

# REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**DRAFT STATEMENT BY THE RT. HON. DR. SAARA  
KUUGONGELWA-AMADHILA**

**PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

**ON THE OCASSION OF THE**

**THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE MIDTERM  
COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
OBJECTIVES OF THE INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR ACTION  
FOR “WATER FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT”, 2018-2028**

**NEW YORK, USA**

**22-24 MARCH 2023**

**Your Majesty, King Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands,**

**Your Excellency, Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan,**

**Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government**

**Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations,**

**Mr. Csaba Körösi President of the 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly,**

**Distinguished heads of delegations and guests**

**From the onset, allow me to express our appreciation to the Secretary General for using his convening power to gather us in New York to bring into focus water issues. This Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018-2028 , takes place on the backdrop of a world characterised by overlapping crises.**

**The centrality of water to ensure the attainment of several sustainable development goals must continue to be interrogated, especially at a time when we are preparing to review the progress made towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals slated for later this year.**

**Your Excellencies,**

**Namibia is one of the driest countries in sub-Saharan Africa, with a semi-arid climate. As a result, we are compounded by water scarcity and high evaporation rates.**

**The lack of perennial rivers in the interior of the country has been a limiting factor for development.**

**For this reason, effective water resources management in Namibia is fundamental to meeting the SDG 6. As a broad policy objective, Namibia strives to ensure equity in access to water and safely managed sanitation, especially for rural agrarian communities.**

**In our quest to achieve SDG 6 and our national development objectives, Namibia has prioritised and enshrined the water and sanitation sectors into key strategic areas of policy planning.**

**To this end, we have recorded progress in providing safe water to the majority of our citizens. Our statistics indicate that about 97% of citizens in urban areas have access to potable water. In rural populations, the figure stands at 87% access to potable water.**

**Your Excellencies,**

**Access to water for all requires bigger investment and coordination among sectors and different development partners.**

**There is a strong need for the global water community to engage and share technological expertise to accelerate efforts towards meeting water-related SDGs, beyond the UN 2023 Water Conference.**

**For this reason, and in order to ensure that water stays permanently high on the political agenda, we reiterate the call for the appointment of a UN Special Envoy on Water. There is a need to adapt the UN Water Structure to become a member state driven structure making it more responsive to present-day realities and better suited for posterity. For this reason, my delegation strongly believes the appointment of a UN Special Envoy on Water would go a long way towards improving coordination amongst various agencies and bodies currently dealing with the issue of water and help turn it from an internal body to a Membership based body. Water needs a dedicated Champion to put its cardinal relevance to the preservation of life, development, peace and security centre stage.**

**Your Excellencies,**

**At national level, the Namibian Government's funding to water for the next five years has been strengthened to address water infrastructure development and rehabilitation of pipelines at the coastal areas.**

**This includes the development of the feasibility studies for a desalination plant and a Master Plan Study for the North Central Areas.**

**These initiatives should move us towards meeting the SDG 6 and water security across the Namibian population.**

**At Continental level, Namibia welcomes and supports the Continental Africa Water Investment Programme (AIP), adopted by the Africa Union Commission and its Ministerial Council on Water (AMCOW), with the aim to leverage US\$30 billion annually in climate resilient water investments for Africa by 2030.**

**This will accelerate investment into climate-resilience at regional, transboundary and national water governance for infrastructure for socio-economic development of the continent.**

**At global level, Namibia welcomes the Special Trust Fund under the Global Environment Facility (GEF) which was established last year at COP15 on Biodiversity, in Montreal Canada, to support the implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework.**

**(GBF)The Fund, without a doubt will serve to complement, existing support and scale up financing to ensure the timely implementation of the GBF through adequate, predictable and timely flow of funds.**

**Your Excellencies,**

**The link between access to sanitation for all and human dignity remains a priority for the Namibian government.**

**For this reason, we have identified the need to improve universal access to sanitation and hygiene in informal urban settlements and rural communities.**

**I am, therefore , pleased to confirm that the Government of Namibia has recently adopted the revised National**

**Sanitation and Hygiene Strategy (2022-2027) to give a strategic direction for a coordinated approach to the implementation of sanitation and hygiene activities.**

**Further, climate change remains one of the biggest emergencies threatening the future of both planet and people with devastating impacts of more frequent and severe droughts, floods, bush fires, sea-level rise, desertification, land and soil degradation, heatwaves, food and water insecurity and many more existential challenges.**

**Our region has over the last few days experienced the devastating effects of Cyclone Freddy , and we convey our condolences to the Governments of Malawi, Madagascar and Mozambique who have borne the brunt of this destructive calamity.**

**In conclusion, on behalf of His Excellency the President and the government of Namibia , I wish to express our gratitude to our international development partners for all the support in the area of clean water supply and safe sanitation.**



**Our government will continue to support and implement programmes that will propel us to achieve access to water and sanitation by 100% of the Namibia population , for social and economic development activities.**

**I trust that over the next three days we will engage in constructive dialogues and deliberations that will yield tangible outcomes for the people of the world who look to this August Assembly with hope for a prosperous future.**

**I thank you.**