



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

**STATEMENT TO THE EIGHTEENTH SESSION OF THE
COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (CSD-18)
BY
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Mr. Chairman
Distinguished Delegates

It is my distinct honour to address the Eighteenth Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-18).

Namibia associates itself with the statements delivered earlier on behalf of the Group of Seventy-Seven (G77) and China and the African Group, respectively.

The themes for this CSD cycle are interrelated and are keys to sustainable development. Namibia continues to address issues related to transport, chemicals, waste management and mining in an integrated manner.

The Government of Namibia strives to reduce poverty and inequality in the country by, among others, providing community-based income generating opportunities to communities through the creation of community based tourism enterprises under the Community Based Natural Resource Management Programme.

We believe that the implementation of Agenda 21 within the context of National Development Plans will enable Namibia to attain her Vision 2030. We all agree that infrastructure is vital for the growth of our economies. Roads, railways and other communication infrastructure are integral parts of the production and consumption pattern. Equally important, is the issue of access to markets and technology transfer particularly with regard to skills development, capacity building, and financial support.

We are a country with special needs in the broadest context of sustainable development. Our difficult and harsh environmental constraints make Namibia extremely vulnerable to external shocks. We are a drought and flood prone country, with much of the land not suitable for crop production. Food security in the country is of great concern especially in view of climate change, biodiversity loss and land degradation.

Namibia is vulnerable to the impact of climate change. There is evidence that climate change has undermined in a significant way our efforts for sustainable development. Exceptional flooding during the past two years does not conform to any known historical trend and does not show consistency with currently favoured climate change scenarios, observed by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, or to any study carried out in Namibia in this area.

We thus need more sophisticated Early Warning Systems to predict with a higher degree of accuracy the events that are likely to unfold in the short, medium and long-term. This will put us in a better position to respond effectively.

In spite of all these challenges, the response by the Government to the ongoing flood situation bears testimony to our intensified efforts to embrace adaptation measures. We are finalizing a National Strategy on Adaptation and Mitigation to Climate Change. We require additional financial support and technology transfer from our development partners in order to implement and mainstream climate change adaptation and mitigation measures in our national development process.

We need additional support to invest in our infrastructure for education, health and other social programmes. As our consumption continues to grow so does our generation of waste. We, therefore, require additional investments in waste management.

Mr. Chairman

Namibia mines diamonds, copper, uranium, and many other minerals of strategic importance. Namibia is party to the Kimberly Process. Mining is the main contributor to our GDP. The sector is also a significant employer in the country.

Namibia is well known for its sound environmental management practices. Namibia is one of the few countries in the world where the protection of the environment is provided for in its Constitution. The Environmental Management Act of 2007 makes it mandatory for Environmental Impact Assessment studies to be carried out before any mining or prospecting commences.

The Namibian Government, in partnership with the mining industry, and with financial support from the German Geological Survey has recently commissioned a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) for uranium. This assessment aims to incorporate environmental aspects in all uranium-mining activities. It covers issues related to social aspects, water, biodiversity, and infrastructure development associated with mining activities. All sensitive areas have been identified and mapped out and possible mitigation measures have been proposed.

Namibia would like to see local beneficiation and value addition to mineral resources in countries where they are mined. We would like to see these minerals processed at home so that they can contribute to job creation and poverty reduction.

We live in an interdependent world. Countries should take joint actions in the implementation of sustainable development. Only when we adapt our conduct to promote sustainable patterns of consumption and production can we improve the state of the world and eventually save ourselves and future generations.

I thank you.