



Republic of Namibia

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT BY HONOURABLE UTONI NUJOMA,
(MP) MINISTER OF LAND REFORM ON FARMS OKONGAVA NO. 72
AND PORTION 1 OF THE FARM NEU SCHWABEN NO. 148
SITUATE IN ERONGO REGION.**

OCTOBER, 2015

PARLIAMENT

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members,

1. I rise this afternoon to explain to this August House and to all citizens of this country the current status of **Remaining Extent of Portion A of Farm Okongava. No 72, measuring 15160. 1857** hectares in extent and **Portion 1 of the Farm Neu Schwaaben No. 148 measuring 5094, 9739 hectares both situate in Erongo Region.** I feel compelled to address this issue due to continuing divergent public discussions pertaining to the two farms that were purchased for resettlement purposes under the Land Reform programme.
2. **Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members,** allow me from the onset to state the record straight and inform the public that **Remaining Extent of Portion A of Farm Okongava. No 72,** is state land, it was purchased by Government in March 2014, at a total cost of [including transfer costs] **N\$15, 036. 303.84, [Fifteen million, thirty six thousand, three hundred and three Namibian Dollars and eighty four cents].** The farm was purchased for resettlement purposes in line with the requirements of the Agricultural (Commercial) Land Reform Act, 1995 (Act No. 6 of 1995). The acquisition of land under this piece of legislation has certain policy and legal expectations to be complied with at acquisition and allocation.
3. Currently, a technical team of Land Use Planners have finalised the planning and demarcation of **Remaining Extent of Portion A of Farm Okongava. No 72,** into agricultural viable units that will facilitate productive farming activities on the farm in line with the Resettlement policy. The technical team has since presented the proposed Land Use Plans for the farm to the Land Reform

Advisory Commission for discussion and further recommendation to the Acquiring Authority in line with the legal framework.

4. The planning, demarcation and eventual land allocation was delayed by the events associated with the “illegal occupation” of the **Remaining Extent of Portion A of Farm Okongava. No 72**, on the 2nd of October 2015. This occupation was immediately reported to the Ministry’s Regional Office in Erongo who immediately sought assistance from the law enforcement offices to assist in restoring order at the farm and allow the said processes to be finalised.
5. Generally, the planning of farms that are adjacent to communal areas is fraught with challenges as communities anticipate immediate occupation of the land notwithstanding the technical and land administration processes that are expected to take place. As a Ministry we are aware of the existence of over-crowding in communal areas and as a result we decided on a policy intervention that is earmarked at addressing decongestion where farms are acquired and subdivided and productive farmers with large herds of livestock from those particular over-crowded communal areas are identified and allocated on a leasehold basis.
6. It is anticipated that this particular engagement with the communities will decongest the communal areas in a systematic manner, ensuring that more land in the commercial areas is opened up and made accessible to farmers in the communal areas and thus improve access to land by all Namibians. Under this planned programme the selected farmers will benefit from post settlement support and improved land management. It is in this respect that the Ministry is proceeding [following the planning and demarcation] to allocate **Remaining Extent of**

Portion A of Farm Okongava. No 72 to identified productive farmers with a lot of livestock within the Otjimbingwe communal area. It is envisaged that this process will decongest Otjimbingwe communal area and open up more grazing to the remaining communal farmers.

7. **Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members, allow me to address the second issue in respect of Portion 1 of the Farm Neu Schwaaben No. 148.** The farm was acquired on the 13th of March 2013 under the Land Reform programme for resettlement purposes. Unlike the **Remaining Extent of Portion A of Farm Okongava No. 72**, the farm was planned and demarcated into three (3) farming units, and two of these were allocated to beneficiaries on the 29 October 2013 in line with the requirements of the current Agricultural [Commercial] Land Reform Act, 1995 (Act No. 6 of 1995) . Farming Unit A of the said farm is the only farming unit that is not yet allocated due to the fact that it is earmarked for mining activities. The application for this Unit was done on behalf of the miners through the Erongo Regional Small Miners Association (ERSMA), a body that is charged with the coordination of Regional mining activities in Erongo Region.
8. It is a well-known fact, that mining activities are regulated by the Ministry of Mines and Energy in accordance with the Minerals (Prospecting and Mining) Act No. 33 of 1992, hence, all matters that relate to and deal with mining are concluded only in close collaboration with that Ministry. The Ministry of Land Reform has already finalised the Term of Reference in respect to this matter in close collaboration with the sector Ministry of Mines and Energy which will thereafter be forwarded to the Office of the Attorney General for legal advice.

9. Nevertheless, the Ministry in cognizance of the need to quickly finalise the allocation of the outstanding farming unit whilst the related sectoral consultations take place, another unforeseen challenge was presented to the Ministry. Out of the 204 miners only 97 have identity documents, a critical legal provision that is required in land allocation under the 99 year leasehold. As a Ministry operating under a given policy and legal framework to guide the acquisition and eventual allocation of land it is imperative that we satisfy ourselves that all members of that Association of Miners are identified Namibian Citizens. The Ministry is working closely with the Region in this matter to ensure that all the miners have produced such documents in order to finalise the allocation of that unit.

10 **Honourable Speaker**, with regards to the perception that the resettlement process is lengthy, I would like to inform the House that the Ministry has taken note and streamlined the current technical provisions within the current policy and legal framework to adequately respond to the need to improve the rate at which offered farms are eventually acquired, planned, demarcated and eventually allocated to farmers.

11 To conclude **Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members**, despite the many challenges, the Government through the Ministry of Land Reform is aware of the acute demand for land for agricultural purposes and in that respect is thus committed to a transparent, fair and equitable land reform process that is guided by our policy and legal framework

I thank you for this opportunity.

