



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

**ON THE**

**OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL HANDOVER OF THE HOUSES  
CONSTRUCTED BY NATIONAL HOUSING ENTERPRISE (NHE)  
THROUGH PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP**

**AT**

**OMUTHIYA, OSHIKOTO REGION**

**THURSDAY, 21 NOVEMBER 2019**

- Director of Proceedings;
- Cde Henock Kankoshi, Governor of Oshikoto Region;
- Your Worship Councillor Katrina Uusiku, Mayor of Omuthiya Town
- Honourable Regional and Local Authorities Councillors present here today;
- Mr Tosca Sem, Member of the NHE Board of Directors;
- Mr. Gisbertus Mukulu, Chief Executive Officer of the National Housing Enterprise;
- Invited guests and home owners;
- Members of the Media;
- Ladies and Gentlemen;

I am delighted to attend and officiate at the handing over houses constructed through Public Private Partnerships by the National Housing Enterprise (NHE) in execution of its mandate. It is the first time in the history of this town that the National Housing Enterprise has constructed houses. These fifty (50) housing units will go a long way in addressing the housing plight faced by the residents of Omuthiya. I hope and believe that this tripartite relationship between the National Housing Enterprise, Town Council and the private sector will have a long lasting positive spin-offs not only for the three (3) stakeholders but for the residents of the town as well in terms of land and housing delivery because this town has a huge potential, with estimated population of five thousand (5000) residents and still growing, in terms of people in need of housing and serviced land. However, we must be vigilant against land and housing speculators so as to promise on the Government's vision of delivery of affordable and decent housing.

Affordable housing stimulates economic development and growth among low-income group communities. A research by Shelter Scotland discussed in their publication titled *The economic impact of investment in affordable housing*, reveals that:

[I]n addition to being a key driver of economic growth, affordable house building plays a key role in addressing inequality over the long-term. ...Eradicating overcrowding, dampness, disrepair and fuel poverty all play a key role in reducing inter-generational health inequalities. Affordable housing also provides a stable environment in which policies which target educational attainment, tackling re-offending or reducing poverty are effective.

Director of Proceedings;  
Ladies and Gentlemen;

It important to note that the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development remains committed to its mandate of designing, coordinating and ensuring an

appropriate policy, legal, regulatory and institutional framework as well as support mechanisms for effective and sustainable urban and rural development in Namibia through various instruments such as the Mass Housing Development Programme, Harambee Prosperity Plan, Build Together Programme, PPP and National Housing Enterprise.

In order to reinvigorate its affordable land and housing delivery programme, the National Housing Enterprise embarked upon a very ambitious plan of delivering four hundred and twenty-two (422) housing units by signing Public Private Partnerships agreements through the process of Request for Proposals in the towns of Oshakati, two hundred (200), Okahao, fifty (50), Rundu, one hundred and twenty two (122) and Omuthiya, fifty (50) part of the first phase of its RFP projects.

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Director of Proceedings;  
Ladies and Gentlemen;

I am delighted that we are moving in the right direction in terms of delivery of affordable housing. Only yesterday I handed over 50 houses in Okahao. We must aggressively address the demand for housing in Namibia. Statistics with regards to the housing backlog nationally and locally are available for all of us to see. We are aware of the national housing targets that require the participation of all stakeholders.

The Harambee Prosperity Plan targets delivery of 20 000 houses in a 5-year period for our people. It is not the President or the Minister who will be at the sites building these houses. It is the collaboration of all of us: central government, local authorities, NHE, the private sector, all players in housing delivery.

Director of Proceedings;  
Ladies and Gentlemen;

Yesterday in Okahao I have commended the Town Council because they have always come on board in terms of availing reasonably priced land. Every time a township is serviced, they avail a portion to NHE and houses are built immediately. I am informed that Omuthiya has also been reasonable in allocating affordable land to NHE. This is how things are supposed to work. After all, when houses are constructed, it is for the benefit of not only the people but also the long-term sustainability of the local authorities. Through these houses that are being handed over today, Omuthiya Town Council will be collecting rates and taxes as long as these properties exist.

Ladies and gentlemen;

I wish to remind all of you here today that both NHE and Local Authorities are part of the same government, serving the very same people, striving to achieve

the same ultimate objective of socio-economic development for our communities. It therefore makes no sense for entities of the same government to be pulling in different directions. Let us deliver houses to our people in collaboration with one another. Local Authorities should avail affordable land to NHE, so that affordable houses can be built for our people.

Let us not forget the important role that the Peoples Housing Processes (Community Self-Help Housing) programmes implemented the Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia and other saving groups and the Build Together Programme is playing in terms of delivering of affordable housing for the low income earners. Thus I would urge and go as far as instructing all the local authorities to make serviced land available for these noble programmes. Unless we make provision for affordable housing for the low income earners we will not succeed in our pursuit of providing affordable and decent shelter to the Namibian population. I hope that the next time I am invited to Omuthiya that I will also be handing over houses constructed through the Build Together and Peoples Housing Processes programmes.

Although little attention is generally given to rental housing and current housing approaches tend to focus on ownership, rental is an important housing affordable option for many, and especially amongst the lower-income, recent urban arrivals/migrants and young start-up families, as it requires no down payment and no long-term financial commitment. Renting is often the first step in a family's housing acquisition process until they accumulate sufficient resources to buy or build. As such, rental housing is an important option and step towards home ownership (incremental housing) for the lower income. Therefore, lets are pursue various housing development options.

Director of Proceedings;  
Ladies and Gentlemen;

I am reliably informed that out of fifty (50) houses constructed here at Omuthiya, forty-five (45) of them were handed over to clients and occupied as we speak. NHE, this is commendable, and you deserve applause for this great work!

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Omuthiya Town Council, Atlantis Ports & Logistics who are the contractors, as well as NHE, the initiator of the project for this collaboration that has enabled these houses to be standing here today. It is now my distinct pleasure to declare these fifty (50) houses officially handed over to their proud owners.  
Thank you all for your kind attention.