as far as Nigeria and Kenya.

I am also pleased to learn about the visiting delegation from the North East District Council in Masunga, Botswana, who are on an official reciprocal visit to Eenhana Town Council. I wish to welcome them all and urge companies and individuals to take advantage of this Expo and other related forums to exhibit their products and establish new business ventures – in support of the SADC free trade protocol, which provides for free movement of goods and services to enhance closer regional integration and South-South cooperation.

Director of ceremony

Having said all these, it is now my distinct honour and privilege to declare the 2012 Eenhana Trade and Business Expo officially open.

I thank you

