

**STATEMENT BY MS. WILHENCIA UIRAS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
OF NATIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION, ON THE OCCASION  
OF THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF NAMIBIA CAPACITY  
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

Director of ceremonies,  
Officials of NPC and NSA  
Officials of UN Country Team in Namibia  
Officials of UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
Officials of GIZ Namibia  
Ladies and gentlemen

- 1.** I am pleased to address you all today at this official opening of the Namibia Capacity Building Workshop on Public Policy Development, Review, Evaluation and Coordination for the Acceleration of the Sustainable Development Goals in Namibia.
- 2.** Some few years back, as we continue to build the Namibian economy, it was recognized that there are challenges in policy development, review and evaluation, which resulted in the approval of the revised structure of the National Planning Commission (NPC) by Cabinet, in 2011. In this respect, the NPC

Act (Act No. 15 of 1994) was reviewed and replaced by NPC Act (Act No. 2 of 2013). The NPC Act of 2013 has mandated NPC to coordinate the development of Government socio-economic policies to ensure coherence, consistency, eliminate duplication and to evaluate Government socio-economic policies to establish their effectiveness.

- 3.** The consistency in the development of such policies and their effectiveness is critical in achieving the country's developmental aspirations, as stated in the current plan under implementation, the NDP5 and other national, regional and international frameworks such as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and AU Agenda 2063. Equally, the consistencies and effectiveness of policies are paramount in policy implementation. Strengthening of national policy coordination system will therefore prevent policy duplication, inconsistencies, contradictions and assist in identification of complementarities especially among sector policies.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**4.** In line with the implementation of the revised Act, the NPC established a unit responsible for coordination and evaluation of government socioeconomic policies. This was to respond to the new mandate that came with the revised Act. This Unit comprises of four (4) staff members, who are responsible for 36 sectors across OMAs. The core function is to coordinate all the policies that are being developed, review the draft policies and policy proposals, and provide inputs and guidance. The unit also evaluate existing policies to establish their effectiveness. These roles clearly demonstrate that NPC plays a critical role in policy making processes and it only make sense that we are experts in this field.

**5.** Since the revision of the Act in 2013, the following tools have been developed:

- ✓ **Guidelines to the structure of Public Policies** - which allows for a standard structure of policies that are developed.
- ✓ **Guidelines for the structure of Public Making Process** - which provide step by step processes in policy formulation, policy revision or policy termination.
- ✓ **Database for Public Policies** -to keep stock of public policies in the country and helps OMAs in identifying complementarities or conflicts when developing new Policies.
- ✓ **Policy Focal Persons** - that serve as the entry point for policy guidance within the respective OMAs. These people are trained annually by NPC.

**6.** Despite the structures in place, the challenges have been the lack of requisite skills in policy making processes to be able to give the best advise and direction in all policy aspects. Some of the puzzling questions have been:

- ✓ What Constitutes a Policy? - How do we advise OMAs whether the concern at hand indeed needs a Policy
- ✓ what should one look at when presented with a draft policy for advice? Is due consideration given to cross cutting issues e.g. gender responsiveness, attendance to needs of people with disabilities, youth and child responsiveness?
- ✓ Should policies and strategies be treated the same?
- ✓ How do we successfully coordinate the formulation and implementation of national sector policies?
- ✓ What are the gaps in the tools that have been developed?
- ✓ Most importantly, how implementable are the policies and what are the socio-economic impact of the various policies?

**7.** It was because of these concerns that late last year, the NPC took an initiative to seek for support for capacity building in the areas of Public Policy. The UN Namibia responded positively to this call and a Programme of support to this effect was facilitated to address this need as it was deemed important in fostering the implementation of the existing and future planning frameworks

nationally and those that Namibia is party to. NPC remains grateful to the UN Namibia, UNDESA and GIZ Namibia for making this project a success. An official launch was already done on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September 2020 with an objective of understanding the need better and how it can be responded.

**8.** It is therefore my pleasure to officially the training workshop today which only indicate that the first webinar we had was a success. My hope is that we achieve the most of what is on the program and that the capacity gaps in the various areas would be addressed by the end of the training workshop.

I thank you.