



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

STATEMENT

BY

**RIGHT HONOURABLE DR. SAARA KUUGONGELWA-
AMADHILA**

PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

ON THE OCCASION OF

**THE LAUNCH GOVERNMENT INTERNET /
INTRANET POINTS OF PRESENCE (POPS)**

FRIDAY, 29 July 2018

KHOMAS REGIONAL COUNCIL BUILDING

- Director of Proceedings
- Honourable Ministers present here
- Honourable Regional Governors
- Permanent Secretaries
- Chief Regional Officers
- Acting Managing Director of Telecom Namibia
- Senior Government Officials

Let me take this opportunity to also welcome you all to today's launch of the Government internet / intranet points of presence, or POPs as they are called in ICT jargon. What we are witnessing today is the creation of one of the key elements to realise Government's mission to enhance and expand public service delivery to the people of Namibia.

As part of our continuous effort to improve service delivery, Government rolled out ICT infrastructure and completed the establishment of GRN Internet/Intranet Points of Presence (POPs) in all regions last year. This project started during the 2012/2013 and was rolled-out in phases. The Government and Telecom Namibia jointly invested into the project.

The overall goal of the project is to provide Government with a reliable, secure and scalable network infrastructure to support the Government investment into the undersea cable known as the West Africa Cable System (WACS) which brought the much needed Internet bandwidth/capacity into the

country, as well as to support the Government initiatives around eGovernment and Decentralization without escalating costs.

The bandwidth brought by WACS has to be distributed to all Government Offices, Ministries and Agencies (OMAs) including the Regional Councils (RCs).

ICT is an enabler for the optimisation of work processes in each Office, Ministry and Agency (O/M/A), as well as Regional Councils and other organs of state to provide a stable support environment for public servants to work faster and more efficiently.

In the run-up to today's event a number of deliverables were achieved, including the following:

- Government embarked on a project aimed at redesigning its own National ICT infrastructure to make optimal use of the investments made into The West Africa Cable System (WACS) capacity.
- A Team, comprising of five members from the Office of the Prime Minister, Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, Ministry of Urban and Rural Development, Polytechnic of Namibia (now NUST) and Telecom, was assigned to come up with a draft design of Government's National ICT infrastructure.
- The Project is called the GRN ICT Infrastructure Redesign and Implementation project and its focus was on the establishment of 14 Regional Government Service Hubs to facilitate the effective

connection of any O/M/A anywhere in the country on fibre infrastructure.

- The Project also involved assigning an appropriate bandwidth to each O/M/A, based on the needs, calculated according to the number and extent of services delivered to the stakeholders.

By launching the new core backbone infrastructure for Government today, we are setting a standard for ICT infrastructure to standardise service delivery mechanisms so that O/M/As can improve the focus on their core mandates.

Director of proceedings,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The newly established POPS or Internet Centres are located at the Regional Offices Countrywide. For the Khomas region, the Internet Centres are in this building and that is why we gathered here today to witness the official launch of these centres.

To ensure that all OMAs and RCs benefit from this investment, the Technical team, mentioned above, worked on the redesign of GRN network and the implementation thereof to ensure equal and fair distribution of the WACS capacity to all.

Looking ahead, the impact of ICT, as a general-purpose technology, extends well beyond productivity gains; ICT acts as a vector of social development

and transformation by improving access to basic services, enhancing connectivity, and creating employment opportunities. Namibia, in particular, must leverage more fully on ICT for development for the following four reasons:

- First, the ICT revolution holds the potential of transforming economies and societies and of addressing some of the most pressing global challenges of our time.
- Second, this ICT revolution is well under way in some parts of our country. In these places, it is even accelerating as a result of the democratisation of technologies, and the accelerating pace of innovation.
- Third, the ICT revolution has not so far reached large parts of our country. Many of those who stand to gain the most from it are not yet connected. In order to better leverage ICTs for development, a higher level of preparedness and better infrastructure and access are needed. In this context, government leadership and vision are critical.

As the ICT revolution unfolds, it will indeed bring benefits, but it will also bring risks and challenges. Some of these are seen in the increasing incidents related to breaches of cybersecurity or cyberwarfare, and in questions related to privacy and the neutrality of the Internet. All of these, we need to develop capacity to deal with them and efforts are ongoing to achieve that in Government through enactment of regulatory framework

Against this background, we congratulate all stakeholders in Government on reaching this milestone and want to encourage them to keep on building and growing so that all Namibians can benefit and prosper. This is one small step towards the ICT revolution in Namibia. ICT is no longer a luxury but an essential utility.

I thank you.
