

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



OFFICIAL INAUGURATION OF THE SECOND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES BOARD

BY HONOURABLE ERKKI NGHIMTINA

MINISTER OF LABOUR, INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND EMPLOYMENT CREATION

OFFICE OF THE LABOUR COMMISSIONER, CONFERENCE HALL

20 OCTOBER 2017



Director of Ceremonies
Acting Permanent Secretary, Mr. Vilbard Usiku
Distinguished Members of the Management of the Ministry of
Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment Creation
Distinguished Designate Board Members of the Second Employment
Services Board
Members of the Media
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is my honour and privilege to welcome you today to the inauguration of the Second Employment Services Board.

At the outset, I thank wholeheartedly our fourteen patriotic Namibians who have responded positively to my request to serve as Board Members on this organ of State tasked with the critical responsibility of

providing advice and guidance regarding labour and employment services. To me this demonstrates the profound commitment and dedication you have towards the advancement of Employment Creation in Namibia. My brief remarks are addressed to the Board.

Esteemed Board members,

Over the years, the Government of the Republic of Namibia has put employment creation at the top of its developmental agenda, as reflected in Vision 2030, the Harambee Prosperity Plan, NDP5 and our own Ministerial Strategic Plan. Another indicator that underscored Government's commitment towards employment creation was its decision in 2015 to confer on my Ministry the explicit responsibility for employment creation and to rename the Ministry to reflect this responsibility.

However, as we are all painfully aware, the second Employment Services Board commences its operation at a time when a large number of the Namibian labour force are jobless, particularly our youth, many of those who are employed do not enjoy decent work, and informal employment is increasing. The high rate of unemployment and extreme income inequality are among the biggest challenges that Namibia faces today as a nation. This means that we have not yet achieved the goals set out in our ambitious and hopeful plans.

By your appointment to the Board, you have been given an opportunity and a responsibility to contribute to the reversal of the current situation.

Before discussing your duties and my priorities for the work of the Board, I will sketch briefly the legal and policy framework in which the Board operates:

Article 95 of the Namibian Constitution, “Promotion of the Welfare of the People”, contains a number principles of State Policy that pertain to the welfare and advancement of the position of Namibian workers, including Article 95(4), which requires

“membership of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and, where possible, adherence to and action in accordance with the international Conventions and Recommendations of the ILO.”

The Conventions and Recommendations of the ILO provide strong guidance for our work in the area of Employment Creation. You have been given copies of **ILO Employment Services Convention 88 of 1948** and **Recommendation 83 on Employment Services**.

You have also been provided with copies of **ILO Convention No. 122** and **Recommendation 122 on National Employment Policy**, as well as **Namibia’s National Employment Policy**, which is current under review. Recommendation 122 gives important guidance for how to ensure that employment creation is put at the centre of social and economic development.

Please study these documents in order to gain a clear understanding of the role that the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment Creation should be playing in the area of employment services and employment creation.

The Employment Services Act, No. 8 Of 2011, establishes the Employment Services Board as a part of the National Employment Service.

Section 2 of the Act provides:

2. (1) There is established the National Employment Service to provide professional labour market services for the purpose of achieving full, productive and decent employment in Namibia.

- (2) The National Employment Service consists of -*
- (a) the Employment Services Board; and*
 - (b) the Employment Services Bureau.*

I emphasize that the object of the National Employment Service, is “*achieving full, productive and decent employment in Namibia.*”

The functions of Board are set out in Section 4 of the Act as follows:

1. Investigate and advise the minister on the provision of the Employment Services and the attainment of other objectives of the Employment Services Act;
2. To assist the minister in monitoring and analyzing labour market developments concerning occupations and occupational segments in particular, including vocational training;
3. Advise the minister on legislation pertaining to the provisions of employment services and regulation of Private Employment Agencies;
4. To facilitate and coordinate multi-sectoral cooperation to achieve the objectives of the Employment Services Act.
5. Advise the Minister of the performance of the Bureau in providing labour market services
6. Advise on any other employment matter that the Board considers useful to achieve the objects of this Act or is referred to this Board by the Minister.

In order to fulfill your mandate knowledgeably, I encourage the Board members to better familiarize yourself with the Employment Services Act and its regulations, as well as the other key statutes in the area of labour employment, namely, the Labour Act, No. 11 of 2007, Social Security Act, No. 34 of 1994, the Affirmative Action (Employment) Act, No. 29 of 1998 and the Employees Compensation Act, No.30 of 1941, as amended.

Esteemed Board Members, I will now indicate my priorities for the work of the Board. I have asked the Bureau to provide to you a copy of my speech to the Board of August 2016. The priorities indicated at the time continue. They identify concrete issues that should be included in the advice that I will request in my remarks today. I am mindful that you have the statutory power to advise me on any matter that you consider to be useful to achieve the objects of the Act. I would welcome your advice in this regard, in addition to the following priorities:

- 1. Improving labour market services.** I am pleased to share with you a draft report prepared by ILO entitled Assessment of the Public Employment Service and Active Labour Market policies in Namibia. The draft was discussed at a validation workshop of stakeholders last week and has not yet been finalized. However, it covers in a comprehensive fashion the work of the Employment Services Bureau and makes far-ranging recommendations about what the Bureau and the Ministry need to do to fulfill its duty to provide effective employment services. In my opinion, this report cries out for a well-thought out plan to prioritize and implement the recommendations. I therefore ask you to study this report and to make pragmatic recommendations to me, to the Bureau on the priorities and manner on implementation.
- 2. Coordination of employment creation.** I also bring to your attention that the Ministry is contemplating amending the Employment Service Act to elaborate upon and to strengthen the statutory responsibility of the Board to facilitate and coordinate multi-sectoral cooperation to achieve the objectives of the Employment Services Act. At present, the level of coordination and cooperation across government at all levels and between government and the private sector and public enterprises falls short of what is required in order to maximize employment creation. I invite your proposals in this regard, particularly as what needs to be done to ensure that employment is placed at the centre of social and economic development.
- 3. Decent Work Country Programme.** Namibia is in the process of formulating a tri-partite Decent Work Country Programme with the ILO. The Permanent Secretary chairs the steering committee.

The first pillar (and priority) of the programme is Employment Creation, with a strong emphasis on youth employment, while another key pillar is on Unlocking the potential of the informal economy. I would like the Employment Services Board to become involved in the formulation of this programme and in particular to advise on what should be the outcomes and indicators to be included under these pillars.

4. Mainstreaming Gender in Employment. Before closing, I want to inform you about an important upcoming event. As part of its evaluation of the implementation of the National Employment Policy, our Ministry has identified the failure to mainstream a gender in the Policy and in its implementation plan as a major shortcoming that must be rectified. To address this, we are organizing a one-day workshop in early December for the purpose of training key stakeholders, including the members of the Employment Services Board, on gender mainstreaming, to be facilitated by an ILO gender expert. This will follow a training workshop for all senior and middle management of the Ministry. I ask you to give attendance at this important workshop your utmost priority in order to have the capacity to bring a gender perspective to the advice that you render to the Minister and to the guidance that you may give to the Employment Services Bureau.

As you can see, there is much to be done. I have complete confidence that you will carry out your duties with the utmost of integrity and commitment to the improvement of the lives of our people.

I thank you.

Introduction of the Board

I now take this opportunity to introduce the new Employment Services Board to the media and to the Namibian public:

NAME	REPRESENTATION	STATUS
1. MS LINGANI SIBALATANI	CHAIRPERSON	RE-APPOINTED
2. MR DAVID IIGONDA	STATE	NEW
3. MR CALVIN MUCHILA	STATE	RE-APPOINTED
4. MS GILLIAN KORNER	STATE	NEW
5. Ms LOIDE SHAANIKA	TRADE UNIONS	RE-APPOINTED
6. MR MAHONGORA KAVIHUHA	TRADE UNIONS	NEW
7. MR GERMANO MUSILI	EMPLOYERS	RE-APPOINTED
8. MS DANTAGO GAROSAS	EMPLOYERS	RE-APPOINTED
9. MR BEN SHIKOLALYE	PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES	RE-APPOINTED
10. MS ELSARIEN KATITI	NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL	NEW
11. DR MICHAEL AKUUPA	SPECIALISED KNOWLEDGE IN LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT	NEW
12. MR HEBERT JAUCH	SPECIALISED KNOWLEDGE IN LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT	NEW

13. MR NKRUMAH MUSHELENGA	SPECIALISED KNOWLEDGE IN IMMIGRATION MATTERS	NEW
14. MS AUNE MUNDJANIMA	SPECIALISED KNOWLEDGE IN EDUCATION MATTERS	NEW

I express my warm congratulations to all of you for your appointment to the Second Employment Services Board, and I sincerely wish that the new-elected board members, with spirit of vitality, will unite and lead all the members to make new achievement at a new starting point, and to renew their contribution to employment creation.

