



**MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY  
HON. MODESTUS AMUTSE, THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND  
COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY,  
ON THE OCCASION OF THE TRANSNAMIB HERITAGE WEEK LAUNCH**

**WEDNESDAY, 18 SEPTEMBER 2024  
TRANSNAMIB RAILWAY STATION  
WINDHOEK**

**Director of Proceedings,**

**Mr Webster Gonzo – Acting CEO**

**Ms Aili Hangula Paulino - Corporate Communication Officer,**

**Hon Councillors of the city of Windhoek**

**Unam Choir**

**Distinguished Invited Guests,**

**Members of the Media**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am pleased to be part of this event, hosted by TransNamib, to commemorate Heritage Week under the theme “*Kultuur is Gemeenskap en Gemeenskap is Kultuur*”.

In 1972, UNESCO introduced the notion of World Heritage, meaning a place of cultural or natural significance to the “common heritage of humanity” as a way of protecting and conserving sites of heritage significance.

Today, we celebrate our cultural heritage in diversity as Namibians, connecting ourselves to the past, the present and the future...

In the same vein, we remember memorial sites such as, Omuhaturua at Otjimanangombe, Ohamakari, Amutoni lyomanenge, Omugulugwombashe, liti kiidhiluka at Elim and many undocumented sites. It is therefore our common responsibility to find and preserve our heritage, our culture, and our pride for generations and the government is ready to bring its part to ensure that our cultural diversity is preserved.

Digital transformation and AI have made research and data capturing for the purpose of recording historic, religious, and cultural information much easier, and we must capitalize on it to record our culture as a nation. The importance of Heritage is that it defines us, it connects us, it unites us and indeed shape our future destinies. It is therefore important that we, the generation of today, preserve our identity and cultural values upon which the strength of the future generation will be anchored.

Culture plays an important role in the tourism economic sector, among other socio-cultural benefits, and it also promotes art. Today, we still have some notable aspects of heritage value that are informal, and thus, we should gradually record and formalize such identified historical features to obtain maximum benefits from our diverse cultural heritage as proud Namibians.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Historical and cultural heritage is the totality of assets accumulated in a given nation over the course of history, it is a legacy of the past and the present that we live in, and that we must pass on to future generations. For this reason, it requires a major effort in the maintenance, conservation, and management.

Furthermore, heritage activities passed from generation to generation, presents a serious risk to disappear if not properly documented.

In this context, there is an urgent need to develop new strategies to organise and summarise existing knowledge that could aid in conserving our heritage.

In this light, further initiatives in conservation should aim, as much as possible, to promote open technology and provide a better, wider, and more equal access to knowledge while documenting, transmitting, and preserving existing knowledge.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I specifically empathize that the heritage conservation community should create initiatives to organize current heritage knowledge in an online conservation “encyclopaedia”. This initiative could provide a solution to preserve the large and unstructured scientific knowledge and additionally, also help mitigate other global heritage challenges since it could contribute to creating a more participatory system to disseminate future knowledge.

Historical heritage is under constant threat, whether from adverse environmental conditions or human activity that includes wars.

I conclude with a call to all Namibians to hold hands and proudly move forward, while jealously guarding and preserving our heritage, AND may the spirit of unity in diversity continue to guide our interactions for years to come.

I thank you!

