



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT:

**STATEMENT BY
HER EXCELLENCY LUCIA WITBOOI, VICE PRESIDENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA,
ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE
2ND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS CONFERENCE 2026**

**16 JULY 2026
THE DOME, SWAKOPMUND | ERONGO REGION**

- **Director of Ceremonies;**
- **Your Honour, Ndaba Gaolathe, Vice President of the Republic of Botswana;**
- **Honourable Emma Theofelus, Minister of Information, Communication Technologies;**
- **Honourable Dr. Nathalia /Goagoses, Governor of Erongo Region;**
- **Honourable Justina Jonas, Member of Parliament;**
- **Honourable Sebastiaan Karupu, Chairperson of the ICT Committee at National Assembly;**
- **Hon. Bethuel Tjaveondja, Chairperson of ICT Committee at National Council;**
- **Honourable Fenni Nanyeni, Deputy Chairperson of ICT Committee at National Council;**
- **Your Worship, Suamma Kautondokwa, Mayor of Swakopmund;**
- **Esteemed Chief Regional Officers, Chief Executives and Captains of the Industry;**
- **Your Excellencies, Members of Diplomatic Corps;**
- **Mr. Arik Karani, President of the Africa Public Relations Associations (Kenya);**

- **Prof Emmanuel Dandaura, Vice President of the Institute of Public Relations (Nigeria);**
- **Ms. Kauli Nghishitende, Board Chairperson of Namibia Press Agency;**
- **Heads of various Media Houses Present;**
- **Distinguished Invited Guests;**
- **Members of the Media;**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Good morning,

It is my distinct honour to join you here in Swakopmund, Erongo Region, to officially open the 2026 Effective Communicators Conference, under the theme: Communication Reconsidered - A driving Force of Constant Progress.

At the onset, I am incredibly honoured to acknowledge our special Guest Speaker, His Honour, Ndaba Gaolathe, Vice President of the Republic of Botswana, and his delegation. On behalf of the Government and people of the Republic of Namibia, I would like to once again extend our warm greetings to Your Honour, the Vice President of Botswana.

Welcome to the Republic of Namibia, we are indeed honoured by your presence, and we look forward to gaining valuable insights from your expertise.

Director of Ceremonies,

I am pleased to note that this conference has brought together leaders, educators, communication professionals, community voices and representatives, public relations experts, and industry stakeholders. Indeed, this gathering provides a suitable platform for knowledge sharing, networking, and professional development in the field of communications.

Today, we are joined by the international community to redefine communication and public relations in the age of digital transformation and Artificial Intelligence, and positioning Public Relations as a unique strategic asset for leadership and constant development.

I have learnt that this event coincides with World Public Relations Day, celebrated today globally.

This is indeed a testament to the growing importance of global communication and trust building.

The global theme for World Public Relations Day, “The Golden Age of Strategic Public Relations”, blends with the theme of this international conference; both emphasizing the call to raise the standard of communication in an era heavily influenced by artificial intelligence.

Communication as we know it, is no longer just a small component in any organization, or government institution. It is now the backbone for trust and nation building and a vital bridge to socio-political divides. It is that fundamental bridge for empathy, storytelling, and democratic unity.

Therefore, let this conference be a catalyst for change. Let it serve as an opportunity for communicators to step away from normal routine, and start engaging into necessary conversations, and rethink how to effectively transmit not just information, but clarity, vision for nation-building.

In today's era of rapid digital evolution and misinformation, the roles of communicators be it in government or the private sector are more challenging than ever. As communicators, you are tasked with a serious responsibility to ensure that facts, truth and clarity prevail over misinformation and disinformation. You must be champions of truth and agents of change. You are the vital link that ensures government programs are not just implemented, but truly understood and appreciated by the public.

In this regard, I urge you to take full advantage of this capacity-building opportunity. The skills you refine and the networks you build in this room will directly impact the effectiveness of our institutions nationwide and beyond.

Directors of Ceremonies,

The future of the communications profession now depends on trust, ethical leadership, innovation, and regional cooperation. A stronger Public Relations profession requires much more than effective communication.

It demands a deliberate commitment to capacitate and strengthen our communication structures, fostering public trust, upholding the highest ethical standards, and embracing innovation. Therefore, at the end of this conference, we will be expecting a guiding document on how we can intentionally strengthen credibility, adapt to emerging trends and tell our stories, from our perspective. I therefore entrust this conference with this mandate. Together, let us use this opportunity to learn how we can adopt shared professional standards from regional counterparts through discussions, presentations, so that we build a stronger and more resilient Namibian communications ecosystem.

**Directors of Ceremonies;
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

As government, we recognize the vital role of government communicators as catalysts for building trust and enhancing good governance. We recognize that effective communication is vital for achieving our Six National Development Plan (NDP6) by ensuring government

coordination, public buy-in, and widespread understanding of the country's economic and social goals. It bridges the gap between policy objectives and citizen participation across our country. Therefore, as government, we expect our communicators to make communication a driving force for NDP6 through effective public awareness campaigns, institutional coordination, digital inclusion and community engagement.

We recognize that effective communication between government, people and institutions is crucial for bringing clarity, alignment and trust. It is crucial for driving positive change within a nation. It is core for fostering understanding and enabling informed decision-making by our citizens.

Therefore, while we are determined to deliver and be judged on our key national priorities, it will be futile if there is no emphasis on the critical importance of strategic communication of these national priority areas.

As Government, we must equally ensure adequate support and provisions to our communicators who navigate daily the complexities of telling our efforts. For if we do not, we will be at the mercy of disinformation and misinformation.

In conclusion, over the course of this conference, you will explore how effective communication shapes the industry and everyday operations. You are here not just to listen, but to learn how to actively build consensus, bridge gaps, and foster transparent engagement.

I encourage you to participate fully, share your unique experiences, and utilize the tools you will acquire here. Once again, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the organizers and facilitators who have made this event possible. I wish you all highly productive and engaging deliberations over the coming days.

With these remarks, it is now my honour to declare the Effective Communicators Conference 2026, officially open.

I thank you.