



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

OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE STATE OF JUSTICE

CONFERENCE

***"STRENGTHENING JUSTICE IN NAMIBIA: BUILDING AN
EFFICIENT, ACCESSIBLE AND TRUSTED JUSTICE
SECTOR"***

16 SEPTEMBER 2026

WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA

Director of Ceremonies;

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

The Right Honourable Dr. Tjitunga Elijah Ngurare, Prime Minister of the Republic of Namibia;

Honourable Dr. Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila, Speaker of the National Assembly;

Honourable Lukas Sinimbo Muha, Chairperson of the National Council;

Your Lordship Peter Shivute, Chief Justice;

Esteemed Justices of the Supreme Court;

Honourable Judges of the High Court;

Distinguished Chief Magistrate and other Magistrates;

Honourable Fillemon Wise Immanuel, Minister of Justice and Labour Relations;

Honourable Mmamoloko Kubayi, Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development, Republic of the South Africa;

Honourable Augustine Nyatanga, Assistant Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, Republic of Botswana;

Advocate Kholeka Gcaleka, Public Protector of the Republic of South Africa;

Other Honourable Ministers;

**Honourable Festus Mbandeka, Attorney-General;
Advocate Martha Imalwa, Acting Prosecutor-General;
Honourable Sam Shafiishuna Nujoma, Governor of the
Khomas Region, and other Governors present;
Honourable Members of Parliament;
Heads of Justice Sector Institutions;
Ambassador Emilia Mkusa, Secretary to Cabinet, and
other Senior Government Officials present;
Service Chiefs;
Regional and Local Authority Councillors;
Members of the Legal Profession, Academia and Civil
Society;
Distinguished Invited Guests;
Members of the Media;
Fellow Namibians;
Ladies and Gentlemen.**

**Thirty-six years ago, at Independence, the Republic of
Namibia was founded on the principles of democracy,
the rule of law and justice for all.**

**Through our Constitution, we affirm the dignity of every
person, guarantee equality before the law and commit
ourselves to protecting the fundamental rights and**

freedoms of all. These values formed the foundation of our justice system and the institutions that uphold it.

I am therefore, glad to be part of this first ever Namibia's State of Justice Summit, convened by the Ministry of Justice and Labour under the theme, "*Strengthening Justice in Namibia: Building an Efficient, Accessible and Trusted Justice Sector.*" Congratulations Honourable Wise Immanuel.

I also commend all criminal justice institutions and stakeholders whose efforts have made this Summit possible. I extend a warm welcome to the Ministers and delegates from our sister countries in the Southern African Development Community. Your presence, the experience you bring to these deliberations and the spirit of regional cooperation that it represents is highly valued.

The theme of this summit, mentioned above invites us to reflect not only on the institutions of justice, but also on the meaning of justice itself.

I understand the word justice came from the Latin concept of justitia rooted in ideas of what is right and lawful. In simple terms, justice is the principle that every person should be treated fairly, that rights must be protected, and that wrongdoing must carry consequences of which every individual has a responsibility over this principle.

Long before written constitutions and modern courts, human communities understood that peace could not endure where the strong acted without restraint and the vulnerable had no protection.

Hence, in the traditional courts, legal representation was given free and by people who do not even know the accused or the victim. Justice developed from that basic human need to live together under rules that apply fairly to all.

Today, justice is expressed through Constitutions, laws and institutions. Therefore, true justice must be felt in everyday life. Justice is done when a person is heard, when a right is protected, when a dispute is resolved

fairly and when the law treats the powerful and the powerless alike.

The theme of this Summit is also fully aligned with our national commitment under the Sixth National Development Plan (NDP6), to ensure equitable access to justice and uphold the rule of law.

It highlights the need for a justice sector committed to effective governance and public service delivery, in which institutions act with integrity and justice is administered fairly, efficiently and within a reasonable time.

It also advances UN Sustainable Development Goal 16, which calls for the rule of law, equal access to justice and effective, accountable and transparent institutions.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Justice must not be experienced in isolation. It must be experienced through the whole system of justice. When one part of the justice system fails to fulfil its responsibility, public confidence in the entire sector is

affected. I therefore, call for an effective and efficient service delivery through the system.

This Summit provides a platform for institutions across the criminal justice sector to examine the performance of our justice system as a whole. We must therefore, ask ourselves an honest question as to what extent this sector is delivering on our constitutional promises.

The public expects equitable access to justice, timely service and institutions that act with integrity. People expect a prompt and efficient response when they seek legal assistance, protection or the enforcement of their rights. The lived experiences of ordinary Namibians must remain central to our discussions and interventions as we seek to improve service delivery across the justice sector.

Within our limited resources and other barriers, attention should be given to the access to justice at the grassroots level. In carrying out your duties, one must always remember the accepted reality that justice delayed is justice denied. That this is an act that

demands a renewed sense of urgency to deliver justice to all citizens.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Namibia has built and maintained an independent Judiciary and a strong constitutional order. These are invaluable national gains that we must jealously guard against present and emerging threats. To do so, integrity and accountability must remain non-negotiable.

I have always maintained that corruption has no place in our country. A lack of integrity can contribute to the loss of precious lives and create insecurity for many Namibians working in the criminal justice sector. We must therefore, confront corruption with the utmost seriousness and refuse to tolerate it in any form.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This Summit must translate into tangible outcomes for the Namibian people. Our discussions must be candid and guided by reliable data, so that we can identify the gaps and determine how best to produce results. Time

must come when so many papers we produce at the end of conferences are put into action.

What we must know, consistent improvement in service delivery builds trust in the criminal justice system. That trust grows when institutions work together while respecting their independence.

We must leave this Summit ready to contribute to a more effective justice system with One Heart and One Mind. Let this first State of Justice Summit establish a common direction for the sector, strengthen institutional cooperation and set a standard for accountable implementation.

Our national motto, displayed on the Coat of Arms, is "*Unity, Liberty, Justice.*" Those words were placed there deliberately.

Unity reminds us that we share one national destiny. Liberty affirms the freedom and dignity for which Namibians struggled. Justice gives meaning and protection to both, because unity without fairness

cannot endure, and liberty without the rule of law cannot be secure.

Justice is therefore, not merely a function of the courts or a principle written in our Constitution. It is part of our national identity and a promise made by the Republic to every Namibian.

Our task is to ensure that this promise is experienced not only in law, but also in the daily lives of our people.

As we move forward, we must be bold, adaptive and determined in implementing the changes required by our criminal justice sector.

Let us use these three days to deliberate with purpose, confront our shared challenges, strengthen cooperation among our institutions and agree on collective action that will improve the delivery of justice across Namibia.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I have now come to the point to perform the most important task given to me by the organizers of this summit.

I therefore, now declare the First State of Justice Summit Officially Open and wish you productive deliberations.

Long live the Republic of Namibia.

I thank you.