

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



KEYNOTE STATEMENT

BY

**H.E. NETUMBO NANDI NDAITWAH VICE
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

ON

**THE OCCASION OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN
BROADCASTING ASSOCIATION (SABA)
BROADCAST MEDIA CONFERENCE**

SWAKOPMUND

8 OCTOBER 2024

**Director of Ceremonies, Mr Sharon Kariseb,
Honourable Jenfan Muswere, Minister of Information,
Publicity and Broadcasting of the Republic of Zimbabwe,
Honourable Modestus Amutse, Deputy Minister of
Information and Communications Technology of
Namibia,
Mr. Stanley Similo President of the Southern Africa
Broadcasting Association (SABA),
Members of the Board of Directors of the NBC present
Mr. Benjamin Pius CEO and Founder of Broadcast Media
Africa,
Professor Peters, Guest of Honour,
Director Generals, CEOs of National and Public
Broadcasters, media and broadcast experts from across
the SADC region, the African continent, and beyond.
Members of the Broadcast and Media Fraternity,
Distinguished Invited Guests,
Ladies and Gentleman.**

**As we gather in this town of Swakopmund, where the
majestic dunes meet the Atlantic Ocean, we find
ourselves in a place that symbolizes both the timeless
beauty of our continent and the boundless potential for
progress and innovation.**

Let me therefore, join other Namibians to welcome all our guests to the Land of the Brave, with a great hope that you will go back with the good memories of our country, and a good reason to come back.

I applaud SABA and BMA for organizing this conference and for having chosen Namibia to be your host. The kind invitation extended to me is also appreciated. My presence here today is not just to share my views on the subject matter, more importantly I will also learn like many of you.

The theme of this year's conference, 'Broadcasting and Content Publishing in the AI-Infused Digital Ecosystem,' captures the essence of the dynamic transformation that is unfolding before us. It reflects our shared vision and commitment to harness artificial intelligence not just as a technological advancement but as a revolutionary tool that could empower us to re-imagine the way we tell our stories, connect with our audiences, and shape the narrative of our societies.

This theme urges us to embrace Artificial Intelligence as a force for good, to pioneer new methods in broadcasting and content creation, and to boldly position Africa to play a significant role in the digital ecosystem, where our innovations can inspire the world. Together, we must not just adapt to change; we should also drive it, ensuring that our unique perspectives, cultures, and narratives shine brightly on the global stage. Time must come when Africa is not just the users of others' innovations but we must contribute to the world innovation heritage.

Director of Ceremonies

It is recognized that AI has a role to play in Broadcasting, it is revolutionizing every aspect of Broadcasting and content publishing. Artificial Intelligence has the potential to make media more accessible, inclusive, and impactful, extending the reach of stories to every corner of the globe.

But with this immense power comes a profound responsibility. As custodians of information and shapers of public opinion, you must ensure that AI is harnessed ethically and thoughtfully.

The promise of AI should not compromise the core principles that guide your work, which are accuracy, fairness, and credibility.

As a former Minister of Information and Broadcasting, I believe in the power of information, it can break and it can build. Therefore, as Practitioners in the fields of media you must remain steadfast in your commitment to uphold the integrity of your reporting where issues are made clear to the audience, using AI to enhance, not erode, the trust your audiences place in you.

As we explore AI's capabilities, we must also be mindful of its limitations and biases. Your role as broadcasters and journalists is to maintain a critical eye, ensuring that technology serves as a tool for truth, not distortion. It is your duty to set ethical standards, implement robust editorial oversight. Let us ensure that technology serves the public good and strengthens our role as pillars of truth in society.

Director of Ceremonies,

In Namibians, we are steadfast in our commitment to harnessing the power of digital transformation to propel our social-economic development and create new opportunities for our people. Our commitment to this vision expands beyond borders, resonating with the aspirations of neighboring countries, many of whom share this transformative journey with us.

Currently, in Namibia over 90% of the population has access to the radio, while over 2 million have access to cellphone connectivity. This is good progress, however, more efforts are being made to ensure that at least all schools have access to digital connectivity to improve teaching and learning.

Our government will continue to support digital transformation because we believe it is key to unlocking Africa's true potential our continent is brimming with talent, creativity, and resilience, it is the strategic leadership that will propel us to the forefront of the global digital landscape.

The process we are making in Namibia and across the SADC region reflects a shared determination to harness digital innovation as a catalyst for socio-economic growth.

By investing in digital infrastructure and research, fostering local talent, and promoting a culture of continuous learning, we are laying the foundation for a future where Africa could lead in technological advancement.

I am looking at Africa where our digital ecosystems are vibrant, inclusive, and reflective of our unique cultural identities. A continent where we leverage technology not just to consume content, but to create it - telling our own stories in our own words. This is our opportunity to showcase the brilliance of the African creativity, the depth of our innovation, and the power of our communities. It is about positioning Africa as a digital powerhouse, where our perspectives are integral to shaping the future of global media.

However, we can only achieve our goals, when we are united and allocate adequate resources to digital infrastructure and invest in appropriate research, the whole continental economic system has to agree with such arrangements, as governments can not achieve this goal alone. Therefore, while governments continue to provide leadership, we need to enhance public-private collaborations to ensure that all our people both in the urban and rural areas have access to both digital, media and broadcast information.

Leadership requires more than just management; it demands a visionary approach-that looks ahead anticipates the evolving needs of our societies, and navigates the complexities of our industries with a keen understanding of both technological potential and human impact. As leaders we are to cultivate a balance between embracing cutting-edge innovations and preserving the human touch that lies at the heart of our communities.

Director of Ceremonies,

As we navigate the vast and evolving landscape of AI in media, we must recognize the critical role women play in this digital revolution. Women bring invaluable perspectives, creativity, and resilience to the fields of AI and media, driving innovations that make our content richer, more diverse, and truly representative of the societies we serve. Yet, despite their significant contributions, women remain underrepresented in the AI and technology sectors. It is imperative that we create pathways that empower women including young women, to not only participate but also lead in this dynamic space.

Our commitment to women participation in AI is not just a moral imperative; it is a strategic advantage. A diverse team brings a wider range of ideas, perspectives, and solutions, which are crucial in developing technologies that cater to the needs of all segments of our society. When women are empowered to lead, the stories we tell become more inclusive, the technologies we build become more equitable, and the media landscape becomes a true reflection of the rich tapestry of human experiences.

Africa possesses an abundance of talent, creativity, and resilience—qualities that position us uniquely to lead in the digital age. Yet, realizing this potential requires more than just skills; it requires the courage to think differently, to question the status quo, and to pursue new paths that display our distinct strengths and aspirations. We must cultivate environments where innovation is celebrated, where risks are seen as opportunities, and where every individual feels empowered to contribute to our shared goals.

Innovation is not just about technology; it is about mindset. It is about daring to envision what is possible when we combine our rich heritage with innovative advancements. By fostering a culture that prioritizes creative thinking, collaboration, and continuous learning, we can develop media solutions that are not only technically advanced but also deeply connected to our societal values and needs.

Let us take bold steps together, challenging conventional wisdom and setting new standards for what African media can achieve in the AI-infused digital world. The future is not something that happens to us—it is something we create. By embracing innovation, we are not just keeping pace with the world; we are shaping it. Let this be our legacy: a vibrant, dynamic, and forward-looking Africa that leads with confidence, creativity, and an unwavering commitment to progress.

As we navigate the complexities of this rapidly evolving digital landscape, let us remember that the true power of artificial intelligence lies not in the technology itself, but in how we harness it to enrich the human experience. Broadcasting goes beyond the mere transmission of information; it is a powerful tool that connects people, celebrates our cultures, and builds bridges of understanding that span across borders and generations. In this new age, your mission is clear: to use AI not just as a tool but as a force for positive change in how we inform, engage, and empower our communities.

It is my believe that, this conference will be a catalyst for change, inspiring us to push the boundaries of what is possible in broadcasting and content publishing. As we delve into the challenges and opportunities presented by AI, let us remember that our ultimate goal is not just to adopt modern technologies but to enhance the human experience. We must strive to create a media environment that remains true to our values, celebrates our diverse cultures, and amplifies our unique voices on the world stage

May this conference be a resounding success and may the partnerships we forge here today pave the way for a brighter, more connected future for us all.

I thank you