

SPEECH

BY

HON. ISAK KATALI

MINISTRY OF MINES AND ENERGY

OFFICIAL OPENING REMARKS

FOR

**DEVELOPMENT DIALOGUE FORUM SERIES 3A –
THEME “SUSTAINABLE ENERGY FOR ALL”**

WINDHOEK, AREBBUSCH TRAVEL LODGE

14 MAY 2012

Director of Ceremonies

Mr. Neil Boyer, Deputy Resident Representative for UNDP, who is standing in for Mr. Musinga T Bandora, Resident Representative, UNDP Namibia,

Dr. Tjama Tjivikua, Rector of the Polytechnic of Namibia

Members of the Diplomatic Corps

Captains of the Industry

Distinguished guests

All protocol observed

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to officiate the 3rd Development Dialogue Forum, with the very important theme of this year "Sustainable Energy for All". With the year 2012 being the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All, Namibia joins the global community in action and engage stakeholders at platforms such these to discuss issues pertinent to our countries' sustainable development.

Sixty (60) % of the Namibian population still doesn't have access to modern energy services and in addition heavily reliant on biomass fuel for cooking and heating. This situation is clearly an unacceptable and unsustainable situation. We all know that without access to sustainable energy, there can be no sustainable development. Thus the transition towards energy sustainability requires changes not only in the way energy is supplied, but in the way it is used, and reducing the amount of energy required to deliver various goods or services is essential. The question at hand is what has Namibia achieved in terms of sustainable energy development and how can we as a nation collectively address our challenges to achieve sustainable energy access to all?

The country's energy situation at present is one where we are heavily reliant on imports for hydrocarbons and petroleum products, our electricity imports are currently 60%, obtained from the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP). This situation places the country at huge risks. The national utility, Nampower have to be commended for their commitment, to ensure the country supply options over short term to long term are explored and implemented towards the benefit of the people. Recent achievements include the commissioning of the Caprivi Interconnection Link as well as the 24 MW Anixas power plant. Other projects such as the addition of the fourth unit at the Ruacana Hydro Power Plant and the refurbishment of the Van Eck coal-fired power station are being looked at to increase the internal capacity. Renewable energy IPP projects such as the solar PV and wind projects are viable options.

Ladies and gentlemen, self sufficiency in energy generation alone does not translate to complete access to that energy. Due to the unjust historical past,

the majority of our people has not had access to modern forms of energy and has also remained marginalized from productive and social economic activities. The national rural electrification programme of this country is one of the initiatives undertaken by government to ensure that the Namibian people all have access to modern and clean energy services. The Rural Electrification Program started just after independence, with the objective to reduce the energy poverty of rural communities and in turn improve the conditions and living standards of the people, has come a long way and still strives to achieve those objectives. So far more than N\$700 million has been spent on the project and more than 900 localities have been connected to the grid. However, many challenges do exist and therefore it was imperative to find a complement to most of the challenges in the form of the Off-Grid Energisation Master Plan (OGEMP). OGEMP would become the most viable option to those areas where the extending the grid would not be feasible. These two roadmaps, the Rural Electrification Master Plan (REMP) and OGEMP are the leading documents. OGEMP ensures that off-grid communities have access to viable renewable energy technologies and services (established energy shops within reachable distances of the affected communities), the financing of these technologies is addressed the Solar Revolving Fund Scheme, and the solar electrification of public institutions.

In 2009, the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Institute (REEEI) was appointed by MME to coordinate the implementation of the Off-grid Energisation Master (OGEMP) of 2007. OGEMP recommends for the establishment of at least one (1) energy shop in each of the 13 regions of the country to help break the barrier of accessibility of renewable energy technologies in remote areas. In total, 180 energy shops will be established in 20 years. Energy shop stocks and sell appropriate, approved energy products and

compatible appliances modelled as energy baskets. The shop also acts as an information hub for communities, energy end users and other stakeholders.

As of April 2012, 10 Energy Shops were indentified and launched by the Minister of Mines in the following Regions: Hardap, Omusati, Ohangwena, Oshikoto, Kavango, Omaheke, Otjozondjupa, Caprivi, Kunene and Oshana. The first phase of the roll out of Energy Shops was made possible by the generous financial and in-kind support from the Local Cooperation Fund of the Embassy of Finland in Windhoek.

The impact of increased energy consumption can be reduced through energy efficiency, an area which has not reached its full potential. The Demand Side Management (DSM) measures that was proposed and implemented since 2007 was a good start; and since then other initiatives followed suit i.e. Cabinet Directive on Solar Water Heaters for Public Institutions, the Energy Efficiency in buildings program and of the late the developments to establish a Green Building Council in Namibia. I think all will agree that the ground work was commendable but there is still a lot of work ahead of us. It is imperative to reach the full potential of Energy Efficiency and we start by looking into technical standards for key energy-consuming products and equipment, the transfer of know-how and good practices, and the development of capacities to implement them. Last but not least the investment in energy efficiency also needs to be encouraged.

It is important to note that policies, strategies, actions and commitment for the energy sector play an imperative role in achieving sustainable access to all. The Ministry of Mines and Energy has therefore committed itself towards the update and review of the Energy Policy and Regulatory Framework. Work on this project

has commenced and with the first output was achieved in terms of creating an energy model for Namibia. Together with the outcome of the National Integrated Resource Plan (NIRP), with the goal to identify the mix of resources for meeting near and long-term consumer energy needs in an efficient and reliable manner at the lowest reasonable cost, Namibia will be able to address the challenges and opportunities of energy issues.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me conclude this address, by emphasizing the following, again, without access to sustainable energy, there can be no sustainable development. The path to sustainable development is challenging, and at platforms like these we attending here today should not be seen as just another event. It provides us with excellent opportunities to tackle the challenges and initiate achievable actions.

Namibia as a country is committed towards sustainable development and therefore allow me to inform you at this platform, that Namibia has officially joined the Global Initiative on Sustainable Energy for All driven by the UN Secretary General to reach the following objectives by 2030 and that is:

1. Ensure universal access to modern energy services
2. Double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency
3. Double the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.

With these few words I hereby declare the Forum open and thank you for your attention.