



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

By

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MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES, WATER AND LAND REFORM

AT THE OCCASION OF: 2026 LÜDERITZ CRAYFISH FESTIVAL FUNDRAISING  
GALA DINNER

VENUE: LÜDERITZ WATERFRONT MULTI-PURPOSE HALL

27 MARCH 2026

THEME: *“HARVESTING SUSTAINABILITY, EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES”*

**Director of Ceremonies,  
Honourable Gaob Dawid Gertze – Governor of the //Karas Region,  
Your Worship, Mayor Brigitte Fredericks,  
Our Esteemed Patron, Mr. Sidney Martin,  
Captains of the Industry,  
Members of the Media,  
Ladies and Gentlemen.**

**Good evening,**

1. It is a great honour to join you this evening at the 2026 Lüderitz Crayfish Festival Fundraising Gala, an event that is far more than a celebration of our rich marine heritage. Tonight, as we gather under the theme “*Harvesting Sustainability, Empowering Communities,*” we re-affirm our continued commitment to sustainable management of our fisheries resources for the benefit and empowerment of all our people
2. The Crayfish Festival has, over the years, grown into one of the signature cultural and tourism events on our national calendar. It showcases not only the exceptional seafood for which this town is renowned, but also the creativity of our entrepreneurs, artists, fishermen and hospitality sector. Tonight, we gather to ensure the continued growth of a festival that has brought pride and opportunities to our region.
3. As Minister responsible for, among others, Fisheries and Marine Resources, my responsibility is the sustainable stewardship of our oceans. This approach is not confined to the determination of total allowable catches for the fishing season but ensuring that our regulations and conservation measures are current and speak to the current realities. In line with Goal 14 of the United Nations Sustainable

Development Goals, our approach to the development of our blue economy is about conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and marine resources. We believe that healthy ocean and seas are essential to human existence and life on Earth. At its core, our fisheries and marine resources management strategies represent an intergenerational contract, a promise that what we inherit, we will preserve, strengthen, and pass on to the next generation.

4. Namibia is internationally recognized as a leader in responsible marine resource management. However, our true measure of success lies in how much of the value for our blue economy is translated into meaningful employment opportunities and value-added products and the benefits are shared with communities, especially those residing closer to where the resources are harvested.
5. Tonight, we are gathered here to support the Regional Governor, Regional leadership and the Lüderitz Town Council in raising vital funds necessary for hosting a successful 2026 Lüderitz Crayfish Festival, ensuring that it remains world-class, inclusive and impactful. Beyond entertainment, the festival contributes to local economic activity, stimulates tourism, supports small and medium-sized enterprises, and creates seasonal employment opportunities for the residents of Lüderitz and the surrounding areas.
6. Lüderitz stands today at the centre of major global conversations, from the promise of Green Hydrogen to the excitement of waiting for the final investment decisions to be made regarding the development of oil and gas fields. These new frontiers signal a transformative future for our nation. Yet, as we look ahead, we must never forget the original frontier that built this remarkable town: **our fisheries**. As Namibia continues to position herself as a competitive player in tourism, blue economy development, and cultural promotion, events such as the Crayfish Festival play a pivotal role in showcasing our unique strengths to both domestic and international visitors.

7. The world is watching and keen to see how these exciting developments of our blue economy will evolve and how we will continue balance sustainability with economic opportunities and how we will ensure that local communities remain at the centre of our blue economy development. I wish to assure them that they will find a community that is united in purpose, transparent in its actions, and fiercely protective of its people's interests, a community that understands that sustainable development is not imposed from outside but forged from within.
8. Our marine resources are not just an economic asset; they are a cornerstone of Namibia's food security. For decades, the ocean has fed our people, sustained thousands of jobs, and supported communities along our coastline. In line with NDP6 and the SWAPO Party Manifesto Implementation Plan strategic objectives, one of our key national priorities is to ensure that Namibia becomes food self-sufficient, and that we reduce our dependence on imported food items by 80% by 2029.
9. The Crayfish Festival is about ensuring that Namibians from all walks of life are made aware of the potential that crayfish offer not only as a protein but also as mean to support livelihoods. I therefore commend the Luderitz Crayfish Festival Trust and the Lüderitz Town Council for their perseverance and dedication. We all know that the road to greatness is rarely smooth; it is often paved with challenges that test resolve and unity. Yet it is precisely through such challenges that strong institutions and resilient communities are built. The Crayfish Festival has become a key national event that attracts participants from across the country.
10. We extend my sincere appreciation to our Patron, Mr. Martin, for your steady leadership and guidance. Your commitment has provided continuity and direction during critical moments of growth. To our corporate sponsors, thank you for recognising that your social licence to operate begins, and is sustained by the people

of this constituency. Your support reflects a shared belief in inclusive development and responsible partnership.

11. Let us remember that the crayfish is more than a delicacy; it is a symbol of resilience. It thrives in the cold, turbulent waters of the Atlantic. In much the same way, the people of Lüderitz are resilient and adaptable to the changing dynamics. You have weathered changes, embraced opportunities and continued to contribute meaningfully to our national journey.
12. As we enjoy this evening's programme, let us therefore dig deep into our pockets tonight, not only in generosity but in shared purpose, so that together we may harvest a future that belongs to all Namibians. Let us also reaffirm our shared responsibility to invest in community development, preserve our marine heritage, and promote sustainable tourism that benefits all.
13. As I conclude, I extend my heartfelt appreciation to everyone who made this evening possible. May our collective efforts ensure that the 2026 Lüderitz Crayfish Festival becomes the most successful edition yet.
14. I wish the 19th Annual Lüderitz Crayfish Festival every success.

I thank you.