



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

BY

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DEPUTY MINISTER

MINISTRY OF URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE
THE GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY OF 38 HOUSES, FOR
SHACK DWELLERS FEDERATION OF NAMIBIA (SDFN) -
ARANDIS**

ARANDIS, ERONGO REGION

22 OCTOBER 2024

**Honourable Neville Andre Itope, Governor of Erongo Region,
Honourable Benitha Iimbamba, the host and Regional Councillor for
Arandis Constituency,
Your Worship Cllr Risto Kapenda, the Mayor of this beautiful town,
Honourable Town Councillors present,
Ms. Revonia Job representing First National Bank, Ohorongo Cement,
Pupkewitz Foundation, and others,
Members of the media,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Good morning and thank you for welcoming me to this very important event.

Today, we are gathered here to celebrate a momentous occasion: the ground-breaking of 38 new houses by the Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia-here in Arandis. This is not just a ceremony; it is a testament to the resilience and unity of our community, where hard work and collaboration come to life.

I am excited to announce that these will be the first homes constructed by the Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia in Arandis.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This project is a ground-breaking step forward in tackling the housing crisis in our community. It embodies our unwavering commitment to ensuring that everyone has access to safe, affordable, and dignified housing-a vital necessity for those who have long faced the challenge of finding a place to truly call home. Today marks not just the start of construction, but the beginning of a new chapter for 38 families who will soon have a place to call their own.

Through the generous support of several key partners, this project has come to life. The Ministry of Urban and Rural Development is funding the construction of 14 houses, First National Bank-17 houses, while 7 houses will be financed by the Federation. Together, we are laying the foundation for a brighter future.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This ceremony symbolizes more than the building of houses; it represents hope and the collective power of working together to address the housing needs of our people. It stands as a powerful reminder of what can be achieved when we unite around a common goal.

It all began with someone's dream-a desire for a place to call home. This initiative started as mere conversations, which then translated into plans on paper, and today, we commence with the real work, demonstrating an unwavering commitment to the development of our country. It is not just about numbers; it's about 38 families, giving children and future generations a place to call home. This is indeed a joyous moment. Giving a powerful reminder of what can be achieved when we unite around a common goal.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

While we celebrate this achievement today, we also recognise the ongoing challenges and sympathise with our fellow Namibians who continue to live in inadequate and improvised housing conditions. This project indeed represents a significant step in the right direction. However, there is still a lot more much work that needs to be done to ensure that everyone has access to safe and affordable housing.

It is estimated that there are over 900,000 Namibians living in informal settlements throughout the country. This is a significant concern for us as government, particularly as we face the challenge of massive and rapid migration from rural to urban areas. However, we must remember that the government alone cannot tackle this challenge. It is through vital partnerships-like those with the Shack Dwellers Federation and support from the private sector—that we can make meaningful progress.

Once again, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all our partners for their commitment and collaboration in this crucial endeavour.

Ever since the Shack-Dwellers Federation was initiated in the year 2000, they have committed and demonstrated to providing affordable housing, especially to our low-income earners. To date, they have constructed more than Eight Thousand and Six Hundred houses throughout the country, of which Three Thousand, Five Hundred and Fifty houses were constructed with annual government support of more than **one hundred and eleven Point Eight Million Namibian dollars** for the current Financial Year. In light of the ongoing housing needs, the government has increased its support to N\$ 20 million for low-cost housing projects, facilitated through the Twahangana Fund of the Shack Dwellers Federation.

FNB, Ohorongo Cement, and the Pupkewitz Foundation have collectively contributed N\$ 26 million. This remarkable support has helped construct over 400 houses nationwide, providing much-needed shelter and stability for countless families.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very delighted and profoundly appreciative of the close cooperation between the Private Sector and the Shack Dwellers' Federation. They have demonstrated that business is not just about making money but also about investing in areas, which benefit the most-needy people in our society.

I am also pleased to acknowledge that the Arandis Constituency, through the exemplary leadership of Hon. Iimbamba, has provided essential machinery and equipment and facilitated storage facilities for this project. Your contributions are highly valued and greatly appreciated in this regard.

Furthermore, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Arandis Town Council for their invaluable support of this project from its inception. This exemplifies the kind of partnership we seek with our local authorities across Namibia.

As construction commences, we urge the Arandis Town Council to maintain oversight of the construction process to ensure that our people receive high-quality homes that meet or exceed industry standards through regular inspections and that it adheres to the national building guidelines as stipulated in your Town Planning Scheme.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let us celebrate this ground-breaking, knowing that it marks the beginning of something truly transformational. Together, we will turn this vision into reality, and soon, 38 families will have a place to call home.

It is now my distinct pleasure to officially welcome the construction of these 38 housing units and to encourage the recipients to work diligently to ensure that these homes are completed on time.

I thank you for your kind attention!