



STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY DR. SAM NUJOMA, FOUNDING
PRESIDENT AND FATHER OF THE NAMIBIAN NATION, ON THE
OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE FIRST EVER
NAMIBIA ENGINEERING WEEK,

UNDER THE THEME “***INNOVATION AND EXCELLENCE:
REINVENTING OUR FUTURE***”.

6TH AUGUST 2018

WINDHOEK SHOWGROUND

KHOMAS REGION

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Dr. van Kent, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Higher Education (in absentia) Represented by Dr. Lisho Mundia, Director for Research and Innovation;
Dr. Petrina Johannes, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Namibia (UNAM) José Eduardo dos Santos Ongwediva Campus;
Distinguished Dean of the Faculty of Engineering at Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST);
Mr. Dennis Maxwell, Director of Denchi Consulting Engineers;
Distinguished Captains of Industry;
Distinguished Members of the Namibian Society of Engineers;
Distinguished Invited Guests;
Members of the Media;
Ladies and Gentlemen;

I am greatly honored to be present here today to open the first ever Namibia Engineering Week, which has been organized by the Namibian Society of Engineers, under the theme “**Innovation and Excellence: Reinventing Our Future**”.

These are young Namibians who seek to promote the engineering profession in Namibia and create a platform for the formulation of innovative ideas and exchange of knowledge in the fields of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, construction, mining, energy and other allied disciplines.

An event of this kind is highly commendable and long overdue in Namibia. It is for this reason that when the Namibian Society of Engineers asked me to be the Patron of the Namibia Engineering Week, I did not hesitate but wholeheartedly accepted.

Indeed, engineering is among the prominent pillars of development in today’s world as a trade that seeks to economically harness the Earth’s natural resources to consistently improve and advance mankind.

Engineers design and build systems and infrastructure such as roads, dams, shopping complexes, machines, automobiles, airplanes, ships, among others; as well as to find solutions to challenges such as economic hardship, drought, diseases and poverty.

It is also worth mentioning here that engineers are the backbone of many outer-space and under-sea exploratory projects that seek to understand the universe and the cosmic activities that impact our world.

Against this background, many countries invested heavily in their people’s innovative and creative capabilities to enable them to invent technologies that would change the world forever. Unfortunately, our continent is in present times only a beneficiary of minor industrial activity and not a partner in the decisions such as those that revolves around product design and development.

It was with this in mind that the Namibian government launched Vision 2030, a program aimed at propelling our country to be an industrialized nation on par with the rest of the developed world. However, it would be impossible to achieve the aims and objectives of Vision 2030 without our own engineers, scientists, quantity surveyors, medical doctors, geologists and many other technical professionals.

For this reason, the Namibian government, together with our international partners, took concerted efforts to invest in the education and training of these professionals as well as the strengthening of our own tertiary institutions to amass the capacity to teach these disciplines locally.

In addition, President Dr. Hage Geingob added the aspect of Training and Innovation to the Ministry of Higher Education, thus attaching great importance to innovation Science and Technology.

When we first started, there were those who doubted about our resolve and vision for the future of our country but today many of these professionals are seated here as a testimony to our government's efforts!

Directors of Proceedings;
Ladies and Gentlemen;

As people who are trained to be craftsmen and craftswomen with unique skills sets, our engineering graduates are well positioned to be self-starting innovators and inventors who can apply their knowledge to find solutions to complex challenges facing our country, and in the process create employment for themselves and others.

I am confident that with the necessary resources and support, our engineers can transform this nation into a world-class hub for technical innovations and strong economic growth.

I therefore call on all industry players, including the Namibian government, to attend to the plight of our engineers.

In addition, I call upon the Namibian Society of Engineers, together with all stakeholders of the engineering fraternity, including the Engineering Council of Namibia as well as academic and research institutions, to work towards turning this event into a huge annual national event.

This will enable our present and future engineers to come together every year in order to network, exhibit their expertise and exchange knowledge among themselves and with those in the industries.

I also call upon the regulatory structures of our government to do everything possible to remove all barriers that hinder the progression of our engineers, so that they can practice and apply their knowledge for the benefit of the people of Namibia.

In conclusion, in my capacity as the Patron of the Engineering Week, I avail myself of this opportunity to inform you that I will be co-hosting an Engineering Fundraising Gala Dinner with the Namibian Society of Engineers this coming Saturday, on the 11th of August 2018, in Ongwediva.

Allow me therefore to hereby invite the Captains of industry and all stakeholders all over Namibia, to join me at this Gala Dinner to make it possible for our engineers to succeed in re-inventing the future of our country. This will equally help to turn Namibia into a hub for engineering excellence and unleash Namibia's potential on the global arena.

As I always say; a people united, trying to achieve a common good for all members of the society, will always emerge victorious!

With these few words, it is now my greatest honor to declare the First Namibia Engineering Week, officially open.

I thank you.