

Republic of Namibia



**New Year Greetings
By His Excellency
President Sam Nujoma
To the Heads of Mission
Accredited to the Republic of Namibia**

The Right Honourable Prime Minister
Honourable Deputy Prime Minister
Honourable Speaker of the National Assembly
Honourable Chairman of the National Council
Your Honour the Chief Justice
Honourable Ministers
Honourable Members of Parliament
Honourable Governor of Khomas Region
Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps
Your Worship, the Mayor of the City of Windhoek
Distinguished Captains of Industry
Esteemed Members of the Media
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to State House. On behalf of the people and the Government of the Republic of Namibia, I would like to extend our sincere best wishes for a happy and productive Year 2005, to Your Excellencies, your families and through you, to Their Majesties, Their Highnesses and Their Excellencies, Heads of State and Government of the respective countries and institutions which you represent.

Traditionally this occasion has served as a forum to strengthen the friendly and cordial relations that exist between our countries and peoples. It also provides us with an opportunity to interact in an informal manner and to explore avenues for co-operation in various fields of human endeavour.

The year 2004 was a challenging as well as a busy year indeed. Here in Namibia, we are looking back at the passing year with satisfaction in light of the successful completion of the Presidential, National Assembly, Regional Councils and Local Authorities Elections which were held during the course of last year. These elections were conducted in a spirit of peace and tolerance in line with our democratic values. These elections have shown that democracy has grown deep roots in Namibia and have also strengthened the confidence of our people as well as the international community in our institutions of governance.

On 21 March this year, our country will celebrate its 15th Anniversary of our Freedom and Independence. It will also be on this day that the President-Elect, Comrade Hifikepunye Pohamba will be sworn in as the next President of the Republic of Namibia.

Your Excellencies,

The situation in other parts of the African continent, especially in the DRC, Sudan and the Cote d'Ivoire remains volatile. We should therefore support the AU's efforts which are aimed at bringing peace and security to the affected countries. I personally support the ongoing consultations within the AU member states on the planned peacekeeping force for the east of the DRC to support the peace making and stabilisation efforts in that country. The aim is to ensure that elections do take place in June this year, as planned.

Your Excellencies,

On 26 December last year, several countries in parts of Africa and Asia were affected by the destructive force of the Tsunami Disaster which caused wide spread loss of life and destruction to towns and cities. We therefore extend our sympathy and solidarity to the people of India, Thailand, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Somalia, Kenya and Tanzania. In the aftermath of this disaster, the international community should now work together to develop and establish early warning systems that will enable humanity to be better forewarned and prepared in order to prevent such large scale destruction and minimize the loss of life.

As we commence the year 2005, various parts of the world still experience the impact of natural calamities such as drought and erratic rainfall. These natural occurrences affect human as well as food security in the world. We should therefore work together and strengthen our national, regional and international efforts aimed at enhancing food security and self-sufficiency. My Government fully supports the resolutions taken at the SADC Special Summit on Food Security in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania last year.

Your Excellencies,

The income gap between the rich and poor, between the industrialised countries in the North and the developing countries in the South is still widening. In order to address this situation effectively, our Governments should expedite the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and Targets without further delay. Of particular importance, we must promote mutually beneficial commercial trade between the North and South within the framework of North-South and South-South Co-operation.

My Government continues to support efforts to accelerate socioeconomic integration of the African continent. In this connection, this year we will witness the completion of many projects that our country has initiated, including the completion of the extension of the railway from Tsumeb to Oshikango. The project will link Namibia's railway system to that of Angola. This project will greatly enhance our transportation capacity within the SADC Region and thereby contribute significantly to the socio-economic integration of the region and the African continent at large.

In line with our Second National Development Plan and Vision 2030, we shall continue to promote commercial, trade and tourism, with the view to enhance economic growth, employment creation and the improvement of the standards of living of all Namibians. In

order to reach our goals, our country will pursue inter-Africa commercial trade and investments in order to contribute to the competitiveness of our continent in global economy.

Your Excellencies,

We should all hope that 2005 will be a better year for all humanity. All states, big and small, have a responsibility towards improving international relations, in favour of global peace and security, stability and sustainable development. We in Namibia believe that all conflicts and threats to international peace and security must be addressed through the established multilateral channels, and specifically through the United Nations Security Council.

However, in order to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations to carry out its mandate in accordance with the UN Charter, all member countries should continue to support the structural reform that has been proposed within the UN System, including the Security Council. At the continental level, we have now reached a stage where the African Union is consolidating its structures and strengthening its institutional capacities. One clear testimony to this is the AU Peace and Security Council which was launched last year. This body will play an instrumental role in maintaining peace and security on the continent.

Your Excellencies,

As we look forward to a successful and fruitful year, I would like to request you to fill up your glasses for a toast:

I now have the honour to propose a toast to the good health of Their Majesties, Their Highnesses and Their Excellencies Heads of State and Government of your respective countries, and to the lasting peace and friendship between our countries and peoples.

I thank you.