



Republic of Namibia

**STATEMENT BY
DR. PEYA MUSHELENGA, MP,
MINISTER OF URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE
OFFICIAL HANDING OVER OF HOUSES CONSTRUCTED UNDER THE
MASS HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (MHDP)
MATUTURA EXTENSION 7, SWAKOPMUND**

TUESDAY, 26 NOVEMBER 2019

- Director of Ceremonies;
- Hon. Cleophas Mutjavikua, Governor of Erongo Region;
- Hon. Regional Councillors;
- Your Worship Cllr. Paulina N.D. Nashilundo, Mayor of Swakopmund and other Hon Local Authority Councillors;
- The Executive Director of Ministry of Urban and Rural Development and his team;
- The Chief Regional Officer and officials from Erongo Regional Council;
- Commissioner Nelumbu, Regional Commander of the Namibian Police in Erongo Region;
- The Chief Executive Officer and staff of the Swakopmund Municipality;
- Representatives of the National Housing Enterprise
- The Principal Agent and Contractor
- Esteemed beneficiaries;
- Members of the Media;
- Ladies and Gentlemen

I am extremely delighted to be here today to officiate at the handing over of a batch of fifty-five (55) houses, which have been constructed with funding from the Government under the Mass Housing Development Programme.

Director of Ceremonies

Ladies and Gentlemen

This occasion serves as a tangible demonstration of the steadfast commitment of the Government towards the provision of access to decent and affordable shelter and basic services to our people, especially the low income groups. Researches reveal that affordable housing enable low-income earners discretion over the use of their meagre funds to meet their family needs and savings for the future. It further addresses housing instability which adversely affects children's performance at school.

The 55 completed houses whose handing we will be witnessing today are part of a total of one hundred and thirty three (133) houses that re on this site. I am informed that twenty four (24) of the 55 houses have already been allocated, while NHE is at an advance stage of allocating and handing over the remaining seventy eight (78) houses, which is scheduled to be done latest middle of December 2019.

I am informed that in addition to the fifty five (55) whose handing over today will be witnessing today, some eight hundred and eighty three (883) houses have already been completed and handed over to beneficiaries here in Swakopmund. In addition, the Government is working hard to resolve a legal dispute which has delayed the completion of a further 583 houses also here in Swakopmund.

Overall at the regional level, out of a total of one thousand eight hundred and thirty-seven (1,837) houses that were planned for construction under the first phase of the Mass Housing Development Programme in Erongo Region, one thousand two hundred and fifty-four (1,254) of these have been completed.

Director of ceremonies

Ladies and gentlemen

As a Government and nation, we recognise that despite the efforts that we have made in the past including what we are doing here today, a large section of our fellow countrymen and women here in Swakopmund and other parts of the country are still struggling and are in need of a place to call home. While the Government will continue to take the lead in driving the national housing agenda, each one of us as citizens - Government, private sector and community - also have a role to play in the realisation of our goal of decent and affordable housing.

On its part, the Government through the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development will continue to mobilise and avail resources to Local Authorities, Regional Councils and community-based groups such as the Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia to service land and provide housing for the needy in general and with special focus on those who live in backyards and improper structures.

In order to accelerate the provision of serviced land and housing, the Government in 2017 passed the Public Private Partnership Act, as framework to guide and promote smart and viable partnerships between public institutions such as Offices, Ministries, local authorities and regional councils and the private sector in financing and undertaking the land and housing development projects for mutual benefits.

It is however expected that such partnerships are done in an open, transparent and competitive basis and with the principle of value for money in mind. In addition, it is important to ensure the houses constructed are truly affordable to many who are in need of proper housing.

In this regard, I wish to implore the private sector, especially the construction industry and banking sector, to continue to support the Government's efforts on land and housing development by devising innovative ways of building quality but affordable houses as well as to develop and offer affordable housing financing products, especially those that meet the needs of the low income groups.

Director of proceedings

Ladies and gentlemen

In keeping with our resolve to provide housing and shelter that is not only decent but also affordable to our people, Cabinet in 2015 directed that the categories of houses that are being constructed under the Mass Housing Development Programme and are earmarked for the ultra-low and low income groups must be sold at prices that are lower than the actual cost of construction.

I am informed that all the 133 houses that are on this site fall in this category is priced at N\$90,000 and will require the owner to pay about N\$770 per month. This is a commendable and praise worthy gesture from the Government of the people, ensuring that the ultra-low income earners are not left out of the housing provision.

Director of ceremonies

Ladies and gentlemen

The Government has noted with great concern the following un-progressive tendencies and actions by some members of the community:

- Vandalism of houses that are still under construction or awaiting to be allocated to owners;
- Erection of shacks next to the proper houses to rent out;
- People applying as first time home owners while they are and end up not living in the houses and instead renting them out;
- Beneficiaries failing to pay their home loans, which is needed to enable the Government to build and provide houses for other needy Namibians; and
- Beneficiaries not taking care of and keeping their houses clean.

These practices are retarding our progress and will and must not be allowed. As such, I am calling on the public institutions that are tasked with the allocation of Government-funded houses, namely NHE and local authorities with the support of the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development and the security forces, to not allow and to deal with any such.

In conclusion, ladies and gentlemen, I wish to take this opportunity to thank all those who play a role in the completion of the houses whose handing over we are witnessing today. We wish to single out the contractor, the Principal Agent, the Swakopmund Municipality, NHE, and the Ministries of Works & Transport and of Urban and Rural Development for their roles and contributions in their different capacities. I am equally grateful to the leadership of the region for its continued oversight.

May we continue to pull together and face the challenge of housing in unity and with a common purpose. And I thank you all for your kind attention.