

# REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY HONOURABLE  
JERRY EKANDJO, MINISTER OF SPORT,  
YOUTH AND NATIONAL SERVICE**

**ON THE**

**OCCASION OF THE OPENING CEREMONY  
OF THE AFRICAN UNION SPORTS COUNCIL  
REGION 5 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
MEETING**

**04 November 2016  
Swakopmund**

Director of Ceremony Comrade Sivhute Katamba (Director of Sport);  
Her Worship the Major of Swakopmund Comrade Paulina Nashilundo;  
Chairperson of the African Union Sports Council Region 5, Dr. Vetumbuavi  
Veii and the Members of the Secretariat;  
Members of the Region 5 Executive Committee;  
Senior Officials of the Ministry;  
Senior Officials of the Namibia Sports Commission;  
Erongo Regional Sports Bodies Representatives;  
Erongo Regional Police Commander Commissioner Andreas Nelumbu;  
The Chief Executive Officer of the Swakopmund Town Council Mr. Marco  
Swarts;  
Distinguish Invited Guest;  
Ladies and Gentlemen;  
Members of the Media;

It is indeed my singular honour and distinguished privilege to address this august house on the eve of the African Union Sports Council (AUSC) Region 5 Elective Executive Committee Meeting in the Land of the Brave. As Minister responsible for Sport, and on behalf of the Namibian sport fraternity, we are very grateful to have you here.

As the custodians of the Sport in the AUSC Region 5, I am requesting you to focus specifically on the development of sport in our Region through aggressive talent identification and nurturing programmes, to unearth talent in the remote areas and to concentrate on the empowerment of women and people with disabilities to increase their participation in the sports.

It is my strong and firm belief that through a strong foundation in sports development and talent identification we can become the powerhouse internationally. We however need to harness this talent into a formidable high performance programme for excellence.

Namibia currently does not have a High Performance Centre or high class international training facilities. However as a country, we have produced Olympic and Paralympic Medallists. At the recently concluded Rio Paralympics, Namibia achieved a world class performance, where we obtained 1 Gold, 2 silver and 2 Bronze medals.

As a country we have performed well at the International level in Boxing where we have produced dozens of continental and world champions and at the regional level, we have also managed to win the COSAFA Senior Cup, 2015 edition and the U/17 COSAFA Cup this year in Mauritius. I am convinced that there are many Olympians that need to be unearthed through talent identification and grass roots sports development programmes in our Region.

As Council of Ministers, we are proud to belong to Region 5. The Region has demonstrated exceptional leadership in Africa and continues to blaze a trail in the number of fundamental sport development and sport for development initiatives. As a Region, we have indeed demonstrated that we are leading home of excellence and innovation by introducing such programmes as the Regional Annual Sports Awards (RASA) Regional Marathon, Regional Exhibition, Sport and Environment and Safe Sport Programme among others. We urge the Executive Committee and the Secretariat to continue expending positive energy towards the sustainable trajectory of the Region.

We just approved a new Constitution and we are now working on attendant regulations. I challenge you to start considering simplifying terminology for our structure. I strongly think the Secretariat should be known as the Executive Board with the Executive Committee becoming the General Assembly. This is just food for thought.

I am reliably informed that tomorrow the AUSC Region 5 will conduct an elective meeting to elect new leadership that will lead the Region for the next four year term. As elected leaders I am sure that you will lead the Region with its strategic vision towards sports development. Thus, I urge the new leadership to conclude the signing of agreements with Member States on the Podium Performance Programme that will ultimately improve on the Region's Olympic tally.

The elected leadership must also ensure that the government structure in the AUSC Region 5 are accountable, transparent and efficient in their governance. The capacity building programmes for our technical sports people must be intensified so that the dependency syndrome from outside must be minimized. We must have trainers that understand the culture, values and norms of the Region.

The leadership must have a vision to start preparing for Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, so that we as a Region are prepared and ready to compete and not just to participate.

Allow me to use this platform to extend my profound wishes to Angola the host, for the forthcoming U/20 Youth Games in December 2016. With the current economic meltdown and with the ever volatile foreign exchange it has put pressure on the Angolan Government. We know the challenges faced and how difficult it is and pledge to support Angola as much as we can.

To the Republic of Botswana that will be hosting the next Edition of the AUSC U/20 Youth Games, it is important to start preparing for the hosting of the Games as it is a mammoth task that needs to be fulfilled.

In conclusion let me ensure you that the Council of Ministers of AUSC Region 5 will always support the decisions and resolutions taken in the interest of the development of sports in the Region.

I wish you all the best in your constructive deliberations. Learn to disagree in order to agree, but in the end the winner must be Sports. Let the democratic process be the guiding principle in your conduct during the election process. Let us agree to accept the outcomes of the elections as a Region in the interest of sports.

I am sure that all of you have arrived through the Walvisbay International Airport and have seen the natural beauty of this country. Namibia is a Land of contrast as portrayed in our national anthem. It is the only country where the desert meets the ocean and I can assure you confidently that there are lots of areas of interest in Namibia for example; the Namib Naukluft Park, Etosha National Park, Petrified Forest and many more that you can come back for and visit at your leisure with your family to promote sports tourism. Enjoy the beauty and warm hospitality of the land of the Brave.

In conclusion, it is now my distinguished honour to now declare this Executive Committee meeting official opened.

I thank you