



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, WATER AND LAND REFORM

KEY NOTE ADDRESS BY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, WATER AND LAND REFORM, CARL HG SCHLETTWEIN AT THE NATIONAL VALIDATION TO REVIEW THE FINAL DRAFT OF THE RESETTLEMENT CRITERIA

- Director of Ceremonies
 - Hon. Laura McLeod-Katjirua, Governor of Khomas region,
 - Hon Governors and Chairpersons of Regional Resettlement Committees
 - Executive Director of MAWLR, Ms. Ndiyakupi Nghituwamata, Mr Alfred Sikopo, Acting ED
 - All Honourable Regional and Local Authorities' Councilors present
 - Chief Regional Officers of the Regional Councils present
 - Distinguished Traditional Authorities' Dignitaries
 - Members of the Land Reform Advisory Commission
 - Chairpersons and Members of the Communal Land Boards
 - Representatives from Government Offices, Ministries and Agencies
 - Representatives from Farmer's Unions
 - Staff-members from the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform
 - Distinguished invited guests
 - Members of the Media present
 - Ladies and Gentlemen
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It am pleased to address you today, our key stakeholders-whom I know represent various communities and organizations. This National Validation workshop is yet another significant workshop, which is needed after the Regional Consultations on the National Resettlement Criteria were concluded. However this workshop is not only another consultation,-but it is a workshop which brings the consultation process on the criteria towards the end. It is a validation workshop- which shares inputs as received from the regions into the revised National Resettlement Criteria.

The finalization of this criteria is required, it is the indispensable piece of policy development within in the overall reviewed National Resettlement Policy. The aspiration was clearly spelled out during our 2nd National Land Conference in October of 2018. As a nation, we are developing a set of new criteria because we have collective key priorities for a target driven land redistribution, which ensures that land is allocated transparently, along the policy guidelines we have agreed upon collectively.

So land redistribution is a high priority, and yes it is sensitive to all Namibians. The overall objective of our Land Reform remains to correct the injustices of the past colonial regimes, both the German and South African Apartheid regimes. Namibians should see it as a fountain of peace and unity wherein our traditions and customs are anchored and through which our dignity is restored.

To achieve those aspirations, these criteria are developed in such a way that land is allocated to satisfy a “needs based redistribution”. In other words dispossessed communities who must be treated preferentially and hence a 70:30 ratio. It means that 70 % of resettlement beneficiaries must originate from the region wherein the land to be resettled is located and 30 % is available to disadvantaged Namibians from elsewhere. Secondly, to reach out to person living in corridors and unemployed youth. The Resettlement Policy before the review had some shortcomings and they are now addressed. Unintentionally farm workers who had worked on farm acquired for resettlement were left homeless and they need to be accommodated. a programme for generational farmworkers is to do that. Further

some group settlements caused congestion and consequently rendered those farms unproductive. Unfortunately poverty was perpetuated in both cases. Our view it ensure people of different categories are all catered for in balanced manner.

Productivity of land on which resettlement occurred is the second priority. Resettlement must resultant decent livelihoods for the resettled persons, not into poverty. The criteria therefore must ensure that the land remains or gains productivity. Once that is assured the final step of restoring ownership can be taken by facilitating free hold titles to resettled persons.

We understand the call and the urgency to implement the resolutions of the 2nd National Land Conference such as the immediate implementation of the revised National Resettlement Policy. We have made good progress and finalised the review of the Commercial (Agricultural) Land Act and the Communal Land Reform Act and consolidated them into one Bill, which is now finalised after some delays in drafting it and shall be labeled in Parliament during its next session in 2025.

The Revised Resettlement Criteria are part and parcel of the reviewed Resettlement Policy, which was approved after a discussion in the National Assembly and were subsequently presented to the Land Reform Advisory Commission (LRAC) for scrutiny and editing. it was thereafter presented to the Regional Stakeholders for inputs and comments. These consultations are a clear dedication towards a responsive land reform policy.

Allow me **Director of ceremonies** to implore upon all the stakeholders who provided inputs and comments so that the revised resettlement criteria are finalized. As the ministry, we value your contributions, inputs and comments. We request that we as stakeholders, validate all inputs to enable the finalization and implementation of the resettlement criteria. As I indicated earlier on, we have invested sufficient time with all our critical stakeholders in consultation, and now it is time to finalize the criteria. The true value of the reviewed Resettlement Policy and its Criteria will realise only after they are implemented.

Once the Criteria are finalized and adopted, the Ministry will move to implement the allocation as per the three proposed models which are, the High Economic Value Model (Large Scale Farming), Moderate Economic Value Model (Medium Scale Farming), and Low Economic Value Model (Social Welfare Economic Value Model). These models will serve as a guiding tool in allocating land to the Namibian citizens in accordance to their various land needs and demand.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Many of us here today lived and or have experienced colonial subjugation in one way or another-which brought about skewed land distribution which my ministry is determined to correct until a balanced land redistribution is achieved. It is for this reason that Land Reform is a high priority in Namibia's policy landscape. It is our contention however that high priorities must not only be talked about, they must be appropriately resourced. The current rate of funding land reform falls far short of what is needed to implement a meaningful land reform. For a successful implementation of the new resettlement policy budgetary allocations must be improved significantly in future.

This workshop should be taken in a serious context. The communities are waiting for the implementation of the new policy and its criteria. The communities which we are representing here today legitimately are hoping for a speedy implementation. Therefore may we request all of you to put heads together so that we validate and ratify the revised Resettlement Criteria as matter of urgency.

I want to thank all the internal and external stakeholders for your contributions during the Regional consultations which assisted us the ministry to arrive to this validation workshop. Now the finalization of the Resettlement Criteria is in your hands for validation during this workshop.

Director of Ceremonies In conclusion, allow me to officially open the workshop and wish you the best endeavor in you deliberations.

I thank you.

