KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY
HON. DR. PEYA MUSHELENGA
MINISTER OF
URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

ON THE OCCASION OF NAMIBIA’S COMMEMORATION
OF WORLD HABITAT DAY 2018

FRIDAY, 26th OCTOBER 2018, 09H00

HAVANA SETTLEMENT AREA
MOSES //GAROEB CONSTITUENCY OFFICE
WINDHOEK
• Director of Ceremonies, Mr. Clement Mafwila, Chief Regional Officer of Khomas RC;
• Hon. George Trepper, Acting Chairperson of Khomas RC and Councillor of Windhoek West Constituency;
• Hon. David Martin, Councillor of Moses //Garoeb Constituency
• Her Worship, Teckla Uwanga, Deputy Mayor of Windhoek;
• Honourable Councillors for both Khomas Regional Council and Windhoek Municipality present here today;
• Senior Government and Municipality officials present;
• Community Members of //Moses Garoeb Constituency;
• Invited Guests;
• Members of the Media;
• Ladies and Gentlemen;

Good Morning,

It is my great pleasure and privilege to be here with you today for this exciting event, the commemoration of World Habitat Day, under the theme “Municipal Solid Waste Management”.

The United Nations in 1985 designated the first Monday of October every year as World Habitat Day. The aim of the day is to reflect on the state of our towns and cities, and on the basic right of all to adequate shelter. It reminds us that we all have the power and the responsibility to shape the future of our cities and towns.
Namibia became signatory to the Habitat Agenda in 1996, and has since observed the day in the country. For this year, Windhoek has been chosen for the commemorations of the event.

Although, I have earlier stated that the day is usually commemorated on the first Monday of October, it is essential to note that Namibia has chosen to have this event today, due to the important second National Land Conference, which was held from 01 to 05 October, and due to other equally important prior commitments during the month of October.

At this juncture, let me take this opportunity to thank the Municipality of Windhoek, as well as the Khomas Regional Council, specifically the Moses //Garoeb Constituency Office who have headed the call to organise this event in partnership with my Ministry.

Director of Ceremonies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Waste generation and its management challenges, is a consequent of the most pressing issue facing Namibia today, and the rest of the world – which is rapid urbanization. Namibia’s informal settlements are growing at an unprecedented rate. In 2016 Namibia’s urban population was estimated to be at 47.9 percent of the total population. Furthermore, 39.7 percent of these urbanites lived in informal settlements, with limited access to water and sanitation, housing, and security of tenure. In most of our towns, the population growth has overwhelmed the capacity of Local Authorities to provide the required basic services to the growing urban population.
Ladies and Gentlemen,

During late 2017, Namibia reported an outbreak of Hepatitis E in Windhoek, and most of these cases were from the informal settlements. Havana where we are today was amongst those areas reported. This virus is linked to amongst others poor sanitation and waste management systems. Therefore, concerted efforts are needed to address challenges faced in our towns, specifically on overall provision of basic services, in order to achieve our Vision 2030, National Development Goals, Harambee Prosperity Plan, as well as the Sustainable Development Goals, the New Urban Agenda and all other international, regional and national plans.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to put on record my appreciation of the good work done by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism in putting in place a National Solid Waste Management Strategy to guide future actions in this sector. One of the strategic directions of the strategy will be to focus on strengthening waste collection systems in informal housing areas, as well as settlements under the administration of the Regional Councils.

I will therefore echo the same statement by the Minister of Environment and Tourism in the strategy: for all stakeholders involved to work in close collaboration with his Ministry, to ensure the effective implementation of the Strategy at all levels.
Similarly, the Municipality of Windhoek, in accordance with the Local Authorities Act, 1992, made regulations for management of waste in the Municipality. Other initiatives embarked upon by the Municipality are also highly appreciated, but much needs to be done by the Municipality, particularly in informal settlement areas. Recognition is also given to other Local Authorities who has put in place some feasible initiatives for solid waste management. However, much needs to be done to improve overall management of municipal solid waste in the country.

Distinguished members of Moses //Garoeb Constituency,
Invited guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,
The collection of municipal solid waste is a public service that has important impacts on public health and the appearance of our towns, therefore my Ministry is glad to contribute some materials, as you will witness today, towards the solid waste management efforts of the Windhoek Municipality, specifically to the Moses //Garoeb Constituency.

In conclusion, there is a need for all of us to change our attitudes to amongst others minimize waste and stop littering. I therefore urged you to use the materials that will be given to you today wisely.

I thank you for your attention.