



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF SPORT, YOUTH AND NATIONAL SERVICE

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## **HONOURABLE MINISTER ERASTUS UUTONI WELCOMES ATHLETES BACK**

As per its mandate the Ministry of Sport, Youth and National Service yesterday welcomed three national teams back from participating at international levels. The Teams being welcomed back were the Namibia Women National Team Indoor Hockey, National Wrestling Team and Para-Swimming. The teams were welcomed by the recently appointed Minister of Sport, Youth and National Service, Hon Erastus Uutoni.

In his welcoming speech, Hon. Erastus Uutoni, welcomed the team back from their respective competitions and congratulated them for their outstanding performance, despite the challenges. “You played among countries that have active professional hockey leagues, but you overcame the odds to give one of the best performance by a Namibian National Team in an international sport event,” said Hon. Uutoni. He also acknowledged the individual performance of the players that culminated in the improvement of the country’s position in the world rankings.

The Namibia Women National Hockey Team was the only Team representing the African continent at the 2018 Indoor Hockey World Cup, held in Berlin, Germany. The Team ended 9<sup>th</sup> in the competition and improved to 14<sup>th</sup> position in the world ranking.

The wrestling team, comprising of six (6) athletes, participated at the African Wrestling Championship, for athletes from 15 – 17 years old, which was held in Harcourt, Nigeria. The team returned with one (1) silver and three (3) bronze medals respectively. “We are indeed excited by the performance of our young wrestlers and they have a bright future ahead of them,” said Hon. Uutoni. The Minister called on the Namibia Wrestling Federation to nurture the athletes in order to ensure that they scoop more medals for the country in the future.

In spite of taking up swimming for the first time in 2016, Mateus Angula, also known as Spiderman, scooped a medal during the Kenya Open & Para-Swimming Championships held in Nairobi, Kenya. In order to ensure that more talents are identified and exposed, Hon. Uutoni called on the Namibia National Paralympics Committee as well as other sport organisations to scout for more para-athletes for swimming. “Let’s expand our wing to all our fourteen (14) regions.” He urged them to ensure that the next team of para-athlete swimmers should be gender balanced.

The Minister indicated that despite the financial constraints, the Ministry managed to produce international players/athletes. He commended the private companies for their support. "I would like to thank the private companies that have supported the Teams, as a nation, we are indebted to these private companies," he stated.

In conclusion, the Minister called on sport bodies and their umbrella organisations to desist from practising the brief case administration syndrome. He also called on the Namibia Sports Commission to properly supervise its affiliates and submit regular reports to the Ministry." He stated that, the sourcing of more funds would only be realised if all parties are organised, professional and practise sound administration. He congratulated the Teams and wished them all the best in their future endeavours.