



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
MINISTRY OF SPORT, YOUTH AND NATIONAL SERVICE

MEDIA RELEASE

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Attention: News Editor

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PERMANENT SECRETARY, MR. ALFRED ILUKENA RETIRES FROM THE PUBLIC SERVICE

The Ministry of Sport, Youth and National Service on Tuesday, 25th April 2017, held a farewell reception in honour of Mr. Alfred Matengu Ilukena who has retired from the public service. Ilukena began working for the public sector in 1990, serving in several departments before assuming the mantle as a Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education. Mr. Ilukena served in different key positions in the Public Service with the majority of this time served with the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture.

His last assignment was with the Ministry of Sport, Youth and National Service where he served one year and six months. In honour of his excellent service, the Ministry of Sport, Youth and National Service held a farewell function on Tuesday, 25 April 2017. At the occasion, the outgoing Permanent Secretary expressed his gratitude for the opportunities given to him throughout his career. He narrated his journey in the service of the Namibian people by taking the audience back to where it all started for him, which was in exile where he served in various educational roles for the SWAPO Party. The outgoing Permanent Secretary regaled the audience with tales of the difficult path the party had to walk, in ensuring that education was provided to the promising Namibians that fled the country, during the apartheid era.

With the dawn of independence his first task by the new government was to set up an inspectorate in the Ministry of Education, aiming to purge the education sector of the remnants of Bantu education. Ultimately, his role in this sector culminated in his appointment as the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education, a position he held until June 2015 when he was transferred to the Ministry of Sport, Youth and National Service.

His path through the education sector saw him lock horns as an inspector of schools with then a High School Principal in Kavango, Hon. John Mutorwa, who would then become his supervisor, when the latter was appointed as the Minister of Education. It was also at the same school where he reprimanded a young school vice principal who would eventually become the incumbent Minister of Information and Communication Technology, Hon. Tjekero Tweya.

The outgoing Permanent Secretary took pleasure in informing the audience, that his role at the Ministry of Education accorded him the opportunity to have worked with many staff members amongst who were Dr. Adrian Van Kent and Ms. Sanet Steenkamp who now respectively have become the Permanent Secretaries of the Ministry of Higher Education, Training and Innovation and Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture.

With respect to his last assignment at the helm of the Ministry of Sport, Youth and National Service, the outgoing Permanent Secretary called upon officials in the Ministry to work together as a team in order to achieve more. “The way I see it is that if we want to make this Ministry work, we have the capacity and the ability to do so. The only thing that I will leave my colleagues with, is that do not work in isolation.”

Although in general he was happy with his last assignment, Mr. Ilukena however expressed areas of regret, where he feels that he could have done more. In this regard, the outgoing Permanent Secretary expressed regrets that he could not deliver on a staff/personnel structure that could ensure ministerial presence in every town/village across Namibia. “I feel that I should have delivered the structure, failure to do so I feel I have not completed my mission. I wanted to make sure that before I leave, I have a decentralized functioning model so that we can take services to the people. We have done well so far, we wanted to decentralize the functions this year, the functions have been identified, unfortunately we cannot implement to the fullest extent of decentralization, because our resources does not allow us to do so.”

The outgoing Permanent Secretary also expressed regrets in not having delivered on improved provision of infrastructure for the Ministry. “I wanted to leave the ministry with a proper functioning, comprehensive, multi-purpose sport and youth centres. A one stop shop where everything happens. Unfortunately, I have never been able to achieve that as well. As I leave, I regret those things that I have not achieved.” However, he hopes that his next predecessor will complete those assignments.

Hon. Jerry Ekandjo, the Minister of Sport, Youth and National Service described Ilukena as a pioneer in education whose dedication to the education sector developed during his youth years while he was in exile. “Comrade Ilukena did not start in the education field after 1990, when he was young, he left the country and was trained as a plan combatant who was also involved in education. He is a pioneer in education.” Ekandjo wished the outgoing Permanent Secretary good health and well-earned rest and wished him all the best for the future.

Deputy Minister, Hon. Agnes Tjongarero thanked the family of Ilukena and especially the wife for having shared him with so many people. “Madam, thank you very much, I know it was not easy. I know he is one of those people who will be in the office very early in the morning, and he will also be very late in the office before he goes home. This means, most of the time, he was with us and not with you and the children, thank you very much for allowing him to be with us for that time.” She praised Ilukena for his dedication to the public service and for sharing his knowledge with her on issues she was unaware. There were things I thought I knew, but working with you I realized there were things that I did not know, and you taught me many of the things. Thank you very much for that. She indicated that although he was going on retirement, the Ministry will call on him for advice and guidance on issues affecting the ministry.

Other praises came from the management of the Ministry, who described Ilukena as a wonderful colleague, with a brilliant mind, who always brought creative and new ideas to the

Ministry. They also described him as a fantastic leader, with good listening skills and a mentor to many. Ms. Rosalia Tjaveondja, Director of General Services in the Ministry of Sport, Youth and National Service, has been appointed as the Acting Permanent Secretary.

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