



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

STATEMENT

BY

**HON. DR. PEYA MUSHELENGA
MINISTER OF URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMWENT**

**ON OCASSION OF THE OFFICIAL DESIGNATION OF CHIEF
HENDRIK ISMAEL WITBOOI IN GIBEON**

06 JULY 2019

Director of Ceremonies

Governor of the Hardap Region, Honourable Esme Isaacks

Chief Immanuel /Gaseb, Acting Chairperson of the Council of Traditional Leaders

Chief PSM Kooper, Chief of Kai-//Khaun Traditional Authority and Chairperson of the Nama Traditional Leaders Association

Chief Johannes Isaacks, of the /Hai/Khauan Traditional Authority

Chief Designate, Hendrik Ismael Witbooi

Senior Councilor Simon Otto Jacobs and all senior and traditional Councilors of the Witbooi Traditional Authority

All Chiefs and Councilors of other traditional Authorities present

Professor Paul Isaak and other Leaders of Faith-based Organizations present

The Witbooi traditional Community

Distinguished Invited Guests

Members of the media

Ladies and gentlemen

I feel deeply honoured for being invited to witness the official designation of the 9th Captain of the /Khowese Clan here in Gibeon under the suitable theme: “Ta |haoba-e ni se xun !na |guri ma...” “Do not stand alone in matters requiring unity”.

This theme is today more appropriate than ever before as our country is faced with countless challenges which no single entity can overcome by itself. It is in acknowledgment of the power in numbers that this country and her people adopted a policy of national reconciliation and the slogan: One Namibia One Nation!

In this slogan, we, as a people collectively accept that our strength lays in the unity of our people.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Director of Ceremonies, Distinguished Guests

Esteemed Chief-designate Hendrik Ismael Witbooi, we witness today your official designation as Chief of the Witbooi traditional community following the approval of the application for your designation as Chief of your community as per the provisions of the relevant sections of the Traditional Authorities Act No. 25 of 2000. The Minister of Urban and Rural Development has approved your application because it met the requirements as laid down in the Traditional Authorities Act No. 25 of 2000. After your designation, the Minister will notify His Excellency the

President about your designation as per the Traditional Authorities Act No. 25 of 2000. This is done in order for the President to recognize your designation as a Chief as provided for in section 6 of the Traditional Authorities Act, 25 of 2000.

As a Chief recognized under the aforementioned Act No 25 of 2000, you will be required to be the custodian of the Customary Law of the Witbooi traditional community. You will, therefore, be obliged to ensure that your community's customary law is functional and applicable to your community and that there is certainty about its application to you as the Chief, to your Councilors, and to your community members. In this context, you and your team of senior and traditional councilors must work together to ensure that your customary law provides certainty especially in respect of leadership succession and by so doing avoiding squabbles, costly and divisive disputes over succession, in the future.

Your powers, duties and functions as a Chief are clearly stipulated in the Traditional Authorities Act No.25 of 2000 which provides for the legal framework for the role and function of traditional authorities. Following are some of your duties and functions together with your Councilors:

- You are responsible for the maintenance of peace, order and harmony within your community.
- You are required to uphold, promote, protect and preserve the culture, language, tradition and traditional values of your traditional community.
- You are required to assist and cooperate with the Government, Regional Councils and Local Authority councils in the execution of policies, projects and programmes and to keep your community informed about development projects and programmes in their area.
- It is your duty as a Chief to assist the Namibian Police and other law enforcement agencies in the prevention of crime in your area.

As the supreme traditional leader of your community you have the responsibility to exercise your powers and to perform your duties and functions in a just and inclusive manner. Your community will expect that you respond positively to their needs and aspirations and that you'll have a sympathetic and a listening ear when it comes to their plights.

As a member of the Council of Traditional Leaders you will become part of the traditional leadership at national level that has a constitutional mandate of advising the President on the control and utilization of communal land among others. Traditional leaders, therefore, have a crucial role to play in advising the President on land and related matters. His Excellency President has, time and again, demonstrated his open- door policy of consultation with the Namibian citizenry.

Director of ceremonies Esteemed Senior and Traditional Councilors of the Witbooi Traditional Authority,

I appeal to you to cooperate with your Chief-designate Hendrik Ismael Witbooi and render him your full support. Assist him in the daunting task of bringing about peace, unity and reconciliation within his leadership and in the Witbooi traditional community. Unity, peace and teamwork are absolute necessities for the consolidation of a fully functional Witbooi Traditional Authority that will deliver services to the community.

I urge you, the Witbooi traditional community to cooperate with your Chief and his leadership to enable them to deliver much needed services to this community which is known for its illustrious history of

resistance under the leadership of their iconic Chief and national hero, Hendrik Witbooi. It is incumbent on you all to preserve this legacy of the late Captain Hendrik Witbooi and of those who followed in his footsteps such as the late Captain Dr.Hendrik Witbooi, former deputy Prime Minister of the republic of Namibia.

Director of ceremonies,

It is expected from all the Chiefs and their communities country-wide and in particular from those in the Hardap and //Kharas Region as good neighbours, to support the newly designated Chief Ismael Witbooi in advancing, unity, peace, and social cohesion in the regions and in our country. Embrace one another as neighbours and fellow-citizens, foster unity among your communities and collectively promote and preserve peace and stability in our country.

Regrettably, leadership changes within traditional authorities in Namibia have not been without controversy. We have seen all over the country how various factions within traditional communities are being formed and how the battle lines are being drawn for a fierce battle for the position of Traditional Leader, while accepting that there is no community without disagreement. Nor is it expected that all people should see the same thing and agrees as such at all times. It is obvious

that such infightings have robbed and continue to rob many communities in Namibia of resources being spent during such fights, while at the same time the affairs of the traditional authorities are being neglected as more time is spent fighting for positions.

I would like to say this however. Leadership is about the people and its hardly about ourselves. It is about working for the people and being the servant of the people. It is about leaving a lasting legacy of great work through excellent leadership and wisdom and not about positions only.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

President Hage Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia, declared this year 2019 as the year of accountability

As such, and with respect to such declaration by the Head of State Traditional Authorities will be held accountable both by the Government and by members of the specific traditional community concerned. Such accountability is and will be based on whether the operations of a traditional community is in line with and satisfies the legal framework, particularly the Namibian Constitution and the Traditional Authorities Act No.25 of 2000.

We have further observed that some Traditional Authorities deliberately omit the establishment of Community Trust Funds to be managed by the Board of Trustees as per the regulations in the Traditional Authorities Act.

Director of Ceremonies, Distinguished Guests

I would like to congratulate Chief Hendrik Ismael Witbooi on your designation as the 9th Captain of /Khowese Clan. You now have a responsibility to lead your people through unity of purpose. As a custodian of your culture, traditions and customs, it is your collective responsibility to ensure the important roles that your people can play in the totality of the Namibian nation

I wish you great prosperity in your new role and may you lead this community with all the tools and wisdom required to fully function in the 21st century and beyond.

I thank you!