

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



ADDRESS TO THE FISHING INDUSTRY BY HONOURABLE DR ALBERT KAWANA, MP, MINISTER OF FISHERIES AND MARINE RESOURCES TO THE 2021 ANNUAL MINISTERIAL ADDRESS

THURSDAY, 04 MARCH 2021

SWAKOPMUND
MFMR AUDITORIUM

Director of Ceremonies,

Hon. Neville Andre, Governor of Erongo Region,

Mr. Matti Amukwa, Chairperson of the Confederation of
Namibian Fishing Association,

Mr. Penda Jacobs, General Secretary of NAFAU,

Mr. Daniel Imbili, President of N.F.I & F.W.U

Mr. Primas Hango, President of NASAWU

Distinguished Chairpersons of Namibian Hake Association,
Midwater Trawling Association, Deep Water Fishing
Association, Namibian Monk & Sole Association, Large
Pelagic Association, Namibian Hand Line Association, Crab
Fishing Association, Wet Landed Horse Mackerel
Association, and Namibian Mariculture Association.

Esteemed invited guests,

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is once again an honour and privilege to stand before you this morning and address you on issues related to my line function as Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources. I am happy to see old and new faces in our midst, thank God you have not become a statistic of COVID-19. To you all I wish you longevity and prosperity in 2021 and beyond. I also highly appreciate the presence of our Union leaders with whom I have been engaging on a number of issues related to the industry.

The presence of my brothers, Mr. Penda Jacobs, Mr. Daniel Imbili, and Mr. Primas Hango is highly appreciated. During my long physical absence from the Erongo Region, I have always relied on an active and dynamic personality, the Governor of the Erongo Region, Honourable Neville Andre. He is always there to coordinate on my behalf. I can say that he knows more what is going on in the fishing industry, especially in the Erongo Region, than I do. My dear young brother, thank you very much.

Due to the nature of the Agenda items to be discussed during my consultation meeting with the industry, I am accompanied by a number of senior colleagues or their representatives. I have a representative of the Honourable Minister of Environment and Tourism, and a representative of the Honourable Minister of Finance.

Today, only seventeen (17) days are left for me to be one (1) year as a substantive Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources. I once again take this opportunity to express my appreciation and gratitude to His Excellency Dr. Hage Geingob for entrusting me with this very important sector which is one of the bread baskets of the Namibian nation.

It is an established fact that marine resources play a critical role in addressing poverty among our people, contributes to economic growth, and plays an important role towards our dream of achieving Vision 2030.

This objective can only be achieved if there is proper coordination at all levels, meaning all stakeholders such as the Government, the private sector industry, and labour must come together and coordinate their activities for the benefit of our nation. This is called Harambee, which means all of us must pull in the same direction and no one must feel left out. Since this is the year of resilience, it is even more critical for us to stand together during this trying time.

Articles 95 (l) and 100 of the supreme law of our land, the Namibian Constitution as well as Section 3 of the Marine Resources Act of 2000, as amended, make it very clear, the natural resources of Namibia belong to the State for the benefit of the current and future generation. It is clear, therefore, that these resources should not only benefit few individuals but all Namibians.

Those who are entrusted in the management of these natural resources have an obligation to make sure that the broader Namibian nation benefit from their exploitation. When it comes to the marine resources, all stakeholders have a duty to make sure that this objective is achieved.

The fisheries sector is the third largest sector in Africa after Morocco and South Africa. Our hake was certified last year by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), only the second in Africa to be so certified. Let us aim high so that in few years from now, we should become the first major fishing country in Africa.

Our Government has enormous responsibility to address the socio economic needs of our people. Therefore, our sector should play a critical role to generate enough financial resources in order to address the challenges of poverty, unemployment, especially among the youth and women, and underdevelopment.

The marine resources should play a positive role in ensuring quality education, quality health care, decent housing aimed at addressing the challenges of informal settlements, quality infrastructure, and access to portable water to all Namibians.

I am, therefore, here to coordinate and consult widely and engage all stakeholders on various developmental related issues such as local procurement of goods and services, employment promotion, training with special emphasis to sea going personnel, value addition, timely allocation of fish quotas, illegal fishing, the new score card, which include aspects such as permanent employment, provision of decent housing, promotion policy, pension of employees, gender policy in the fisheries sector, corporate social responsibility, channels of communication between the industry and the Ministry, demarcation of fishing grounds between wet and freezer, the request by the Wet Landed Horse Mackerel

Association to access the 200 meter isobar, manner of disposal of Governmental Objectives/ Purpose fish quota, as well as to receive proposals from the industry as to how we can take our sector to higher heights.

In order to have maximum impact, I have proposed a programme which includes meeting separately with members of the Associations, and the workers through their union leaders to discuss sub-sector specific issues.

In conclusion, allow me to assure you that I will always maintain an open door policy as well as commitment to transparency. I also assure you that my engagement with the industry will become a routine affair so that together we can find common ground for the benefit of the industry and of our nation. .

I thank you.