



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

REMARKS

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

HON. ERASTUS A. UUTONI

**AT
THE OCCASION OF THE
INAUGURATION OF THE NEW NAMIBIA
BOXING AND WRESTLING CONTROL BOARD**

NIDA BOARD ROOM, WINDHOEK

23 OCTOBER 2019

Thank you Director of Ceremonies-

- **Hon. Agnes Tjongarero, the Deputy Minister;**
- **Mrs. Emma Kantema-Gaomas, the Executive Director of MSYNS;**
- **Mr. Edelberth Sivhute Katamba, Director of Sport Development;**
- **Senior Management and staff members of the Ministry Present;**
- **Senior Management and staff of the Namibia Sports Commission present;**
- **Mr. Ellison Hiarunguru, Chairperson of the Namibia Boxing Control Board,**
- **Boxing Promoters and Boxers present;**
- **Management and staff of the Namibian Boxing and Control Board;**
- **Captains of Industries Present;**
- **Distinguished Invited Guests**
- **Media Representatives present;**
- **Ladies and gentlemen;**
- **Allow me to say all protocol observed!!!**

A very good morning to you all.

I am deeply honoured seeing you all here this morning after a short notice invitation to this important inaugural ceremony. It is truly an indication that you have a passion for boxing.

Firstly, allow me to recognize and thank each and everyone of you present here today, especially the members of the media who continuously assist us drive the agenda of sport development. Let me also recognize the promoters and leaders of boxing clubs present as well as the Vice Chairperson of the Ring officials Committee in our midst this morning. I would like to whole heartedly thank you all for your kind support and attendance.

Director of Ceremonies;

From the onset, boxing is one of our sporting strength we have as a Nation and I am proud to the fact that sport in Namibia regardless of challenges is making significant strides. Over the past few years we have witnessed how some of the Namibian sport men and women participating on continental and international platform. Through these participation, we have produced world class athletes that won medals at those different platforms and qualified them as world champions. I wish to therefore recognize in our midst Harry Simon, who is our first undefeated boxing Champion and others that come after him. Looking at the trend from then to this very day, I am convinced that we are on the right path and are doing well as a nation and the country is also greatly marketed through various sport codes including boxing.

Thus, because of the existence of boxing clubs around the country, many of our young people are kept engaged in positive and developmental activities rather than sitting idling and engage in unhealthy activities.

If anyone still questions the importance of boxing, allow me to share with you some of the lessons out of many, that the sport of Boxing Can Teach You about Life, I would like to outline only five to you this morning, to signify the importance of this sport and why it needs our devotion and support:

1. Boxing teaches you how to keep your balance by creating a solid foundation to make you almost stand firm to whatever tries to knock you down.
2. It will teach you how to get back stronger and smarter after each blow, and allow you to toughen up for the blows that are yet to come.
3. Since boxing relies heavily on your reaction, if you don't have a good and quick reaction, you'll end up lowering the odds of winning against your opponent.
4. Always bear in mind that the difference between winning and losing in boxing, as well as in life, lies in how well-prepared one is.
5. Finally, regardless of how strong, skilled, or confident you are, you will need support from others.

Boxing therefore and most importantly is a great factor of integration. In our ever more diverse and individualized societies, boxing is the best in some cases, even the only bond that links people with the community, regardless of social, racial, political background. In this way, sport creates identification and inclusion.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Section 4(1) of the Boxing and Wrestling Control Act no: 11 of 1980, provides for the Minister responsible for sports to appoint a five (5) member board to constitute the Namibia Boxing and Wrestling Control Board. The board is responsible for the regulation, controlling and exercising general supervision over boxing and wrestling tournaments in Namibia. This body is also intrusted guard against undesirable practices of boxing and wrestling to protect the interests of boxers, wrestlers, promoters, officials and the public in general.

At this juncture and without holding back, I wish to state that I was becoming very worried over the past months about the negative reports and the infighting that has been going on within the boxing sector. Because of that, the Control Board has lost credibility from the Namibian people. Today, this good and well-intended body according to public perception, is regarded in many other bad ways. Hearing all those reports has made me feel uneasy because I unfortunately found myself at the helm of the organization as the appointing authority.

In that regard, I have always said that as individuals, we always have to remind ourselves that we are here today and gone tomorrow. Thus, it is important to note that the organisations we are entrusted with are not our own, but for many others to come and build on the foundation we are laying today. Therefore, if we fail to build or play our part, the future generation will suffer not simple for the sake or suffering, but because of our ignorance of the fact that it's not about us but others as well.

Therefore, the Ministry of Sport Youth and National Service is hard at work to ensure the practice of good governance in all our sport federations and bodies which includes the Boxing Control Board. We want to see an organization that stakeholders, boxers and promoter and the public has full confidence in. We want to see a body we continue intrusting to guard against undesirable practices of boxing and wrestling to protect the interests of boxers, wrestlers, promoters, officials and the public in general.

Now having said that, allow me to come to the reason why we are here. It is now my distinct honour to introduce to you the leaders that will take the Boxing Control Board to the next level. This is a group of individuals that will bring vast experience in areas of Medicine, Financial Management, Information Technology, Law, Public Management and many other skills which will help transform the operations of the Control Board.

Allow me now to call upon the new board members starting with the Chairperson to introduce themselves:

Introduction and officially handing of Appointment letters.

- 1. Dr. Bernhard Shidute Haufiku (Board Chairperson)**
- 2. Mrs. Saima L Nghihalwa**
- 3. Mr. Trevor Mills**
- 4. Mrs. Maria Pogisho**
- 5. Mr. Josef Penomuenyo Shikongo (a.k.a Joe Acher)**

Now that, the new the board has introduced themselves, I wish to state that you have a difficult task ahead of you which is to restore public perception of this institution. Also, for many years, the task of reviewing the Act is still dragging and currently is in a blueprint format which is still at the technical level of development. I want to seriously look into the relationship between boxer, promoter and the board in order create a good environment. Time has come that we aggressively push to complete all the consultations and take the Act to Cabinet for approval. It is very disappointing that we are operating under an Act that still talks about South West Africa in reference to Namibia and refers to the administrator general which we assume is the Minister. We need to get this Act reviewed as a matter of urgency.

I wish to urge you to work towards the full realisation of the Namibia Sports Commission' Strategic Plan for 2018 to 2022, which is our roadmap that will guide all sports activities in Namibia. The plan has five strategic key objectives: enhancing sports development and participation, improving sports management capacity, ensuring the compliance to sports legal and regulatory frameworks, promoting financial self-reliance in sport, and enhancing national excellence.

I also urge you to carry out your given assignment for the interest of the nation and the overall development of Sport in Namibian. Let us work in unity and purpose to ensure the proper administration of boxing is a priority, that will ensure that opportunities to participate in boxing are made available to all persons throughout Namibia.

Let me also take this opportunity to thank the outgoing board for their immense contribution towards the development of boxing during their tenure. Their works will not go in vain but will form part of the foundation to which the incoming board will build on. I know it was never an easy task, but they managed to keep boxing moving. I really commend them for that.

Finally, allow me to assure our boxing stakeholders such as MTC Namibia and others that there is indeed great hope in boxing. I thus urge that you continue to support and renew your trust in the new Control Board in order to take the sport of boxing to a new level.

In that light, I once again wish to re-affirm our Government's commitment to build and achieve a caring, united and socially cohesive Namibia through the Ministry of Sport, Youth and National Service as a custodian for sport and youth development.

It is worth mentioning that Cabinet has approved the establishment of the Sport museum and we are currently finalising the terms of reference. This museum will celebrate and showcase the achievement of our men and women in sports. Therefore, it is my wish that some of the boxing champions will feature in the museum to be remembered by the future generation.

In conclusion, allow me to conclude by saying *Sport is our joy, Sport is our Happiness* and *Sport is a greatest unifier of people.*

I thank you

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