

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



Keynote Address by His Excellency Dr. Hage Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia, at the launch of the GIPF Housing for Men and Women in Uniform Initiative at Osona Village

September 7, 2016

Okahandja

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Director of Ceremonies – Mr David Nuyoma, Chief Executive Officer of the GIPF;

Honourable Ministers and Deputy Ministers present here today;

Comrade Dr. Libertine Amadhila – Patron of the Osona Village;

Governor of the Otjozondjupa Region – Honourable Otto Ipinge;

Excellencies, members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Your Worship the Mayor of Okahandja – Cllr Johannes Hindjou;

Captains of Industry;

Distinguished Service Chiefs;

Members of the GIPF Board of Directors and Management;

Members of the uniformed services;

Distinguished Invited Guests;

Members of the Media;

Fellow Namibians;

It gives me profound pleasure to be here today to officiate at the launch of an initiative which is dear to my heart. During my inaugural State of the Nation Address in April 2015, I reaffirmed my personal commitment towards addressing land reform and most importantly, the provision of affordable housing to all Namibians, as these initiatives are critical towards social justice and poverty alleviation in Namibia.

Robert C. Maynard once said, "*Human Rights rest on human dignity. The dignity of man is an ideal worth fighting for and worth dying for.*" As Namibians, we have an illustrious history decorated with many incidents that

document our fight for human dignity; a principal for which we were prepared to die and many did so.

Today, Namibians enjoy a more dignified life compared to the dark days of yesteryear. However, due to the social deficits which we have inherited, we still face several challenges with regards to our socio economic architecture; one of these challenges being the lack of affordable housing for many of our citizens.

Those who are amongst the largest group of victims of the housing conundrum include our youth and our men and women of the uniformed services. On many occasions I have lamented the fact that our soldiers and police officers are expected to carry out their duties with discipline, dedication and patriotic commitment. But how can we expect them to perform their tasks, which include the protection of VIP's, when they have no access to decent housing and are often forced to live in deplorable conditions?

Therefore in the spirit of *No Namibian Should Feel Left Out*, the GIPF, after consultation with Government, has decided to launch this noble initiative as a first action aimed at rectifying the shortage of housing amongst our uniformed men and women.

In modern life, housing is something that has a profound impact on the human psyche. Access to a decent home can light the spirit of human endeavor. A decent home can be the spark or catalyst which can propel an individual across the poverty gap, towards an ultimate prosperity. Economists agree that many other qualities derive from an individual's home; more than a roof over one's head, the home has come to symbolize family, stability and wealth. As the largest single investment for most families, and the driver of demand in enormous sectors of the economy, housing plays a huge role in a nation's economic development.

Those of you familiar with Maslow's Hierarchy are aware that the pyramid is comprised of physiological needs first, then safety, love and belonging, esteem and eventually self-actualization. To illustrate my earlier inference that housing has a major role to play in the human psyche, take note that in your home, you can take care of physiological needs, in your home, you can ensure your safety, in your home, you experience the emotions of love and belonging, in your home you experience a heightened sense of self-esteem and finally, having achieved all these prerequisites for a successful life, it is from your home that you will enter into society to realize and attain self-actualization.

We are aware that housing and households play an important role in every economy. Housing has a positive impact in several areas such as aggregate

demand and consumption; growth of complementary industries; capital formation for business financing; wealth and savings; the rate of growth and employment. It is for these reasons that through the Harambee Prosperity Plan, we have endeavored to integrate housing into the wider Namibian developmental agenda, with measurement of success determined by the overall economic benefit.

I believe in the saying each according to his or her ability, to each according to his or her need. Pillar three of our Harambee Prosperity Plan, which deals with Social Progression, accentuates this theory. Under this pillar, Government has the dual responsibility to take care of the neediest citizens while creating an environment in which those with ability can prosper. As I have indicated before, it should be clear that through the provision of housing, one can turn individuals that were once needy into individuals who have the means to pursue prosperity. Therefore Land Servicing, Housing and Sanitation are critical issues that are addressed by this third pillar.

I am pleased by the fact that the GIPF, as part of its commitment to alleviating problems with regards to Land Servicing and Housing, is supporting Governments efforts by targeting to take up at least 30% of the deliverables of the plan, which aims to construct 20,000 new houses nationwide and service a minimum of 26,000 plots during the Harambee period.

Through this partnership between Government, GIPF and Preferred Management Services, the Osona Village Initiative aims to contribute not only to the targeted deliverables of the Harambee Prosperity Plan, but to the wider developmental objectives of Namibia.

Today, is a prime example that Government is committed to honouring the promise of land and housing delivery. It has been said that, "*Ambition is the path to success, persistence is the vehicle you arrive in.*" The Harambee Prosperity Plan is ambitious in its vision, a vision which has identified our path to success. I am certain that if we all pull in the same direction, our perseverance and persistence will ensure that we arrive at our destination; that destination being prosperity for all. It will take engagement across the Government, the involvement of local Government, and the commitment of the private sector to achieve this goal. Our plan is well founded – it has taken extensive research and wide ranging consultation to draw it up – and it is realistic.

Addressing the land and housing challenge is a key objective of this Government. There is nothing more fundamental to a sense of security in the world than having a home, and being safe within it. We believe like Chinese Philosopher Confucius, that "*the strength of a nation derives from the*

integrity of the home. Through providing housing, we will ensure that we provide a conducive environment for strong families to foster and bond and in so doing, strengthen the larger Namibian family, in our Namibian House, in which no Namibian should feel left out.

I thank you.