



**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA THE
PRESIDENCY**

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY
HER EXCELLENCY DR. NETUMBO NANDI NDAITWAH
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
ON THE OCCASION OF THE
TANZANIA–NAMIBIA BUSINESS FORUM DAR
ES SALAAM, TANZANIA
20 JUNE 2026**

**Honourable Selma Ashipala-Musavyi, Minister of
International Relations and Trade of the Republic of**

Namibia;

Mr. Gilead J. Teri, Director General, Tanzania Investment and Special Economic Zones Authority;

Ambassador Gabriel Pandureni Sinimbo, High Commissioner of the Republic of Namibia to the United Republic of Tanzania;

Ms. Jessica Hauuanga, Acting Chief Executive Officer of the Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board;

Mr. Sebulon Chicalu, Chief Executive Officer of the Namibia Tourism Board;

Mr. Ephraim Balozi Mafuru, Chief Executive Officer of the Tanzania Tourism Board;

Senior Government Officials from the United Republic of Tanzania and the Republic of Namibia;

Distinguished Members of the Tanzanian Business Community and the Namibian Business Delegation;

Captains of Industry, Academia and Business Institutions;

Members of the Media; Ladies and Gentlemen.

Namibia and Tanzania have a long-standing relationship leading to our political independence. Where we are

today, we need to bring about economic independence our governments and private sector are crucial partners and need to work together for that independence to be achieved.

Subsequently, when I got an invitation from my dear sister Her Excellency Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan, President of the United Republic of Tanzania for me to pay a State Visit to this friendly country, I found it appropriate to be accompanied by a business delegation present in this room, joined by their counterparts from Tanzania.

Therefore, this Tanzania—Namibia business Forum is a platform purposely created to allow our business personalities to meet and take advantage of our two countries' long standing political cooperation to move it to a meaningful economic cooperation for the benefit of our two countries and peoples.

That is to say, while governments established frameworks for cooperation, it is businesses, investors and entrepreneurs who should transform opportunities

into jobs, create industries and bring about prosperity for our people.

I therefore, express my sincere appreciation to all businesses people present here today for having made this business Forum your priority this afternoon. Accordingly, I look forward to constructive engagement. The success of this event will also be judged on the number of businesses deals to be signed as well as their implementation moving forward.

Tanzania is not simply a friendly country to Namibia. For many Namibians who participated in the liberation struggle, Tanzania was a second home. It was a place of refuge, solidarity and hope. It was here that many Namibians found support, received education, developed leadership skills and strengthened their determination to continue the struggle for freedom and independence.

It is also important to underscore that the people of Tanzania stood with Namibia when freedom was still a dream. The Tanzanian people opened their hearts, homes and institutions to Namibian people during the

most difficult moment of our liberation struggle till victory was achieved. The friendship between our two countries was therefore, forged through sacrifice, solidarity and a shared belief in the dignity and freedom of all African people.

The people of Namibia have never forgotten that support and we never will. Our freedom was not achieved by Namibia alone. It was made possible through the collective sacrifices of many African nations, and Tanzania occupies a special place in that history.

The bonds forged during those years were built on trust. Tanzanian people trusted and were convinced that Namibia would one day be independent and free from South African colonial apartheid. It is on that basis that Namibia trusted Tanzania as a steadfast friend and reliable partner.

Today, as we gather here, I believe we must ask ourselves an important question: can we translate that same trust into our economic relations?

Based on our rich history, the political relations between Namibia and Tanzania are excellent. Our governments cooperate closely, our peoples enjoy warm relations and our shared history continues to bind us together. Yet we must honestly acknowledge that our economic relations have not yet matched the strength of our political relations. This is not a criticism. It is an opportunity.

It is an opportunity for us to transform our historic friendship into stronger trade, increased investment, greater industrial cooperation and deeper people-to-people economic partnerships.

Today's Forum is therefore is more than a networking platform. It must serve as a call to action. The generation that fought for political freedom has done its part. The responsibility now rests with us to secure economic freedom for our people. Africa stands at a critical moment in its development journey.

For far too long, our economies have exported raw materials while importing finished products. We

continue to create value elsewhere and buy it back at a premium. This model has limited industrialisation, constrained job creation and slowed economic transformation across our continent.

No nation has achieved lasting prosperity by exporting raw materials and importing development. The next liberation struggle is therefore, economic liberation. Our political liberation is largely complete. Our economic liberation remains unfinished.

- It is about industrialisation.**
- It is about value addition.**
- It is about manufacturing.**
- It is about innovation.**
- It is about creating jobs and take our people out of poverty.**

It is about ensuring that Africa derives greater benefit from its own resources and creates greater opportunities for its own people.

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) presents us with an important opportunity to accelerate this agenda of the Africa we want. However, the AfCFTA is not a document to be celebrated. It is an instrument to be used. Its success will depend not only on governments and policies, but also on the willingness of African businesses to trade with one another, invest in one another and grow together.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Namibia and Tanzania possesses complementary strengths that provide a strong foundation for deeper economic cooperation.

Tanzania has established itself as one of Africa's fastestgrowing economies, with significant strengths in agriculture, manufacturing, tourism, logistics, mining and a rapidly expanding consumer market. Namibia offers strategic logistics infrastructure, abundant natural resources and growing opportunities in agriculture, agro-processing, tourism, health, education, energy, logistics and manufacturing.

Together, our countries are well positioned to contribute meaningfully to regional value chains, industrialisation and sustainable economic growth.

Opportunities for cooperation exist in agriculture and agro-processing, mining and mineral beneficiation, oil and gas, energy including renewable energy, logistics and transport, tourism, manufacturing, the blue economy, technology and innovation, the list is long.

Yet beyond all these opportunities lies a more fundamental question. The question before us is simple: do we trust one another enough? Trust is the foundation of every successful business relationship.

If we trusted one another enough to fight together for freedom, surely, we can trust one another enough to trade together for prosperity. As African business people, do we trust African products, African services and African enterprises in the same way that we trust products from elsewhere?

Do we trust one another enough to place Namibian products on Tanzanian shelves and Tanzanian products on Namibian shelves? Do we trust African entrepreneurs enough to invest in their ideas, support their innovations and back their ambitions?

These are important questions because trust drives investment, trade and long-term partnerships. Africa produces world-class products. Our coffee, our tea, our cocoa, our textiles, our pharmaceuticals, our technologies and our manufactured goods can compete with the best in the world. The question is whether we ourselves have sufficient confidence in what Africa produces.

Do we trust African products enough to choose them, promote them and invest in them? If we are serious about building intra-African trade, we must begin by trusting one another more, trading with one another more and investing in one another more. We must begin to look at each other not with suspicion, but with confidence.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Economic cooperation must ultimately be measured by its impact on people. The true value of trade and investment lies not in statistics alone, but in the jobs created, the skills transferred, the businesses developed and the opportunities generated for future generations. Africa is home to one of the youngest populations in the world. This should be one of our greatest strengths. However, our young people cannot eat potential. They cannot build their futures on promises alone. They need opportunities, skills, financing and jobs today. But time is not waiting for Africa.

The world is moving at a speed. New technologies are emerging. New industries are taking shape. New markets are being created. We therefore, do not have the luxury of delay. Every year lost is a year of opportunity denied to millions of young Africans.

Our economic partnerships must therefore, place strong emphasis on entrepreneurship, innovation, skills development, technology transfer and youth

empowerment. We must create an environment where young Africans become creators of jobs rather than seekers of jobs.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Namibia continues to position itself as a competitive investment destination and a strategic gateway to the rest of Africa and the world at large.

We remain committed to strengthening infrastructure, improving logistics networks, expanding energy generation and creating an enabling environment for investment and industrial growth.

The Port of Walvis Bay continues to serve as an important gateway connecting Southern Africa to the rest of the continent and international markets. We see significant opportunities to strengthen trade and logistics linkages between Walvis Bay and Tanzanian ports, thereby enhancing connectivity between Eastern and Southern Africa.

Namibia is also advancing value addition in critical minerals, expanding agro-processing industries, promoting green industrialisation and growing manufacturing capacity.

The business delegation accompanying me represents a wide range of sectors and reflects Namibia's commitment to building lasting partnerships across Africa.

We warmly welcome Tanzanian businesses and investors to explore opportunities in Namibia, just as we encourage Namibian businesses to pursue partnerships and investments in Tanzania. Governments have a responsibility to provide policy certainty, efficient institutions, transparent regulations and reliable infrastructure and the Namibian government is ready to play its part.

Namibia remains committed to maintaining a stable, rules-based and investor-friendly environment that supports sustainable economic growth and long-term investment.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The future prosperity of our continent cannot depend solely on external markets. It must increasingly be driven by African production, African innovation, African investment and African partnerships. We have the resources. We have the talent. We have the markets.

We have the energy, creativity and determination of the world's youngest population. What we require is greater confidence in ourselves and stronger collaboration among ourselves. History will not judge us by the number of meetings we attended or declarations we adopted.

History will judge us by the factories we built, the industries we developed, the jobs we created and the opportunities we opened for future generations. Let the private sector play its part.

Let us move beyond potential to production. Let us move beyond hesitation to action. Let us build stronger commercial bridges between Eastern and Southern

Africa. Let us demonstrate that intra-African trade is not merely an aspiration, but a practical pathway to prosperity. Let us show that African countries can trade with one another, invest in one another and grow together. The future will not wait for Africa, and neither should we.

The responsibility rests with us. If we are to realise the aspirations of Africa's Agenda 2063 and the promise of the AfCFTA, we must act now, act boldly and act together.

Let the future generations say that when Africa stood at a crossroads, we chose partnership over hesitation, production over dependency and action over delay. Let them say we built Africa that believed in itself. Let them say we built an Africa that trusted itself.

Let them say we built an Africa that prospered through its own efforts and through the strength of its own partnerships.

I am confident that the engagements taking place today will contribute significantly to strengthening Tanzania–Namibia economic relations and advancing our shared vision of a prosperous, industrialised and interconnected Africa.

Finally, I wish you productive deliberations and successful outcomes.

I thank you.