

**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**



**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT  
TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY  
BY  
HONOURABLE NETUMBO NANDI-NDAITWAH, DEPUTY PRIME  
MINISTER AND MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND  
COOPERATION,  
ON THE  
25TH SESSION OF THE AFRICAN UNION ASSEMBLY (AU) OF HEADS  
OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT**

**29 JUNE 2015**

**Honourable Speaker,  
Honourable Members.**

I am taking the floor to present the outcome of the 25<sup>th</sup> Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU), which was held in Sandton, Johannesburg, South Africa, from 14 to 15 June 2015.

The Session was held under the theme: ***“2015: Year of Women Empowerment and Development towards Africa’s Agenda 2063”***, and was presided over by the Chairperson of the AU H.E. Robert Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe.

As it is customary, the Assembly was preceded by the 27th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council of Ministers that was held in Johannesburg from 7 to 12 June 2015, as well as the 30th Ordinary Session of the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC) held in Pretoria from 7 to 8 June 2015.

The Namibian delegation to the Assembly was led by His Excellency Dr. Hage G. Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia. The issues that stood out from the Agenda of the Summit included:

- The First Ten Year Implementation Plan of the Agenda 2063
- The Implementation of the Decision of the Assembly of January 2015 for the AU to fully fund its operations and the concomitant financial implications to the major contributors to the budget
- Approval of the new scale of assessment of contributions to the budget
- The 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the United Nations and the state of multilateralism
- Streamlining of the AU Summit and the working methods of the African Union
- Free movement of people, goods and services on the continent
- Harmonisation of qualifications of higher education in Africa

The Assembly was held against the backdrop of increased young Africans perishing in the Mediterranean Seas while trying to migrate to Europe, as well as attacks on African migrants. The Heads of State and Government deliberated on the strategic issues of migration and xenophobia and their interrelationship. Following the discussion, the Assembly decided that the African Common Position on Migration and Development adopted at the Banjul Summit in 2006, needed to be effectively implemented to address these developmental and social challenges. The root causes as well as the measures to remedy the challenges that emanate from migration are well articulated in the said Common Position. The causes of

migration are poverty, unemployment and the illusion that they will have a better live abroad.

In highlighting the theme of the year, awards were given to AU Member States that have made strides in the empowerment of women. Namibia was among those honoured, as well as being singled out as one of six (6) best achievers on the empowerment of women. The Assembly adopted the Johannesburg Declaration on *2015: Year of Women's Empowerment and Development towards Agenda 2063*.

For some time now, AU Heads of State and Government have expressed concern that for too long a time, the budget of the AU had been funded largely through donations and this has been of concern to the AU Heads of State and Government. Hence, at the January 2015 Summit in Addis Ababa, the AU adopted the Agenda 2063, together with the decision that the AU member states would fund 100% of its operations and the First Ten Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063.

Subsequently, assessed contributions were revised and resulted in an increased contribution for all AU Member States over the next five years. In this regard, Namibia's contribution would increase from US\$ 995, 236.13 to US\$5 million by 2020, pending finalization of the new assessments to be made by October this year.

At the Johannesburg Summit, the Assembly adopted the First Ten Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063 while emphasizing the need for alignment with existing continental frameworks. It also makes reference to development in several areas such as:

- inclusivity particularly of women and youth
- challenges of small island states
- the need for strengthening ownership and domestication and value addition by member states and regional institutions. In this regard, let me point out that it as was decided that henceforth, 25% of raw materials originating from the African continent should be processed for value addition and job creation. As we all know, Namibia is working to effect this decision.

Let me also point out that in January 2012 the AU Assembly decided to establish a **Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA)** in order to boost intra-African trade. I am delighted to report that the CFTA negotiations was launched on 15 June 2015 in Johannesburg. This is a very important element which will not only lead towards the achievement of Africa's Agenda 2063, but also to the establishment of an African Trade Conference, similar to the World Trade Organisation.

**Honourable Speaker,  
Honourable Members.**

The President of Sierra Leone, in his capacity as Coordinator of the Committee of Ten (10) on Security Council Reform presented the 16<sup>th</sup> Report of the C10 to the Assembly. During the deliberations that ensued, the Summit reaffirmed the African Common Position as set out in the Ezulwini Consensus and Sirte Declaration, and that Africa's demand is legitimate, as it is geared towards addressing the historical injustice towards Africa. This discussion also took place within the context of the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. This year, the Assembly underscored the need for continued advocating of the African Common Position that Namibia fully supports. Namibia as a member of C10, has offered to host the next Summit of the C-10 at a date to be determined with the Chair.

**Honourable Speaker,  
Honourable Members,**

During the last two Summits, the Assembly focused on the Ebola Crisis which greatly affected our continent. The last Assembly considered the **Commission on the Ebola Crisis** progress report that highlighted the improvement in the situation since January, and that the AU was scaling down the number of volunteers by 92% by mid-June 2015. Liberia was declared Ebola-free by the World Health Organization (WHO) on 9 May 2015. Member States, including Namibia that heeded the call of the affected countries were highly commended.

In this connection, the Assembly adopted a decision which, among others, reaffirmed commitment to strengthen health systems and increase domestic funding in line with the Abuja Declaration which demands a 15% target. The major recommendation that emanated from the discussion was to review the AU humanitarian policy framework vis-à-vis health emergencies such as Ebola. Member states were encouraged to participate in the Global Summit on Ebola which is scheduled to take place in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, from 20-21 July 2015 under the theme "Africa helping Africa in the Ebola recovery and reconstruction".

**Honourable Speaker  
Honourable Members,**

You are all aware that Namibia is a member of the Peace and Security Council. Prior to the Assembly, the AU Peace and Security Council Summit was convened and discussed the situations in Burundi and South Sudan. The Summit was

informed that elections in Burundi would be held before the expiry of the mandate of the government on 26 July 2015. The Summit also stressed the need for the warring parties in South Sudan to abide by the agreements signed and to implement them fully.

In addition, the Assembly exchanged views on the state of terrorism on the continent, especially the activities of Boko Haram in West Africa and Al Shabaab in East Africa. Other issues discussed included the situation in Western Sahara, the peace process in Mali, the situations in Madagascar, and Somalia, terrorist activities in Nigeria and Kenya, and the increasing trafficking of narcotic drugs in Africa. President Geingob's visit to Mali was also highlighted and appreciated especially by ECOWAS Member States, as well as Namibia's consistent position on Western Sahara.

Namibia will continue to be an active member of the Peace and Security Council until our mandate expires in April 2016.

**Honourable Speaker,  
Honourable Members.**

On the recommendation of the Executive Council, the Assembly endorsed the proposal to name the garden in front of the AU Conference Centre after the late Professor Wangari Mathai. She was a well-known and highly regarded Kenyan environmentalist and the garden expressed the appreciation by Africa of her contribution to the Continent and the world at large.

The Assembly was also an opportunity for Heads of State and Government to network, an advantage that H.E. President Hage G. Geingob utilized.

Finally, the 26<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union will be held as usual in January 2016, at the Headquarters of the African Union in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 30 and 31 January 2016.

Thank you for your kind attention.

