



**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY HON DR. PEYA MUSHELENGA, MP  
MINISTER OF URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
ON THE  
OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL SITE HANDOVER CEREMONY OF  
THE NATIONAL HOUSING ENTERPRISE (NHE) PILOT PROJECT  
FOR THE INFORMAL SETTLEMENT UPGRADING IN WINDHOEK,  
AT  
OTJOMUISE, WINDHOEK  
WEDNESDAY, 04 DECEMBER 2019.**

- Director of Ceremonies;
- Your Worship Councillor Muesee Kazapua, Mayor of Windhoek
- Cde Laura McLeod Katjirua, Regional Governor of Khomas Region;
- Honourable Fanuel Shivute, Regional Councillor for Samora Machel constituency;
- Mr. Nick Hibbert, Acting Chief Executive Officer of the National Housing Enterprise;
- Residents of this township
- Members of the Media;
- Ladies and Gentlemen;

From the onset, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the invitation extended to me to officially hand over this site. I have one of the shortest tasks here today, which is to have the project officially commence through this handover session.

Our country is faced with a persistent backlog in serviced land and housing, a situation that is attributed to a combination of causal factors and is manifesting itself in urban sprawl and the growth of informal settlements. These settlements are generally characterised by lack of tenure security and access to basic services such as water, electricity, access roads and proper sanitation. This is corroborated by the Socio-economic Rights Institute of South Africa (SERI) states in the research paper titled Informal settlement upgrading in South Africa: Linkages to livelihood creation, informal sector development and economic opportunity generation, that the South African informal upgrading programme has three objectives, namely to enhance security tenure and recognise the residents' tenure rights, to provide a health and secure environment for human living and to promote social economic integration.<sup>1</sup>

The conditions in informal settlements are worsening to a “Humanitarian crisis” level as per the declaration of His Excellency the President, and require urgent collective action. This is the reason why we are here today, to officiate at the occasion whose outcome will signify bringing lights into the dark lives of our low income earners, to give meaning to their life and boost their human dignity.

Director of Ceremonies;  
Ladies and gentlemen;

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<sup>1</sup> Socio-economic institute of South Africa, 2012, Informal settlement upgrading in South Africa: Linkages to livelihood creation, informal sector development and economic opportunity generation, Working paper No. 2

The size and number of informal settlements around the country is undeniably on a rapid increase. The situation is surely extreme in Windhoek, due to it being the capital city and major attraction of people seeking enhanced opportunities to improve their lives. We cannot shy away from this fact and need to face the challenge head on. It is us, together with relevant stakeholders, who have the responsibility to find solutions to the housing needs facing our people. We know the key expectation of our people in informal settlements, which is a decent shelter with access to basic services.

Director of Ceremonies;  
Ladies and gentlemen;

With the mandate and trust vested in us by the electorate, Government is expected to respond to the needs of the people including housing. Subsequently, we expect the institutions established for the purpose of housing provision to fulfil the task. Government, in response to the needs of our people, has embarked upon this pilot project to test the viability of improving houses in the informal settlements. And indeed, this is good initiative.

I therefore call upon the National Housing Enterprise (NHE) and the two contractors to successfully implement this project, within the prescribed time and with the expected superior product quality. I therefore hope that lessons from implementing this project are learned and well noted for purposes of improvement in the subsequent projects.

In conclusion, I wish you all the best in seeing this project through to its successful completion. It is now my pleasure to officially handover the sites to the two contractors.

Thank you all for your kind attention and best wishes over the festive season.  
Thank you