



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

**MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION
TECHNOLOGY**

BUDGET SPEECH

VOTE 29

FOR THE 2014/2015 FINANCIAL YEAR

BY

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MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION
TECHNOLOGY**

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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Honourable Speaker,

Honourable Members of the National Assembly,

It is my distinct honor and privilege to present to this august House, Vote 29 of the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MICT) for the 2014/15 financial year.

The Government of the Republic of Namibia has declared the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector as one of the critical pillars of our economy. The ICT sector continues to make significant contributions to economic development and competitiveness through innovation, research and development. Hence MICT endeavors to promote local software development to facilitate online service delivery.

For the 2014/15 financial year, MICT has been allocated an amount of **Five Hundred and Sixty-Six Million, Eight Hundred and Sixty Four Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$566 864 000)**.

In summary, allow me to briefly highlight how the allocation will be utilized for the implementation of the development goals of the ICT sector as embodied in NDP4 and Vision 2030 through the following programmes:

PROGRAMME 1: ICT DEVELOPMENT

An amount of **Eight Million, Nine Hundred and Fifty Six Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$8 956 000)** is allocated towards developing adequate state-of-the-art ICT infrastructure that is aimed at creating a conducive environment for the accelerated growth and usage of ICT services.

This includes effective monitoring of implementation of the Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) Migration Plan and Consumer Awareness Campaign in order for Namibia to meet the international deadline for DTT migration by 17 June 2015. The funds will also be utilized to finalize the legal framework for electronic transactions, Cybercrime and Data Protection Bills as well as to develop E-waste and Broadband Policies.

The Ministry will further facilitate the establishment of the Namibian Domain Name Association; conduct ICT stakeholders' workshops; establish and maintain an authoritative system of measuring and publishing ICT statistics; establish the Universal Access Service Fund and update the National ICT infrastructure map.

PROGRAMME 2: PRINT MEDIA AFFAIRS

Under this programme, an amount of **Twenty-Four Million, Eight Hundred and Fifty-Three Thousand Namibia Dollars (NS\$24 853 000)** is allocated for the production and dissemination of information to the public. This includes the publishing of Namibia Review, Government Information Bulletin and MICT Update.

The coordination of media liaison activities such as the dissemination of Cabinet Decisions, issuing of Press Releases, translation of publications into other Namibian languages, as well as advertisement of national events will also be covered under this programme. The Ministry further plans to publish the Namibian Constitution in Braille in order to cater for the visually impaired citizens.

The budget will also cater for the roll-out of activities of the Nationhood and National Pride (NNP) Campaign programme.

These activities will include the popularization of NNP campaign through media adverts, printing of memorabilia, formation of regional NNP structures and other outreach activities.

For **New Era Publications Corporation**, an amount of **Twelve Million Namibia Dollars (N\$12 000 000)** is allocated to implement its business plan towards becoming self-sustainable. The funds will also be utilized for the gathering and production of news in Namibian languages.

Furthermore, an amount of **Twelve Million Namibia Dollars (N\$12 000 000)** is allocated to the Namibia-Zimbabwe joint venture company, **NAMZIM**. These funds will be utilized for the gathering and production of news articles and opinion pieces from an African Perspective, as well as promoting SADC as an attractive investment destination.

PROGRAMME 3: AUDIOVISUALS AND COPYRIGHT SERVICES

An amount of **Sixty-Two Million, Two Hundred and Ninety-Nine Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$62 299 000)** is allocated for **Audio Visual Production, Copyright Services and Regional Offices**. The Ministry plans to produce Thirty-Four (34) video documentaries on government policies, programmes and activities, as well as to conduct film and video screenings across the country with the aim of educating the Namibian youth on social issues facing them.

A Film and Video Classification Committee will be constituted to benchmark and draft a film and video classification policy. In addition, film and video classification and rating system will be established in order to set standard for the local film industry.

With regard to Copyright Services, the Ministry will continue to advocate for copyright and intellectual property protection through information sharing and public participation platforms. The aim is to sensitize the public and inculcate a culture of zero-tolerance against piracy.

An amount of **Eight Million, Five Hundred Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$ 8 500 000)** is allocated to **Namibia Film Commission (NFC)**. The NFC will commission two (2) feature films, four (4) documentaries, two (2) short films and one (1) Animation film during the 2014/15 financial year. The Commission will also host the first ever Children's Film Festival under the Namibia Eco Kids Film project to promote environmental awareness.

In terms of training, the Commission will provide mentorship programme through incubation project to SME film businesses, in order to develop the industry to contribute to job creation and poverty reduction. The NFC will continue to create good incentives to attract major foreign film production to Namibia.

An amount of **Three Hundred and Eleven Million, Nine Hundred and Twenty-Three Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$311 923 000)** is allocated to **Namibia Broadcasting Corporation (NBC)**. The national broadcaster will continue with the Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) roll-out and it is anticipated that by June 2014, sixty-five percent (65%) of the Namibian population will be covered.

The funds will also be utilized to continue with the expansion of digital television channels, upgrading of the studios and the development of local content. As part of the ongoing DTT migration roll-out, NBC television is now available through the digital set-top boxes on three channels, namely NBC1, NBC2 and NBC3.

For **Namibia Press Agency (NAMPA)**, an amount of **Twenty Million Namibia Dollars (N\$20 000 000)** is allocated for the operational activities, covering the gathering and production of news stories for print media and radio stations. It will also cover the production of audio visual news and documentaries for online and television viewers. Furthermore, NAMPA will continue with the provision of mobile news and public relations services to complement its current product output.

PROGRAMME 4: COORDINATION AND SUPPORT

Under this programme, an amount of **One Hundred and Six Million, Three Hundred and Thirty-Three Namibia Dollars (N\$ 106 333 000)** is allocated for the implementation of the Ministry's operational activities. These include policy supervision, human resource management, financial management, internal auditing, logistics as well as Information Technology support services.

Honourable Speaker,

Honourable members,

The following are State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) and State-Owned Companies (SOCs) that do not receive funding from government. However, they have a national obligation towards the implementation of national projects:

TELECOM NAMIBIA

During 2014/15 financial year, Telecom Namibia will implement a number of projects as part of its contribution to NDP4. These include the expansion of national fibre optic backbone network from 9625 km to 9925 km of fibre optic cables by 2015.

The national backbone capacity will also be upgraded by a high capacity Dense Wavelength Division Multiplex optical highway system, which was completed during the previous financial year. This system can accommodate multiple of 10 Gb/s wavelengths from a single 10 Gb/s system. The broadband access technologies will be expanded and the number of fixed broadband clients will increase from 40,594 to 41,600.

On the Government Network, Telecom Namibia is making an investment of about Sixty-Seven Million Namibian Dollars (N\$ 67 million) to establish the network infrastructure required to provide interconnect capacity for the GRN service hubs at the 14 regional capitals, as well as five locations in Windhoek.

The government of the Republic of Namibia will be making an investment of about Twenty-One Million Namibian Dollars (N\$ 21 million) to deploy IT equipment at the 14 Regional Councils. Part of this investment is meant to establish fibre links to interconnect the Regional Councils to the existing Telecom Namibia national Internet Protocol /Multiple Protocol Label Switching network.

This investment will establish the underlying infrastructure, required to provide E-Government services. This network layer is optimized to transport data in a cost efficient, secure manner and at high speed between all ministries and the public at large.

Pivotal to this network are the two central service centres, reachable from any ministerial office across the country. This network allows the general public to access all the future E-Government services.

Furthermore, the Broadband data links were established to connect various Border Posts across the country to a central Control Centre in Windhoek. The data links enable the Border Posts to have real-time capability to communicate important passport data to the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration's Control Centre and regulates entry and exit of Namibian Territory.

Telecom Namibia and XNET are currently busy establishing the Educational and Health Networks to benefit the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health and Social Services with high speed connectivity. This will also provide internet connectivity and national IP transport services to UNAM, Polytechnic and all national libraries.

Communications Regulatory Authority of Namibia (CRAN)

During the 2014/15 financial year, CRAN will implement a number of activities that are of strategic importance in the ICT regulatory environment and licensing regime. These include the formulation of Universal Access and Service (UAS) regulations and the establishment of a UAS unit within CRAN; the undertaking of a GAP analysis in rural areas for providing UAS in the future; the commencement of a legal study on Postal services; the upgrading of CRAN website for better consumer education; the infrastructure sharing regulations; the Quality of Service regulations for licensees, new spectrum pricing, allocation and usage regulations.

Namibia Post Ltd (NAMPOST)

In its efforts to take postal services closer to the people, especially in rural areas, NAMPOST will open five new post offices during 2014. These new offices will be opened in the following Regions: Ohangwena, Omusati, Khomas, and Otjozondjupa. This will bring the total number of post offices to 141 countrywide.

NAMPOST is also in the process of introducing Business Centres across the country, with the aim of providing access to basic computer and internet services to the public using the postal infrastructure. Plans are further afoot to cooperate with NBC in the sale and distribution of NBC branded DTT set-top-boxes in order to ensure the widest reach.

It is worth mentioning that the Government of the Republic of Namibia has identified financial inclusion as an important objective and target. To this end, NAMPOST has put in place mechanisms that will allow it to deploy the postal infrastructure in such a way that it will increase its participation in ensuring access to affordable financial products.

Mobile Telecommunications Company Ltd (MTC)

During the 2014/15 financial year, MTC will upgrade and improve the network connectivity in rural areas, with high speed 3G and 4G services. The Environmental Impact Assessment studies and site acquisitions are already done and the project will commence in the first quarter of 2014.

The Nationwide Transmission Backbone Fiber, which targets 4655 km in MTC nationwide transmission backbone will also be completed by 2016. This state-of-the-art ICT infrastructure has facilitated the introduction of 4G/Long-Term Evolution (LTE) services and improved mobile penetration rates.

The National Fibre Dense Wavelength Division Multiplexing (DWDM) Backbone connecting the WACS landing point from Swakopmund to Windhoek, to Velloorsdrift at the South African border and reaching Oshakati in the North of Namibia is being expanded to cover Rundu and Katima Mulilo towns during 2014. MTC contributes 1.7% to the GDP.

Honourable Speaker,

Honourable Members,

In light of the above, I humbly submit Vote 29 to the amount of Five **Hundred and Sixty-Six Million, Eight Hundred and Sixty Four Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$ 566 864 000)** for your endorsement.

I thank you!