



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

OTJOZONDJUPA REGION

**STATE
OF THE
REGION ADDRESS**

BY

HON. JAMES UNOMASA UERIKUA

07 JULY 2021

Director of Ceremonies;
Chairperson of Otjozondjupa Regional Council – Hon. Marlene Mbakera
All Constituency Councillors and Honourable Members of Parliament;
Chief Regional Officer for Otjozondjupa Region – Agatha Mwet
Your Worships - Mayors of various Town Councils and Municipalities;
Honourable Local Authority Councillors of different Local Authorities;
Chiefs and Traditional Authority Leaders;
Chief Executive Officers from both Public and Private Institutions;
Regional Heads of Government Offices, Ministries and Agencies;
Management Staff and Other High Ranking Officials;
Religious Leaders;
Distinguished Business Personalities;
Distinguished invited guests;
Distinguished Members of the Community;
Members of the Media;
Ladies and Gentlemen;

All protocol observed and Good morning to you all.

In terms of Article 110 (a) sub article 5 and 6, I am mandated by the constitution of the Republic of Namibia to give a State of the Region address at the Council meeting of the Otjozondjupa Regional Council, on developmental achievements and planned activities of the Region. Equally so; to report on the previous year's activities of the Central Government and other developmental partners of the region.

My State of Region Address is further tailored to the annual progress on Central Government projects in line with National Development Plan of Namibia, Harambee Prosperity Plan and Vision 2030, aligned to my Declaration of Intent.

Honourable Chairperson and Honourable Councillors, Ladies and gentlemen;

The national goals and plans of Government prompts us to become active role players and catalysts of change in our own setups. Government's approach on development is bottom-up, entailing that development and planning thereof starts at grassroots level. Vision 2030 and the Harambee Prosperity Plan should therefore serve as yardsticks by which we should align our plans and measure our output.

Allow me now to report on the activities in the region during the period under review.

The **REGIONAL COUNCIL** which by statute is responsible to plan, coordinate and implement developmental projects in the Region, thereby ensuring the provision of services to the Regions inhabitants has undertaken the following projects during the period under review:

Socio-Economic Development Programmes:

One Region One Initiative (OROI) Project

A leather making project at the Gam Settlement in the Tsumkwe Constituency totaling (One point three Millions Namibian Dollars) N\$1.3 million of which 10 recipients have benefited.

Support to Poor Rural Farmers Programme

Under this Programme, a total of Five Hundred and Twenty One Thousand, Eight Hundred and Fifty Namibia Dollars (N\$ 521 850) worth of livestock and chickens were procured and distributed to rural farmers in all Constituencies.

Rural Employment Scheme

Under this programme a Grass Baling Machine was acquired for the Grass Baling Project at Neu Sommerau Group Resettlement Farm at Kombat, at an amount of One Hundred and Thirty Thousand Five Hundred and Eighty Five (N\$ 130, 585)

Rural Services Projects

The Rural Services Projects in rural and peri-urban areas was necessitated by the need for proper sanitation and this project has benefited a total of 232 beneficiaries with the construction of toilets in various constituencies. This is at a total amount of One Million Four Hundred and Eighty Two Hundred and Twenty Seven (N\$ 1 480 227).

Infrastructure Development (Capital Projects) – (Medium Term Expenditure Framework – Mtef)

Construction of Otjozondjupa Regional Office Park

The construction of the Otjozondjupa Regional Council Office Park, is currently nearing completion. The three-block triple storey building and conference facility is being constructed at an amount of One Hundred And Twenty One Million (N\$ 121 000 000.00). The overall construction progress is at 95% for the office building and 90% for the conference centre.

Construction of Oxidation Ponds at Okamatapati

A budget amounting to Two Point Four Millions Namibian Dollars (N\$2.4 Million) was allocated for the rehabilitation of oxidation ponds, pump station, clearing and grading of access roads and erection of a security fence around the ponds at Okamatapati. The project is 95% complete.

Fencing of the Sewerage Ponds at Kalkfeld

The fencing of the sewerage ponds at Kalkfeld Settlement is intended to ensure compliance to the Environmental Act of Namibia. The Kalkfeld Sewerage project brought an end to the use of the bucket toilet system in the Settlement a few years ago, the last of its kind in the region.

Other infrastructure projects intended for the region include the tarring of the Grootfontein-Tsumkwe-Gam road by the Roads Authority, electrification of areas of

Tsumkwe Constituency by CENORED as well as development of Landfill sites in the Settlements of the region.

Local Authorities

The Otjozondjupa region is fortunate to have Five (5) towns. Development being bottom-up implies that the towns are critical catalysts of economic development.

Otjiwarongo Municipality

Otjiwarongo hosts the capital of the region, and thus the leading growth area in the region.

I am highly delighted that housing forms the highest priority of the Capital of the region. Two hundred forty-seven (247) houses were constructed during the period under review. Otjiwarongo Municipality received Six Million Namibian Dollars N\$6 million from the central government under Capital projects for funding of the informal settlement phase 2 planning, for the purchase of prepaid water meters, upgrading the sewerage mainline and for the water reticulation extension.

Council continues with the maintenance and improvement of the road network totalling Four Million Four Hundred Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$4 400 000.00), as well as the construction of an Emergency Response Unit amounting to Eight Million Three Hundred Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$ 8 300 000.00).

Another project include the development of a dumpsite to be fully compliant to environment standards to cost an estimated value of Nine Hundred and Sixty Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$ 960 000-00).

A Biomass Livestock Feed Factory in conjunction with the Ministry of Industrialization and SME Development and Green Gold Processing, is being constructed at the site of the old cement plant in Otjiwarongo. The factory will produce animal feed and charcoal and will comprise of a processing warehouse unit for storage of raw biomass materials, biomass storage unit, 2 charcoal and/or bio char processing units, a charcoal and/or bio char loading dock, and 2 charcoal and/or bio char storage units. In terms of hospitality and entertainment industries, *Etotongwe Investment* Hotel Conference and Leisure Park estimated at Three Hundred and Fifty Million Namibia Dollars (N\$350 000 000.00) is planned for Otjiwarongo with a hosting capacity of 1000 beds and a Conference facility with capacity of taking 1000 people.

In terms of land delivery, the Municipality of Otjiwarongo entered into public private partnership (PPP) agreements with some developers to service land on terms, conditions and pricing set by Council. A total number of 244 erven were serviced and to date, 100 erven have been alienated and transferred and about 77 houses have been constructed.

The Municipality of Otjiwarongo has embarked upon a process to plan additional land for the informal settlement in order to address the need for land through its plan to avail 4000 residential formal erven. The plan is to ensure that the flexible land tenure act is implemented in the informal areas by 2022 to prevent Land grabbing.

Okahandaja Municipality

The Municipality enjoys its status as being in close proximity to Windhoek it is my hope the Local Authority will use this as an advantage in terms of accelerating affordable property development.

Okahandja has surveyed 571 plots and issued allocation letters to the Land Delivery Committee.

Okahandja has established the new Townships that cater for the following land uses; Residential, Business, institutional, Public Open Spaces, Educational and industrial totalling 2,847 plots. Rehabilitation of existing road network in the town of Okahandja remains an ongoing project in different extensions through Road Fund Administration Funds and the help of private business people such as LEWCOR and COLAS that operate plants in town.

Grootfontein Municipality:

At Omulunga Extension 7 (318 plots) and Extension 8 (325 plots) are fully serviced and are ready for occupation. Council pre-allocated 715 erven to ultra-low income earners, marginalized communities, youth, Luipersdheuwel community, Omulunga Extension 9 and Luiperdheuwel Extension 3 respectively.

Planning and surveying of 1000 erven at reception area for ultra-low income earners as well as formalization of Donkerhoek though flexible land tenure is also underway.

The construction of 100 social houses at Omulunga Extension 8 for Single quarter relocation is underway while Luiperdheuwel Extension 3, is in the planning process.

A major social achievement in Grootfontein has been the construction of twelve (12) temporally dwelling units as part of the relocation of the marginalized communities from single quarters to Omulunga Informal settlement.

These are current the State Funded Capital Projects under the (MTEF) at the town:

- New storm water/drainage system upgrade;
- a New sewer reclamation plant, One (1) kilometre upgrade of roads connecting suburbs and the new traffic circle in Omulunga,
- Construction of Fire station, and construction of infrastructure services at Omulunga extension 9,10,11,12 and 13, Grootfontein extension 6, Luiderpsheuwel extension 3 and
- completion of the remaining work at Omulunga extension 6.

The town of Grootfontein is however in need of Forty Three Million Namibia Dollars (N\$43 000 000.00) for the electrification of Omulunga extension 6, 7 and 8 respectively.

Okakarara Town Council

Okakarara Town Council during the financial year under review received Three Million Namibia Dollars (N\$3 000 000.00) for partial construction of services (water, roads and sewerage reticulation) at Okakarara Central Business District (CBD). The town however is still in need of a further Four Million Namibia Dollars (N\$4 000 000.00) to complete the electrification of the area for the 2021/2022 financial year.

Honourable Chairperson and Honourable Councillors, Ladies and gentlemen; I will report on the progress and as well as challenges in the different sectors for the period under review:

ICT

The remarkable development in the ICT Sector made Namibia to be one of the front-runners in Africa on ICT development, with well-established internet access with wide coverage connectivity and fairly stable speed.

The Otjozondjupa region has seen an increase in 3G and 4G broadband coverage, with 64% and 37% coverage respectively, while 2G has a geographical coverage of 75% and 88% of the population coverage. Thus Otjozondjupa Region ranks number 3, following Erongo and Khomas regions in terms of having the most network towers, totalling 100.

Despite the achievements listed in the region, a few challenges are still experienced in the ICT sector such as a lack of budgetary allocation for from the national budget for upgrading and ICT infrastructure construction as well as the slow pace of rural electrification that has an effect on ICT expansion.

Land Reform

In highlighting the achievements of the Land Reform sector it is worth stating that during the period under review government through the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform, acquired Four (4) farms for resettlement purposes which were divided into *Nine (9) farming units*, measuring a combined size of *Fifteen Thousand, One Hundred and Sixty Five comma Two Five Three Two hectares* (15,165.2532 Ha).

The total amount spent by the central government during the Financial Year 2020/2021 on acquiring farms in the Otjozondjupa region, amounts to *Thirty Five Million, Three Hundred and Eighty Eight Thousand, Seven Hundred and Eight Namibian Dollars and Sixty Cents* (N\$35, 388, 708.60).

A total of *Four Hundred and Fifty Four (454)* applications for resettlement were received.

I am pleased to note that the total amount of resettlement leaseholds paid for the Financial Year 2020/2021 is *One Hundred and Two Thousand and Twenty Namibian Dollars and Forty Six cents* (N\$ 102,020.46).

However, there is *Thirty percent (30%)* reduction in comparison with the revenue collected in the 2019/2020 Financial Year.

Communal Land rights Registration

During the period under review, the Otjozondjupa Communal Land Board targeted to register *Seventy Two (72)* customary land rights but has managed to exceed that target by registering a total of *One Hundred and Seventy Seven (177)* customary land rights of which *Three (3)* were rights of leaseholds.

The expenditure for this exercise amounted to *Fifty Six Thousand, Seven Hundred and Eighteen Namibian Dollars* (N\$56,718) which includes amongst others, activities such as mapping and verification of customary land rights.

It is my hope that once land rights are registered, people in Otjozondjupa region will enjoy benefits such as; security of tenure while land related disputes will be minimized as this programme also avails rights for just and lawful compensation.

I wish to also commend the companies, financial institutions and local authorities extend financial assistance to their employees to build houses in communal areas.

Farm Neu Sommerau, Government Resettlement Project – Kombat

The Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform bought Farm Neu Sommerau next to Kombat for Group Resettlement Farming Project, in 2001. The Project aims to uplift livelihoods by assisting beneficiaries with ploughing services in order promote self-sustainability through crop production and livestock farming.

Notable achievements at Neu Sommerau Resettlement Project during the 2020/2021 Financial Year include:

- The production of *Fifty Four point Four (54.4)* tons of White Dry Maize that was sold to Makalani Maize Mills at *Two Hundred and Sixty Four Thousand, Six Hundred and Fifty Six Namibian dollars (N\$ 264, 656.00)*
- Production of *Ninety Seven point Four (97.4)* tons of charcoal that was sold to various charcoal companies at a total cost of *One Hundred and Forty Nine Thousand, Four Hundred and Forty Namibian dollars (N\$149, 440.00)*

This brings the total income generated from projects at Neu Sommerau to *Four Hundred and Fourteen Thousand and Fifty Six Namibian dollars (N\$414,096.00)*.

Development of Communal Areas

The Ministry of Agriculture, Water, and Land Reform is implementing a Programme for Communal Land Development (PCLD) in the Tsumkwe Constituency. The PCLD programme aims at developing communal areas through the provision of infrastructure investments.

The Tsumkwe-west: Assvoelness PCLD project area is measuring Fifty-Three Thousand One Hundred and Ninety-Eight Hectares (53,198 Ha.). The project targets One Hundred and Thirty-Five (135) households and the following facilities are planned for development commencing in the coming Financial Year of 2021/2022 and these include:

- 1) A farming model measuring Two Thousand Five Hundred (2500 ha) with a training facility and a borehole;
- 2) A brand-new Craft centre to be constructed in order to support tourism activities;
- 3) Extension of a community garden including fencing and drilling of a new borehole; and
- 4) Drilling and equipping of One (1) community borehole.

The entire budget for the Tsumkwe-West PCLD Project is *Thirteen Million, Nine Hundred and Twenty Eight Thousand and Sixty Three Namibia Dollars and Thirty-Four cents (N\$ 13,928, 063.34)*

The Gam Project for Communal Land Development (PCLD) includes the development of farm infrastructure inclusive of boreholes and water points, is taking place at Three (3) areas/villages; namely, Omangete/Otjiere, Otjiserandu/Tura, and Otjiuamapeta, with a combined area, measuring *One Hundred and Thirteen Thousand Five Hundred and Two Hectares (113 502 Ha.)* amounting to a total budget of *Seventeen Million and sixty-One Thousand Two Hundred and Five (N\$ 17,061,205)*.

Honourable Chairperson and Honourable Councillors, Ladies and gentlemen;

The high demand for farming land remains amongst the major challenges that the Land Reform Programme is faced with, in the Otjozondjupa Region, due to the ever growing demand for resettlement in the region. Therefore only a few beneficiaries are able to benefit from the programme. I therefore urge all the inhabitants of Otjozondjupa Region and the rest of Namibia to be **very patient** while the Government through the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform derives methodologies and implement the land conference resolutions on some of the pertinent issues on land reform in the Country.

Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare

Gender Equality and Research

Under the Gender Equality and Research, the focus is to reduce and prevent gender based violence and encourage GBV watch-culture in the region. In this quest, a total of 89 community meetings were conducted around the region with 1098 people being reached. Trainings and symposiums on GBV have also been carried out across the region targeting youth and adults of all gender.

Child welfare services

In terms of Child Welfare Services, Otjozondjupa region had on record the following grant supports under the review period of 2020/2021; Foster Grant, Maintenance Grant, Special Maintenance Grant and Vulnerable Grant with beneficiaries amount to a total of 18 664, of which 9132 are male and 9532 are female. In terms of the Child Welfare Grant however, there has been notable incidents of misuse of the *Children Grant*, and thus I appeal to guardians and care takers to refrain from such conduct and as leaders we are dismayed by such reports as they defeat the efforts of Government towards addressing the plight of needy and vulnerable children.

Community Empowerment

The Sub division of Community Empowerment Advocacy under the Ministry of Gender involves the support towards Community members who run Edu-care programmes. A total of 90 Edu-care beneficiaries are being supported with monthly allowances of N\$1500-N\$2000, totalling an amount of N\$1,166,200.00 for the year under review.

Allow me to appreciate the smart partnership between the Namibian Government and the European Union towards improving and construction of Early Childhood facilities in various constituencies of our region.

Division – Marginalized Communities & Disability Affairs

I am glad to state that through the Education support programme, the San marginalized children have access to uninterrupted learning and are supported in terms of monthly allowances, bursaries (NASFAF) and transport while there is a funeral support benefits that includes a coffin, cross and transport for the marginalized communities.

In line with the Harambee Prosperity Plan, the Ministry of Gender intends to construct Ten (10) Low Cost houses at Namapan in Tsumkwe Constituency and Two (2) at Okangeama in the Okakarara Constituency for the Marginalized communities in those areas.

In terms of water provision, the Ministry of Gender is in the process of drilling a new borehole at Farm Uitkomst, which hosts the San Marginalized community in order to increase the water supply to the school, clinic and community. This project will also include the laying of a 1.5 Kilometre pipeline to Okangeama San Community Centre for the provision of water to that area.

Nutritional support for the marginalized communities, continues to be rendered as resources are available and to date, a total of 80 612 bags of maize meal and a 11 516 bottles of cooking oil as well as other food commodities such as soya mince, okatete and salt have been distributed to the marginalized beneficiaries under the period of review.

With reference to the Marginalized programme, I will fail in my duties if I do not appreciate the support that other partners are rendering towards these programmes of the Marginalized community programme; such as **Palms For Life** a non-governmental organization, that is in the process of constructing modern Early Childhood Centres at Farm Uitkomst and Tsumkwe Settlement during this Financial year of 2021/2022. In addition this NGO has committed to sponsor Two Hundred (200) Marginalized students in various fields of vocational training at COSDEC for the Financial Year 2021/2022.

Hon. Councillors, Ladies and Gentlemen

Allow me to report on one of the crucial divisions in our region, namely the **Works Maintenance and Technical Services Division**, that is responsible to ensure that infrastructure and facilities of Government are maintained in good working condition. Works remains a critical division in terms of providing bill of quantities as well as supervision of Government infrastructure projects in the region.

I would like to mention here that the a lot still needs to be done in-line civil, electrical and mechanical works especially at Government facilities such as mortuaries, medical facilities and schools. I appeal to all OMAs to ensure that they provide adequate budgets to Works regional offices to ensure efficiency and effectiveness. It is however disheartening to note the deplorable conditions of Government houses in the region and therefore I want to urge all those occupying Government houses to look after them with care as these houses offer shelter to you.

Directorate of Education, Arts and Culture

Hon. Councillors, Ladies and gentlemen,
Education remains the greatest pillars of any society and needless to say, the great future of any nation is based on a foundation of good education.

In terms of enhancing equity education, Otjozondjupa Directorate Education, Arts and Culture managed to establish Two (2) new public schools namely Ombili Primary School in Otjiwarongo Constituency and Neu Sommerau Primary in Otavi constituency. Additionally, Three (3) new private schools were established and opened doors in January 2020 namely; Catalyst Education and Eagle Christian Academic in Okahandja Constituency as well as Educ-Agri Private School in Otjiwarongo Constituency.

The capacity of learners that were enrolled in the 83 schools of the region total 48 152 during the period under review. This number is expected to increase to an estimated 50 560 learners for the next enrolment considering that the number of schools in region have now increased to **87**.

You will all agree with me that Education cannot be possible without adequate funding. This year, the development budget totalling N\$ 6 562 488.36 was utilized on construction and renovation which included the construction of classrooms, Science Laboratories, Libraries and Septic tanks.

Smart partnerships in the Education sector have seen the construction of Eight (8) classrooms and One (1) ablution block at Ombili Primary School at Otjiwarongo to the value of Three Million Fifty Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$3 050 000.00) by B2Gold Mine. Furthermore the Japanese Embassy inaugurated the ground-breaking of a block of Four (4) classrooms that they are funding at Donatus Primary School in Otjiwarongo. The Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) drilled a borehole at Otjozondju Primary School to the value of One Hundred and Forty Thousand (N\$140 000.00).

Ministry of Health and Social Services

Another important sector of the Namibian Pillars is Health and Otjozondjupa region which has been striving to excel in ensuring that every citizen of the region has access to quality health services.

It is evident that the vastness of the region outnumbers the resources available, none the less, as a region we continue to strive to address the issue with vigour and urgency. With Four (4) District **hospitals** (Okahandja, Okakarara, Grootfontein and Otjiwarongo), Two (2) Health Centres (Otavi and Mangetti), Nineteen (19) Clinics and Two Hundred and Thirty Nine (239) Outreach Centres, the region strives ensure that health services are rendered in a smooth and efficient manner.

During the period of review the directorate of Health was allocated a budget of **253 Million** Namibia Dollars of which the budget execution rate was 103%.

COVID-19 Response

The Directorate of Health incurred an overspending of 3% due to COVID-19 response.

Otjozondjupa region recorded the first case of COVID-19 on the 19th of June 2020 and the impact of COVID-19 on the region during the period of review is as follows: Total tested 12, 347; total number of positive cases 2593 and deaths amounted to 50.

This number has increased though given the rapid increase of COVID-19 cases due to the new severe strain. As a we came up with an integrated COVID-19 Plan and a Taskforce comprising of various stakeholders including the business community with the aim of supplementing the much needed assistance in mitigating the effects of the pandemic in the region.

The region however still needs more COVID-19 wards and Isolation facilities. Projects undertaken in terms of Capital Projects under Health include a new Outpatient, casualty and dental site at Okahandja Hospital, construction of a health centre at Okondjatu that is still currently in progress and construction of Laundry and Kitchen at Okakarara Hospital.

Transport remains the biggest challenge under health especially with the current COVID-19 pandemic. In general the condition of health facilities in general and the delay in the construction of the Referral Hospital, remains a challenge that the region needs to overcome. It is my hope that the construction of the referral hospital at Otjiwarongo whose planning started a few years ago, will be a solution to the issue of hospital space.

The region rolled out COVID-19 vaccination campaign on the 21st of April 2021. Each district has one fixed point and 1 mobile team reaching out to all outside clinics as well as other identified points (Army bases, Police holding Cells, B2Gold mine and farms).

Hon. Councillors, Ladies and gentlemen,

My office has undertaken to establish a regional forum to engage all Government and non-governmental agencies in the region as I have noticed that the level of collaboration and sharing of information is not yet at an acceptable level. None-the less despite the COVID-19 pandemic some Ministries used the opportunity to an advantage. One such Ministry is the **MINISTRY OF INDUSTRIALIZATION TRADE AND SME DEVELOPMENT** that benefited several SMEs across the country through the manufacturing of masks and Otjozondjupa region was no exception. The intervention benefited Ten (10) SME's from Otjozondjupa region inclusive of all seven constituencies to a tune of N\$390 000.00. The Ministry also through the COVID-19 Grant introduced various initiatives to support entrepreneurs hard hit by the pandemic in collaboration with development partners and other stakeholders that lost income during lockdown. A total of 29 SME's from Otjozondjupa region have benefited by receiving N\$15,000 each, totalling N\$435 000.00. Another important project launched by the Ministry is the "Buy Local" "Grow Namibia" campaign that is aimed at raising awareness on importance of buying local and supporting local entrepreneurs.

Hon. Councillors, Ladies and gentlemen,

The **Ministry of Youth, Sport and National Service** is mandated by the Namibian Government to develop and empower the youth and to promote amongst others, sport and it is committed to realize the outcomes related to youth development in its contribution to the National Development Goals as set out in NDP5, Harambee Prosperity Plan as well as Vision 2030. The Directorate of Youth development has 6 offices in the region, with the main objectives of empowering the youth through entrepreneurship training, youth employability, skills development and promote active youth participation through conducive platforms and responsive youth programmes. Programmes of the Ministry include, Child Justice Program, Rural Youth Development, Youth Health, National Youth Credit Scheme and Children of the Liberation Struggle Program. The Namibian Youth Credit Scheme (NYCS) has benefited 20 Youth beneficiaries at to benefit from loans amounting to N\$ 70,000.00

HPP Regional Youth Enterprises capacitates young people with the necessary skills that enable them to contribute to employment creation and poverty eradication. The directorate have achieved the target as set in HPP by establishing and registering 6 Regional Youth Enterprises who have further developed Business Plans.

Through the Basic Computer Training basic ICT skills training is being imparted to out-of-school and unemployed young people who do not meet the basic entry requirements to conventional vocational training centres and are unable to obtain employment due to lack of the required qualifications.

Youth Horticulture Self-Employment Project

The Youth Horticulture Self-Employment project has been established in the region and was launched at Okakarara Constituency. The project is spearheaded by the National Youth Council (NYC) and the National Youth Service (NYS) and targets unemployed youth and has managed to employ Six (6) youth.

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, IMMIGRATION, SAFETY AND SECURITY

Hon Councillors, Ladies and gentlemen,

You will agree with me that the safety of a Nation is of utmost important and the newly integrated services of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security form an integral component of governance structures of the region.

NAMIBIAN POLICE FORCE

In the Otjozondjupa region, the Namibia Police Force is rendering satisfactory work despite the challenges at their exposal and this is also attributed to the conducive and stable political environment that enables the force to intensify its efforts towards preservation of peace and stability in the region.

CRIME PREVENTION OPERATIONS- *Special Crime Prevention Operation*

During the year under review, the Namibian Police Force conducted the following operations namely: Namib Desert and Hokanama Operations which were initiated by the Head of State, His Excellency President Hage Geingob. The operations were jointly

conducted by the Police and Namibia Defence Force and other stakeholders. In addition to that, the region has conducted an intelligent-driven regional cross border joint operation "Patako" with Erongo region and One (1) internal clean – up operation "Kupotela Maimu" within the region of Otjozondjupa itself. These pro-active policing operations resulted in notable policing successes and achievements in the region.

In addition the region also conducted a special operation on the State of Emergency on COVID-19 pandemic restrictions as declared by the Head of State from March to September 2020 that saw 174 persons being arrested and Fines to the value of N\$ 348 000.00 being issued.

Traffic Policing

A total of 2762 traffic fines with a combined value of about N\$ 3, 025 125-00 were issued during the year under review while a total number of 41 persons were arrested for drunk and driving. A total number of 26 motor vehicle accidents with fatalities were reported and 198 persons were arrested on warrant of arrest for traffic offences.

I note here with concern that most of motor vehicle accidents or fatalities on our national roads are attributed to amongst others, Ignorance of road traffic rules, over speeding, animals and inconsiderate/negligent/selfish and driving.

Protected Resources

Poaching of protected animals remain a concern in the region due to proximity to game reserves. Of serious concern also in our region, is the issue of poaching of protected species. During the period under review, a syndicate involving Ten (10) suspected/accused persons were arrested in Otjiwarongo and Windhoek respectively for being in possession of two (2) rhinoceros horns worth One (1) Million Namibia dollars.

Stock theft

With Otjozondjupa's strength being livestock farming, the region is one of the highest contributors in terms of the meat/beef industry. However, the region faces serious setbacks in this endeavour due to stock-theft. I would however like to applaud the Namibia Police for the efficient response in attending to incidents of stock-theft. During the period under review, the Police managed to recover stolen livestock which was then handed back to the rightful owners.

Common Crime Statistics

The Common Crime Statistics comparison of crime reported during the 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 financial years indicates a decrease as 2020/2021 had 5541 as compared to 2018/2020 that had a total of 7262.

Capital Projects

Amongst the many capital projects for the Police in the region, it is with utmost delight that I inform you that the construction of Nyae-Nyae Police Park and Baracks in the Tsumkwe Constituency at an estimated cost of **Forty Three Million Nine Hundred and Thirty Eight Thousand Nine Hundred and Sixty Five, Thirty Three Cents (N\$ 43 938 965-33)**, which was commissioned during the 2019/2020 financial year is expected to be completed around by the end of June 2021.

Challenges

In terms of challenges experienced by the Police, I would like to state that crime is the determinant of the work of the Police. I urge that we all play our part to reduce crime to cut costs. I would also like to urge members of the public especially the

business to meet Government half-way by supporting and sponsoring the Namibia Police Force with vehicles and other amenities.

DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL REGISTRATION

Another crucial sector of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security are the department of Civil registration and Immigration, that is aligned to Vision 2030, the National Development Plan (NDP) and the Harambee Prosperity Plan. Civil registration enables the Country to document and issue birth and marriage certificates, identification cards as well as death registration. Another milestone in the department is the introduction of E-Birth and E-Death notification systems that facilitates timely electronic transfer of information on any occurrence of birth or death. During the period under review, the birth registration for Children under One year was 4920, while 1117 children were registered under late birth registration programme during the 2020/2021 financial year.

Identification Cards Registration

It is statutory and mandatory that every Namibian attains an identification document at the age of 16. In Otjozondjupa region, the Civil Registration Department had set a target of issuing 7868 Identity Documents during the 2020/2021 financial year. However 5704 IDs are still not collected and therefore I urge members of the public to ensure that they collect their documents. This sector is however challenged with the vastness and remoteness of some parts of the region especially the Tsumkwe Constituency where challenges are evident among the San and the Ovaherero returnees from Botswana in terms of accessing National Identification Documents.

MINISTRY OF FINANCE: DIRECTORATE OF INLAND REVENUE

Hon. Councillors, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The MINISTRY OF FINANCE: DIRECTORATE OF INLAND REVENUE in the region made tremendous strides in maximizing revenue resources, enhancing of organisational performance and ensuring effective regulatory framework compliance.

Achievement

The Ministry greatest achievement under the Inland Revenue Directorate has been the introduction of a new Integrated Tax Administration System (ITAS) in mid-January 2019, a modernized system aimed at improving efficiency and effectiveness in Tax Administration. With this modern technology, tax payer register online brings along benefits such as online self-assessment, 24 hour accessibility, reduces service queues, rapid response services and the risk '*red-tape*' that can lead to bribery. Another tax relief programme was launched in February 2021 offering a relief to tax payers during the COVID-19 pandemic in order to ease economic burden.

In terms of the Public Act 15 of 2015, I appeal on behalf of the Ministry of Finance as mandated with the issuance of Good Standing Certificates on Tax, that OMAs and Local Authorities as well as businesses should consult the Ministry about the status of bidders in terms of tax compliance prior to issuing of bid awards, to ensure that that bidders are in compliance with the legislation of Income and Value Added Tax legislations. I therefore appeal to the citizen of this beautiful Country to be responsible and pay their tax.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION OF NAMIBIA

Hon. Councillors, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The past two years has seen our Country running all four types of elections namely, Presidential and National Assembly 2019 to Regional Council and Local Authority elections in 2020.

To ensure that every citizens gets sensitized on the election procedures and processes in the region, voters' education is being undertaken as a continuous process in all the (7) Seven Constituencies. During the period of review specifically the voters' education was necessary following the Supreme Court judgement in February 2020 that entailed the use of ballot papers in any elections held after 21st March 2020. Am happy to note that this time around, only very few farms are still found locked when election officials visit the Constituencies, but am told that eventually most of the farms were accessed as the farmers were informed through Whatsapp groups that were created. The Local Authority elections saw new dynamics in terms of leadership and Party representation. In terms of the Regional Elections for example; SWAPO Party managed to retain Five constituencies, namely: Tsumkwe, Grootfontein, Otavi, Otjiwarongo and Okahandja and NUDO retained Two (2) constituencies namely: Okakarara and Omatako. These results are all due to the Peace and stability as well as conducive environment created by the Namibian Government through the ruling Party SWAPO.

I would not want to end my speech without calling the upholding of peace and hard work. Peace is priceless, yet without it, we will not be able to flourish as a region and Country. The region has not experienced much instability, however it is always better to address issues while they are still small; whether in governance, traditional or social setups. This year is a year of Implementation for Otjozondjupa Region. Gone are the days when procrastination was the order. I appeal to every sector in the region whether belonging to Government or Private, that we enhance our implementation level. My office has embarked upon establishing a Project Implementation platform, where we will collectively share information on implementation of projects and programmes in the region as well as assess the impact thereof. This type of initiative is also aimed at equitable resource distribution in the region. I am confident that this platform will inform us and all stakeholders involved on the impact of all the hardwork and initiatives being done and serve as a data pool for developmental achievements in the region.

In Conclusion, allow me to applaud the community of Otjozondjupa for your conduct towards ensuring a safe and conducive environment in the region especially more so, in containing the COVID-19, although on the latter, more can still be done. I therefore urge you to always remain vigilant and aware that COVID-19 is still around us and therefore refrain from irresponsible conducts. The Government of Namibia has come up with COVID-19 Protocols and Guidelines as well as restrictions. However at the end of the day it is about our own survival and that of others to ensure that we do not spread the virus or expose yourselves to situations that might be risky. The vaccine is now in Namibia and although it is voluntary, I encourage you to be vaccinated.

With these remarks, I submit my State of Region Address for 2021.
I thank you.

