



Republic of Namibia

Ministry of Urban and Rural Development

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**INAUGURAL ADDRESS TO THE STAFF OF THE
MINISTRY OF URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
BY
HON. JAMES SANKWASA
MINISTER OF URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
DELIVERED ON THE ____ APRIL 2025 AT MINISTRIAL HEAD
OFFICE
WINDHOEK**

Welcome

1. Ladies and gentlemen, colleagues, and the entire staff of the Ministry, good morning. As, you are all aware that, on the 22nd of March 2025 at Windhoek, the President, her Excellency, Dr Nandi Ndaitwa bestowed on me the Office of the Minister of Urban and Rural Development, forthwith. I am greatly indebted to Her Excellency the President for such an honour and trust in me.
2. I am also humbled and gratified by the warm reception, you have extended to me on my arrival to this important Ministry. Today, we are gathered here, as a team, in order for us to set the tone and direction the Ministry will be heading, during my tenure, as mandated by her excellence the President. It is obvious, on my own without the involvement, participation, commitment of and from each of you in your various roles and respects, I will not deliver the President's mandate for this Ministry, as a result, the Ministry entirely, and myself we would fail, not only Her Excellency the President, but also the people of the Republic of Namibia our ultimate principals.
3. However, if each of us is committed, dedicated and accountable firstly to oneself, to the Ministry, and lastly to the people of the Republic of Namibia, and as a collective, we can and we will execute the Ministerial mandate with excellence, and I believe we can and we will.
4. **Her Excellency, the President, Dr Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah in her Inaugural Speech on 21 March 2025, stated¹:**

“ With those profound statements of our leaders, the progress that we have made as a nation was a result of collective efforts. Individual members of our society responded to the call and each arm of the state, the executive,

¹ Inaugural speech by Dr. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, President of the Republic of Namibia, delivered on 21 March 2025, Windhoek, Namibia, at page 8 to 9.

the legislature and the judiciary made significant contributions to the political, social, and economic development of our country. Similarly, the private sector, churches, traditional authorities and other non-state actors have been also important constituencies in nation-building efforts. I therefore pledge to continue to work with all these institutions to make a success of our country.

Directors of Ceremonies

The task facing me as, the fifth President of the Republic of Namibia, is to preserve the gains of our independence on all fronts and to ensure that the unfinished agenda of economic and social advancement of our people is carried forward with vigor and determination to bring about shared balanced prosperity for all.

The mandate that the electorate gave the SWAPO Party under my leadership is clearly articulated in SWAPO Party Election Manifesto 2025-2030, the SWAPO Party Political Program and the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia. Those will be my guiding instruments throughout my presidency, as I serve all people of Namibia regardless of their political affiliation."

5. From the forecited quotation, Her Excellency the President, directed us in this Ministry to:

- 5.1 Work as a collective;
- 5.2 Partner with the private sector, and government and non-government entities;
- 5.3 Implement the SWAPO Party Election Manifesto 2025-2030 and SWAPO Party Political Program within the context and confines of the Namibian Constitution;
- 5.4 Serve all Namibians regardless of their political affiliation;
- 5.5 Provide effective solutions to problems caused by unprecedented urbanization;
- 5.6 Provide effective solutions to housing and sanitation;

5.7 Increase investment in urban and rural development infrastructures.

6. It is us, in this Ministry who must help the President, to successfully achieve, the mandate given to her by the people of this great nation, through the SWAPO Party of Namibia. I am more than ready and willing to help the President in this noble but mammoth task, are you ready? If you are join me, lets work and improve the living conditions of our people both in urban and rural areas.
7. It is important that, I remind you of the source of Her Excellency the President's mandate delegated to this Ministry or us, the **SWAPO Manifesto**, where the following is stated²:

"9. DECENT LIVING: LAND, HOUSING AND SANITATION

The SWAPO Party led-Government has maintained its commitment to accelerated land redistribution; addressing housing challenges; improving sanitation. We are committed to promote sustainable urban development for a healthier and livable environment. Similarly, we remain committed to upgrading informal settlements and ensuring rural water security by 2027 as key priorities to improve living conditions for all.

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2: Housing and Sanitation

- *Accelerate the availability of land in urban areas through subsidizing the local authorities to facilitate the speedy implementation of the 2024 National Housing Policy.*
- *Implement comprehensive and participatory upgrading programmes for informal settlements, focusing on servicing land to ensure the security of tenure and provide access to basic services such as water, sanitation, and electricity.*

² SWAPO Party Manifesto 2024 Elections at page 27 para 9.2

- *Focus public expenditure proportionally on Priority Target Groups, and realign state supported housing provision mechanisms to provide access to adequate housing.*
- *Encourage and stimulate private sector investments in adequate housing provision.*
- *Establish mechanisms for allocating unoccupied land in urban areas to promote efficient land use and access to housing.*
- *Strengthen National Housing Enterprise's (NHE) existing affordable housing programmers to cater for a broader range of income groups, including streamlining of application processes that ensure eligibility criteria, by focusing on middle-income earners.*
- *Service at least 10,000 plots annually for construction of low and medium-cost houses by strengthening the Build Together Programme and supporting the Shack Dwellers Association."*

8. The SWAPO Party Manifesto in respect to this Ministry's mandate, is now a reality on 31 March 2025 you witnessed in the media, when the Hon Prime Minister Dr. Elia Ngurare stated that '*N\$ 500 million has been allocated to formalize informal settlement*' and this is in line with the SWAPO Party Manifesto. It is us or this Ministry the steward and project managers of the realization of the formalization of informal settlements, without further delay, are we ready?
9. I hope from the few words I have stated, all of us are on the same boat and page heading the same direction, from now forward. Therefore, I direct that all of us, from now must think outside the box on how this Ministry will execute its mandate with excellence and expediency, so that the people of the Republic of

Namibia benefits. In addition, the Management under the capable leadership of our new Executive Director, Dr. Wilhelmina Shivute in collaboration and consultations with their divisions, is directed to develop and craft the Ministry's Implementation Plan and Strategy within 21 days from today.

10. I must remind you again, as at the date her Excellency the President was inaugurated, *it is no longer business as usual*, therefore we must introspect and retrospect, firstly ourselves, and secondly the Ministerial institutional capacity, in light of the critical and urgency of our mandate as ministry, preparedness to deliver with excellence.

CONCLUSION

11. Before I let you return to your offices, I will conclude with these words from the Inaugural speech of Her Excellency, Dr Nandi Ndaitwah, I quote³:

"The attainment of sustainable socio-economic development can only be realized through an accountable administration."

Therefore, we will promote good governance with predictable rule-based system that instills confidence in our institutions. Public servants are required to maintain, at all times, high ethical standards. They should provide the best possible service timeously without favoritism. Corruption in all its manifestations should be avoided at all cost."

GOD BLESS, I THANK YOU FOR ATTENDANCE!!

³ Inaugural speech, Ibid p 15