



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY HON. DR. ALBERT
KAWANA, MP, MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS,
IMMIGRATION, SAFETY AND SECURITY ON
THE OCCASION OF THE LAUNCH OF ONLINE
APPLICATION FOR VISA ON ARRIVAL AND
VISA ON ARRIVAL FORM**

03 March 2025

Dr. Hifikepunye Pohamba Building

Windhoek

- **Director of Ceremonies;**
- **Honourable Frans Kapofi, MP, Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs;**
- **Honourable Pohamba Shifeta, MP, Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism;**
- **Honourable Lucia Witbooi, MP, Deputy Minister of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security;**
- **Your Excellency Jovelina Imperial e Costa, Dean of the African Heads of Mission and Ambassador of the Republic of Angola to the Republic of Namibia;**
- **Honourable Laura McLeod-Katjirua, Governor of Khomas Region;**
- **Lieutenant General Joseph Shimweelao Shikongo, Inspector-General of the Namibian Police Force;**
- **Commissioner-General Raphael Tuhafeni Hamunyela Commissioner-General of the Namibian Correctional Service, represented by Deputy Commissioner-General Sam Shaalulange;**

- **Mr. Etienne Maritz: Executive Director, for the Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security;**
- **Ms. Nangula Nelulu Uaandja, Chief Executive Officer, Namibia Investment and Promotion Development Board;**
- **Mr. Delphin Ilunga, Deputy Chairperson of the Federation of Namibian Tourism Associations (FENATA);**
- **Ms. Rachel Nghilwamo, Deputy Executive Director;**
- **Mr. Nehemia Nghishekwa; Chief of Immigration;**
- **Mr. Jackson Wandjiva, Deputy Executive Director;**
- **Partners in the tourism industry;**
- **Senior Government officials;**
- **Distinguished invited guests;**
- **Members of the media;**
- **Ladies and gentlemen,**

Good Morning!

1. It is both an honour and a privilege to stand before you today as we officially launch the **online application for Visa on Arrival** and unveil the **new Visa-on-Arrival Form** – two monumental steps forward in our ongoing commitment to enhancing Namibia's border efficiency and streamlining our immigration processes. This initiative represents the latest in our series of progressive measures to boost the country's tourism sector, improve international engagement, and uphold our national security.
2. I want to start by reflecting on the journey that has brought us to this day. In 2019, the **Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security (MHAISS)** took a bold step to reshape the tourism landscape by introducing the **Visa on Arrival policy**.

This policy was not just a pragmatic response to the demands of a changing global tourism market; it was also a statement of our commitment to making Namibia more accessible to simplifying the travel experience for our visitors, and to bolstering the growth of the tourism industry, which remains a vital pillar of our economy.

3. The **Visa on Arrival** policy allowed citizens from selected countries that reciprocated Namibia's visa regime to obtain their visas upon arrival at designated entry points. This system was ground-breaking for a country like Namibia, where tourism plays such an integral role in both economic development and international relations. With this policy in place, Namibia began to see an increase in the number of international visitors, and it has become clear that facilitating smooth and efficient entry processes is key to encouraging more tourism and fostering positive diplomatic relations.

Director of Ceremonies;
Distinguished Invited Guests;
Ladies and Gentlemen,

4. In the years following the introduction of the **Visa on Arrival** policy, the Ministry has continuously sought ways to enhance the visa experience for our international guests. We have expanded the visa-on-arrival facilities to include a number of strategic entry points. Today, visas on arrival are available at major border and entry points, including **Hosea Kutako International Airport** and **Walvis Bay International Airport**, **Katima Mulilo**, **Ngoma**, **Impalila Island**, **Trans-Kalahari**, **Oshikango Mohembo**, **Ariamsvlei**, **Noordoewer**, and **Oranjemund Border Posts**. The reach of this service has been steadily growing to make Namibia more accessible to travellers worldwide, and we are proud of the progress we have made thus far.

5. As we reflect on these achievements, we must also acknowledge that there is always room for growth and improvement. As such, in **May 2024**, the **Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security** submitted a proposal to **Cabinet** to impose visa requirements on specific countries, based on the principle of **reciprocity**. This decision was made after careful deliberation and consultations, as it sought to address the growing demand for fair and balanced immigration practices. In response to this proposal, Cabinet resolved to impose visa requirements on thirty-three (33) countries that have placed similar visa requirements on Namibian citizens.

6. I understand that any changes to visa policies have implications for the tourism sector. Therefore, following the Cabinet decision, we took careful steps to ensure that the implementation of these changes would not cause negative impact on the tourism industry.

Consultations with key stakeholders in the tourism sector were held to address concerns about fees, timing, and the potential impact on budget travellers. These consultations were crucial in helping us shape a process that was both sensitive to the needs of the tourism sector and protective of Namibia's interests.

7. The Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board (NIPDB) also engaged with stakeholders in the business sector, ensuring that investment promotion and economic growth remain at the forefront of our efforts.

8. The impact of visa requirements on investors and tourists was discussed in depth, and their feedback helped refine the overall implementation process. As a result, the revised visa regime will come into effect on **1st April 2025**, and we are confident that the transition will be smooth and well-received.

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9. Today, I am delighted to announce that starting on 1st April 2025, we will expand the Visa on Arrival policy. For travellers from countries that have positively engaged with Namibia and have reciprocated our visa exemptions, the benefits will continue. However, citizens from countries that have not reciprocated these exemptions will be required to pay a fee upon arrival: **NAD 1600** (approximately **USD 90**) for non-African Union countries, and **NAD 1200** (approximately **USD 70**) for citizens from African Union countries. These fees have been benchmarked against those in similar countries, and they will be subject to annual review.

10. To make this process as seamless as possible, travellers are encouraged to carry **credit or debit cards** as **speed points** are available at all designated ports of entry, facilitating efficient payment upon arrival.

We are committed to ensuring that these fees do not create barriers for legitimate travellers and will continuously review the system to adjust as needed.

11. Another major change we are introducing today is the **online application for Visas prior to arrival**, which will provide travellers with the ability to complete their visa applications before arriving in Namibia. This online system will not only save valuable time but also reduce congestion at our borders, ensuring a smoother and more comfortable arrival process. Travelers will no longer have to wait in long queues to complete their visa applications at ports of entry, and they can simply apply online prior to departure.

12. Moreover, travellers benefiting from this online system will not be required to submit additional documents, such as bank statements, but they must indicate their **means of sustenance** for the duration of their stay in Namibia. This simplified process is designed to be as efficient as possible, ensuring that visitors can focus on enjoying their time in Namibia rather than dealing with complex bureaucratic procedures.

13. In addition, we have made significant changes to the **Arrival and Departure Form**, which has now been streamlined into one **combined Arrival and Visa-on-Arrival Form**. This new form is designed to be more **user-friendly** and will help ensure that travellers can provide the necessary information swiftly and accurately. This change will improve our ability to maintain secure and efficient borders while reducing the burden on travellers.

14. It is also important to note that the new visa regime will benefit several categories of visitors, including **bona fide tourists, potential investors, and visitors attending meetings, seminars, workshops or simply visiting friends and family members.**
15. However, individuals seeking employment or work opportunities in Namibia will still need to apply for employment permits in advance, as these categories of travellers are subject to different immigration requirements.
16. I am particularly excited to announce that as of today, tourists from countries where Namibia has no diplomatic representation will no longer need to apply for a visa in advance. They can now obtain their visa upon arrival, which will significantly ease the process for visitors from countries where establishing diplomatic missions might be difficult.

17. In 2019, a decision was made for **45 countries** to benefit from visas on arrival, and in 2023, **11 more countries** were added. Today, citizens from **57 countries** worldwide can benefit from the **Visa on Arrival** facility.

18. This enhanced visa regime is just one part of our broader commitment to making Namibia a more accessible, welcoming, and secure destination. It is our hope that these improvements will further elevate Namibia as a preferred destination for tourists, business investors, and those seeking opportunities for international collaboration.

19. The countries selected to benefit from visas on arrival are among those where Namibia does not have diplomatic missions, such as embassies or high commissions.

This is an ongoing process, and we will continue to bring more countries on board in the future, as we did last year. In this spirit, we also request other countries to reciprocate or offer Namibia similar visa relaxation benefits for the mutual benefit of all.

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20. The current 28 African Union countries are currently benefiting from visa on arrival and with effect from today, they will also benefit from electronic visa regime. The countries are as follows:

1. Benin,
2. Burkina Faso,
3. Burundi,
4. Cabo Verde,
5. Cameroon,
6. Central African Republic (CAR),
7. Chad,
8. Comoros,

9. Côte d'Ivoire,
10. Djibouti,
11. Equatorial Guinea,
12. Eritrea,
13. Ghana,
14. Gabon,
15. Gambia,
16. Guinea,
17. Guinea-Bissau,
18. Liberia,
19. Madagascar,
20. Mauritania,
21. Niger,
22. Rwanda,
23. São Tomé and Príncipe,
24. Sierra Leone,
25. Togo,
26. Tunisia,
27. Western Sahara Republic, and
28. Uganda.

Twenty-nine (29) other countries around the world are currently benefiting from visa on arrival and with effect from today, they will also benefit from electronic visa regime. These countries are:

1. Argentina,
2. Bulgaria,
3. Cambodia,
4. Chile,
5. Croatia,
6. Czech Republic,
7. Ecuador,
8. Estonia,
9. Greece,
10. Hungary,
11. Israel,
12. Latvia,
13. Lithuania,
14. Mexico,
15. Nicaragua,
16. Paraguay,
17. Peru,

18. Poland,
19. Romania,
20. Slovakia,
21. South Korea,
22. Vatican/Holy See,
23. Venezuela,
24. Vietnam,
25. Thailand,
26. Turkey,
27. United Arab Emirates,
28. Uruguay, and
29. Singapore.

21. At this juncture, I wish to inform you that as from 1st April 2025, 33 countries which previously benefited from visa exemption will now need entry visas to enter the Republic of Namibia. However, they will also benefit from visa on arrival as well as electronic visa regime.

As for electronic visa regime, nationals from these 33 countries are encouraged to already apply for visas using the electronic visa regime with effect from today so that when they arrive from 1st April 2025 onwards they should not experience immigration challenges. The electronic visa regime will enable them to apply for visas even for travels to be undertaken in future after 1st April 2025. These countries are: Armenia; Australia; Austria; Azerbaijan; Belarus; Belgium; Canada; Denmark; Finland; France; Germany; Iceland; Ireland; Italy; Japan; Kazakhstan; Kyrgyzstan; Liechtenstein; Luxemburg; Moldova; Netherlands; New Zealand; Norway; Portugal; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; Tajikistan; Turkmenistan; Ukraine; United Kingdom; United States of America; and Uzbekistan.

22. This adjustment is designed to ensure that our immigration system remains robust and fair, while at the same time still encouraging tourism and international engagement.

23. With the launch of the **online application for Visa on Arrival**, travellers can now apply for their visas online before embarking on their journey. This innovative platform will not only save time but will also reduce congestion at our borders, ensuring that visitors have a smooth and comfortable arrival experience.

24. Furthermore, we have made significant improvements to the previous **Arrival and Departure Form**, eliminating the departure form and introducing a combined **Arrival and Visa-on-Arrival Form**, making it more user-friendly and efficient.

This revamped form will simplify the process, allowing travellers to provide the necessary information swiftly while enhancing our ability to maintain secure and orderly borders.

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25. As we look ahead, we also plan to expand the issuance of visas on arrival to additional entry points as our infrastructure improves. Through these efforts, we are positioning Namibia as a more accessible and inviting destination for travellers worldwide.

26. Let me take a moment to emphasize our commitment to evolving our visa policies. We believe in the power of ongoing dialogue with countries around the world. By fostering collaboration and understanding, we can ensure secure and efficient migration management, protecting our national interests while promoting mutual benefits.

For countries that do not qualify for visas on arrival, the process remains unchanged: they must apply for their visas in advance via the Ministry's online visa platform and await approval prior to arrival in Namibia.

27. As we expand the visa-on-arrival system to more entry points, we will continue to listen to feedback and adapt our services to ensure that Namibia remains an open and welcoming destination for all.

28. Finally, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all those who have contributed to the development and successful implementation of these initiatives. Your hard work, dedication, and vision have made today's launch possible, and together, we will continue to build a more efficient, secure, and accessible immigration system.

29. With these words, it is now my distinct honour and privilege to officially declare the **commencement of the online application for visas and the new arrival and visa-on-arrival form** effective from today.

I thank you!