

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



MINISTERIAL REMARKS BY

**HONOURABLE MODESTUS AMUTSE,
MINISTER OF INDUSTRIES, MINES AND ENERGY**

ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE
NAMIBIA OIL AND GAS CONFERENCE 2026

19 AUGUST 2026

WINDHOEK, KHOMAS REGION

PROTOCOL

Director of Ceremonies;

Her Excellency Lucia Witbooi, Vice President of the Republic of Namibia;

Honourable Kornelia Shilunga, Special Advisor and Head of the Upstream Petroleum Unit in the Office of the President;

His Excellency Dr. Philip Mshelbila, Secretary General of the Gas Exporting Countries Forum;

Governors present;

Your Worships the Mayors of the City of Windhoek and of Walvis Bay;

Honourable Members of Parliament;

Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Mr. Jason Kasuto, Chairman of the Economic Association of Namibia and host of this Conference, together with the co-organising partners: NIPDB, NAMCOR, the Hanns Seidel Foundation and SNC Incorporated;

Captains of industry, operators, investors, sponsors and exhibitors;

Distinguished delegates, local and international;

Members of the Media;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good morning.

It is a privilege to address you at the official opening of the Namibia Oil and Gas Conference 2026, and to do so moments before the statement of Her Excellency the President is delivered to this hall. Allow me to speak plainly, as an engineer of policy rather than a maker of promises, about three things: where this industry stands, what your Government is doing about it, and why this Conference matters to both.

First, where we stand. The discoveries of the Orange Basin have moved Namibia from prospect to priority on the global energy map. We are now approaching the decisive milestones: final investment decisions targeted from this year, and **first oil before the end of this decade**. Between those two points lies the real work, and it is on that work that my Ministry is fixed. Our strategic plan for 2026 to 2030 carries one organising idea: to move this country **from exploration to readiness**, so that Namibia is ready onshore when production begins offshore.

What does readiness mean in practice? It means an onshore petroleum supply base to serve as the logistics backbone of this industry, lowering costs and building local capacity. It means expanded and refurbished fuel storage to secure national supply. It means a petrochemical testing laboratory to protect the integrity of our fuels and our revenues. It means modern seismic and geoscientific data systems, because investment flows to jurisdictions whose subsurface is well understood and whose data is credible. None of this is glamorous. All of it is what separates countries that found oil from countries that were ready for it.

Second, certainty, because I know it is the word every investor in this hall listens for. Let me offer it in three forms. **Institutional certainty**: the placement of upstream petroleum under the Upstream Petroleum Unit in the Office of the President is not a disruption; it is a deliberate realignment to protect a sensitive and strategic sector, drawn from the experience of producing nations, and it comes with full accountability, including annual reporting to the National

Assembly. The regulatory powers of the State remain clear and unchanged, and my Ministry continues to carry the mandates of industrialisation, mining, energy and downstream petroleum. **Policy certainty:** the National Upstream Petroleum Local Content Policy now gives this industry its rules of engagement, developed through genuine consultation with the very operators, financiers and communities represented in this room. It tells you exactly what Namibia expects: Namibian employment maximised, Namibian suppliers prioritised, skills and technology transferred, and meaningful Namibian participation, ownership and financing across the value chain. **Fiscal certainty:** a stable and transparent framework, with petroleum revenues managed for the long term, including through the Welwitschia Sovereign Wealth Fund. Predictability is our policy. Namibia does not move goalposts.

And let me say this directly to our international partners: local content, properly done, is not a tax on your investment. It is the durability of it. An industry surrounded by capable Namibian suppliers, skilled Namibian workers and invested Namibian communities is an industry with social licence, political stability and a future measured in generations. That is what the Policy builds, and my Ministry will implement it *with* you, not against you.

Third, this Conference. Government does not endorse platforms lightly. We endorse this one because it does in practice what our policy demands on paper. The Local Content and Suppliers Masterclass is supplier readiness in action. The NIPDB Local Supplier Pitching, now in its second edition, puts Namibian enterprises directly in front of operators and investors. The structured matchmaking builds the partnerships our policy calls for. The exhibition is open to the public, free of charge, so that this industry belongs to every Namibian who walks through the door. And the numbers speak: **more than 1,500 delegates and over 70 exhibitors**, nearly double the participation of two years ago. To the Economic Association of Namibia and its Chairman, and to the co-organising partners, NIPDB, NAMCOR, the Hanns Seidel Foundation and SNC

Incorporated: you have built a national asset. This platform carries the full support of my Ministry and of the Government of the Republic of Namibia.

To Namibian entrepreneurs here today: the masterclasses, the pitching sessions and the policy are doors your Government has opened. Walk through them prepared. To investors: you have found a jurisdiction that is stable, serious and ready to build with you. Bring your capital, bring your technology, and bring your best standards, and you will find in Namibia a partner that keeps its word.

The task before all of us is captured in a single sentence: to ensure that history records not merely that Namibia found oil, but that **Namibia was ready**. On behalf of the Ministry of Industries, Mines and Energy, I wish this Conference every success, and I now invite this hall to receive the statement of Her Excellency the President of the Republic of Namibia.

I thank you.