



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

**SPEECH
BY THE MINISTER OF SPORT, YOUTH AND
NATIONAL SERVICE**

HON. AGNES TJONGARERO

**AT THE OCCASION OF COVID – 19
TVALOLOKA LOCATION FOOD RATION
DONATION TO HONOURABLE GOVERNOR OF
ERONGO REGION BY NATIONAL YOUTH
SERVICE**

SATURDAY, 05 SEPTEMBER 2020

**RIETFONTAIN TRAINING CENTRE,
OTJOZONDJUPA REGION**

Director of Ceremony,

- **Honourable Emma Kantema – Gaomas, Deputy Minister of Sport, Youth and National Service;**
- **Honourable Andre Neville Itope, Governor of Erongo Region;**
- **Honourable James Uerika, Governor of Otjozondjupa Region in absentia;**
- **Dr. Emmerentia Leonard, Chairperson of the National Youth Service Board of Directors and other board members present;**
- **Dr. Felix Musukubili, Commissioner of National Youth Service;**
- **National Youth Service management and staff members;**
- **Trainees;**
- **Members of the media**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**

I am very honoured on behalf of His Excellency, Dr Hage G Geingob, President of Republic of Namibia and as statutory Head of National Youth Service, who has delegated me to come officiate this event and to present the food ration donation from NYS to the Erongo Regional Governor, earmarked for Covid-19 Quarantine Centres and for the Twaloloka (now Twafika) residents.

From the onset, I would like to state that this is my third visit to Rietfontein Centre in a space of three months.

Indeed, it is a demonstration that NYS means business and are enthusiastic to their delivery of their mandate. During my first visit, I was invited for an orientation of the Centre and the surrounding farms. During that visit, the board and management took us around the Centre to demonstrate the Centre capacity utilisation and the envisaged value addition facilities that were envisaged to be developed. I'm pleased to state the value addition facilities are completed and the donation I will be making later are produce of this Centre by our own Namibian committed and patriotic youth that are undergoing NYS training programmes.

Director of Ceremony, ladies and gentlemen,

The mandate of the National Youth Service is wide encompassing. It includes among others:

- bringing the Namibian youth from various social and cultural background representative of all 121 constituencies, to share common experiences and encourage notions of equality;
- providing specialized and unique training opportunities to the youth to enhance their opportunities of employment;
- provision of opportunities for the youth to take part in national development on a voluntary basis; and

- thereby encouraging patriotism, a sense of nationhood and commitment to Namibia development.

To this end, from the date of NYS inception, about 5300 trainees have undergone Civic Training and Voluntary Service Program and over 600 have graduated from the Skills Development programmes under NYS vocational training scheme. I'm advised that many of the civic graduates have been absorbed in the security services cluster including the Namibian Police, Correctional Services and the Namibian Defence Force.

Those who have completed skills development training, have either been absorbed in the labour market and are self-employed. I'm however, informed that most skills trained youth find it extremely difficult to access funding to start their own enterprises. In this respect, as a government, we will be looking at interventions that seeks to ease accessibility to funding by the youth graduates particularly those from vocational training programmes.

Director of ceremony, ladies and gentlemen.

Besides NYS mandate relating to training and skills development, the Service has acquired agricultural farms. Therefore NYS is engaged in crop and horticulture activities at Rietfontein Center, Berg Aukas in Otjozondjupa Region, Eunda in Omusati and Omauni in Ohangwena Region. Moreover, NYS is also involved in livestock farming at Rietfontein Center and

farm Gemsbokpan in Otjozondjupa Region. Until recently, NYS was only producing grains with no value addition. Similarly, most of the cattle were and are still being sold as live animals without any value addition.

It is against this background that the Board and Management have resolved to embark on value-addition drive on all their produce. The Namibian Government has called for value addition to local products and NYS is heeding that call. For this reason, NYS has invested in a milling plant at the center.

Besides meat that is supplied to the kitchen to feed the trainees, NYS is also producing milk and will soon start adding value to the milk being produced such as cultured milk (omaere) and possibly cheese and other dairy products. A milking parlour at Rietfontein Center has been renovated and milking has commenced as will go witness later. These are indeed great achievements by the Board of NYS and management over a very short period of time since I was last here in July 2020. I'm confident that with time, NYS will be on a good cause to self-sustainability and ultimately play their part in contributing towards food security in Namibia.

As we are all aware, last year 2019, the country experienced devastating drought affecting most grazing fields. However, this year the country received a fair amount of rain. This created an opportunity for NYS to harvest abundant animal fodder in the form of hay for livestock. This hay is being stored at the center

waiting for farmers when the need arise. Again, this is another initiative by the NYS management towards income generation to fund their training programmes.

Director of ceremony, ladies and gentlemen

As you are all aware, the world is being confronted by Covid-19 pandemic. Consequently, resulting in most, if not all countries, closing their borders and introducing stringent mitigating measures to help curb and manage the impact of the pandemic. Namibia has not been spared from this novel virus.

As such, various high level government interventions have been put in place including regional lockdown, enforcement of the Covid-19 protocols which includes wearing of masks and keeping the required social distance.

All aimed at mitigating against the wide spread of the pandemic in the country. Until recently, Walvis Bay in the Erongo Region was the epicenter of the virus and as such misplaced a lot of the regional inhabitants. NYS offered its training center in Henties Bay to be used as a quarantine facility.

You would have all learnt from the media reports on complaints emanating particularly from our NYS Henties Bay quarantine facility relating to the inadequate meals provided at the facility. It was on this basis that the National Youth Service considered to make a donation as part of their social responsibility. Further, the recent fire that destroyed the residential places of the

Twaloloka (now Otweya location) aggravated the social dynamics in the region.

On the basis of the two situations stated herein, the Board and management of NYS having consulted my ministry, felt duty bound as a national service to make a contribution in a form a donation to the Regional Governor, Honorable Neville Andre. The donation includes, 500 bags of 10 Kgs white maize flour and Mahungu Pearl Millet Flour and 1000 kilograms (1 ton of beef packed in 250 box cartons of 4 kgs each. These products are produce of NYS farms and packed at this very center as we will be witnessing the process after this event. I believe with this donation, small as it may appear, will make a great impact to the beneficiaries.

NYS has farms in various regions, besides Otjodzujupa Regions. These includes; farm Omauni in Ohangwena where the Mahungu is being cultivated, farm Eunda in Omusati for horticulture production. My ministry has engaged the new Commissioner to ensure that NYS has representation in all regions in a long term. Currently, we are busy considering the transfer of the ministry's training centers in Omahake, Karas and Hardap Regions to NYS to ensure the expansion of their training programs to these regions.

Director of ceremony, ladies and gentlemen

As I conclude, am advised that NYS is busy establishing production units that will render services to Government, public

and private clients. The need to establish production units comes as a result of challenges encountered when securing job attachment and apprenticeship for NYS trainees. Thus, the envisaged production units will offer opportunities for NYS trainees to gain valuable on the job experience. The intention is to ensure NYS participation in capital projects where the trainees and graduates would have the opportunity to find employment and do their required job attachments and apprenticeship.

Ultimately job creation for the youth thereby contributing to Namibia's socio-economic development. On this point, I wish to call upon all offices ministries, agencies and including state owned enterprises and private entities to consider using the services of NYS in their various projects be it on a commercial basis or voluntary services.

Director of ceremony, ladies and gentlemen, at this juncture, allow me now to invite the Hon Governor of Erongo Region, Hon Neville Andre to come to the front so we can proceed with the donation. In the same vein, I would like to invite my Deputy Minister joined by The Board Chairperson and the Commissioner to come and witness the handing-over of the donation.

With these few remarks, I thank you for your attention as I proceed to make the donation.