REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

STATEMENT BY

HONOURABLE DR. PEYA MUSHELENGA, MP
MINISTER OF URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

ON THE OCCASION OF THE

OFFICIAL OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 7TH OSHAKATI
ANNUAL TOTEM EXPO

AT

OSHAKATI INDEPENDENCE STADIUM

ON

SUNDAY, 27 MAY 2018
• Director of Ceremonies;
• Hon. Kornelia Shilunga, Deputy Minister of Mines and Energy;
• Hon. Ministers and Deputy Ministers present
• Hon. Clemens Kashuupulwa, Governor of Oshana Region;
• Your Worship, Cllr. Angelus Iiyambo, Mayor of Oshakati Town;
• All Regional and Local Authority Councilors present;
• Esteemed Traditional Authority Leaders;
• Mr. Werner Iita, Chief Executive Officer of Oshakati Town Council;
• Representatives from Standard Bank Namibia;
• All Senior Government Officials present;
• Esteemed Invited guests;
• Members of the media;
• Ladies and Gentlemen;

Good Morning!
Today I am deeply honoured to address you on this glorious occasion of the official opening ceremony of the Seventh Annual Totem Expo under the theme ‘Strengthening ties through culture’.

It is indeed, brings me joy to see us all gathered here from all corners of Namibia to proudly celebrate an event that unites us all as a nation through our diverse cultures. This shows that despite our indifferences we are peacefully coexisting and working together to achieve common goals as a country.

In pursuit of our lost norms and values, usually attached to cultural identity of our people, Oshakati Town Council have gone a mile further to choose totems (Omapata/ Omazimo) as a stepping stone towards restoring cultural identity in our society. This practice makes people appreciative of their lineages. It provides them with information about a broader component of the people whom they are related to by blood. Oshakati Totem Expo further aims to close the gap between cultural values and the modern practices, as we know that most of our young people can easily become lost in cultural
conglomerations, particularly that they are made up of imported cultures.

It is indeed amazing to note that the Oshakati Town Council opted to host the exposition of this magnitude based on our traditions and cultures while according the business people the opportunity to exhibit their products and services to the larger public. This is a milestone indeed.

Director of Ceremonies;
Ladies and gentleman;

I am aware that each town's economy depends on how favorable the environment can permit the growth of business activities to take place. Hence I applaud the Oshakati Town Council for taking into consideration that while celebrating this festivity of totems, the business fraternities are accorded a chance to exhibit their products and services at this exposition. Every opportunity should be seized to bring trade and investments to our local authorities.
I have been informed that this year, the number of exhibitors for the Oshakati Totem Expo has increased from 190 to over 250 exhibitors from various categories such as Corporate, SME, Cultural, and Outdoor Exhibitors, marking an increase of over 30%.

I have a special word of thanks to each of these 250 exhibitors for ensuring that the untapped market exists in this expo is explored. Next year, I want to see more exhibitors from various sectors all over the country taking part in this expo for the economic growth and development of our country. The opportunities of cultural tourism should be explored to the fullest.

I further would like to urge the exhibitors to grab this opportunity with both arms and utilize it to the best of your abilities, and ensure that you market your products and services as well as your company to be known.

Director of ceremonies;
Ladies and gentleman;
I would also like to mention that I have further been informed that last year the Oshakati Totem expo attracted over 13 000 visitors from all over Namibia, I would like to see more visitors coming to Oshakati Totem Expo to be part of an event that unites us all culturally.

Director of Ceremonies;
Ladies and Gentlemen;

Events of this nature should be treasured and be known to the future generation. I therefore wish to urge parents to allow their children to come to the expo and learn about our cultures and totems in particular. Seeing that this expo takes place during school time, schools should organise that their learners attend this event to be exposed to matters of cultural importance. I would also like to urge the senior citizens to share their teachings of culture and the past and to ensure that the youth are well informed on how to respect their cultures before imitating cultures from elsewhere which does not reflect any of African identity.
Allow me to thank the Oshakati Town Council for continuously hosting an event of this magnitude which unites us and shares immense education on our culture. I further would like to thank every person who is part of the Totem Expo.

Lastly, let me also thank all those who took part in the National Cleaning Campaign, which was held on Friday 25th May 2018. I can see Oshakati Town is clean – for your information I participated in the cleaning of Oshakati Town on Friday. Let us keep it up and continue cleaning our environment on a regular basis.

On this note, it is now my honour to officially declare the 7th session of the Oshakati Annual Totem Expo officially open.

I thank you all for your kind attention.