

**RESPONSES BY HON. NETUMBO NANDI – NDAITWAH TO  
QUESTION 188 BY HON. MUKWIILONGO ON THE ISSUE OF  
NAMIBIAN FARMERS GRAZING IN ANGOLA**

**Hon. Speaker,**

**Hon. Members of this August House,**

I rise to respond to the question posed on 04 October 2023 by the Hon. Mukwiilongo, NEFF, regarding the issue of Namibian Cattle grazing their cattle in Angola.

**1. Knowing fully well that this situation has presented itself for the past 18 years, why was nothing done to assist our farmers to the point that today they are to be kicked out as illegal migrants?**

At the outset, I wish to inform that the Government of the Republic of Namibia has and continues to be seized with the matter of Namibians grazing in Angola. Since gaining our Independence in 1990 the Government of the Republic of Namibia has been engaging the Republic of Angola on various issues, as you may be aware we share a common history, and borders.

Amongst others is the issue of our people living along the common border, case in point our two countries in 1996 have signed an agreement on “the Movement of People and Goods along the Common Border”, supplemented by the Addendum, that allows for the free movement of people and goods within a 60km radius inside the territory of either party which was signed in 2005. Since then there have been numerous mechanisms that guide the two governments on their cooperation with each other, such as the, Joint Commission of Cooperation, (JCC), and the Joint Commission on Defence and Security which have now been elevated to the level of Bi-National Commission, (BNC). These mechanisms are being utilised to monitor the implementation of agreements between the two countries, including the free movement of people and goods.

**2. Where do we border with Angola as Namibia since the area where our people are farming is Oukwanyama? Or have we robbed Angola its area and their people?**

The borders between Namibia and Angola are well known by the Nationals of both countries as borders posts of the two countries have infrastructure namely, office. It is a common knowledge that in most cases in Africa along the common borders you find tribes

on either sides of the border. Therefore, it is not a unique case for the Oukwanyama tribe to be on either side of the Namibia-Angola Border, as our borders are not demarcated based on Tribal settlements. You will find the same situation if you go to Kunene, Omusati, Kavango West and Kavango East as all these regions are bordering Angola.

### **3. How are these farmers currently being assisted?**

**Honorable Member,**

I appreciate your inquiry regarding the support extended to Namibian farmers in the northern part of the country

The Namibian government is actively engaged in initiatives to develop the agricultural sector in the country including in the northern region, with a particular focus on supporting farmers. In this regard, there are two key aspects that highlight our commitment to the welfare of Namibian farmers, in this case those in the northern communal areas:

**Market Access for Beef:**

The government is diligently working to secure market access for beef produced by farmers in the northern part of the country. This involves collaborating with international partners to explore export opportunities and enhance the visibility of Namibian beef in the global market. Currently the market is open for Africa and serious work is to be done to open the Asian Market. The goal is to create sustainable income streams for farmers and contribute to the economic development of the country.

### **Capacity Building with Developmental Partners:**

Recognizing the importance of capacity building for the empowerment of farmers, the Namibian government has sought assistance from esteemed developmental partners. Through collaborative efforts, these partnerships aim to provide valuable training and resources to farmers in the northern region. The focus is on enhancing agricultural practices, introducing modern technologies, and improving overall productivity.

The engagement with developmental partners reflects our commitment to leveraging international expertise and resources for the benefit of Namibian farmers. The support from partners underscores the global community's shared responsibility in

promoting sustainable agricultural practices and fostering economic growth.

These efforts are part of a broader strategy to create a conducive environment for agricultural development in the northern region, addressing challenges and seizing opportunities for the benefit of local farmers and communities.

**4. Has the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation been in touch with Angola on the matter and if so, what has been agreed?**

In 2019, I undertook a Familiarisation Visit to the Namibia/Angola border area, in Ohangwena Region, where I engaged the regional leadership and addressed over 400 Namibian farmers who are grazing their cattle in Angola, about the importance of peaceful co-existence with the sister Republic of Angola. It has to be clear that the Government of Angola is cognasint that Namibia is highly impacted by Climate Change, hence they have allowed Namibians to graze in Angola, but our citizens have to respect the Angolan laws. However, some of our citizens have not complied hence, the

Angolan Government has warned our citizens farming in Angola to respect their laws.

Subsequently, since 2020, Namibian Ministers of International Relations and Cooperation, Home Affairs Immigration, Safety and Security as well as that of Defence and Veteran Affairs, raised the issue of our farmers grazing their cattle in Angola at their respective bilateral platforms. In 2021 a joint technical committee travelled to Angola to Monitor the situation and to ensure the compliance with the Laws of the Two Countries.

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of October 2023, I undertook a Goodwill Mission to Angola, where I engaged my counterpart, Ambassador Tete Antonio, Minister of External Relations to reaffirm the importance of peaceful co-existence and good neighbourliness, particularly with respect to Namibian farmers grazing their cattle in Angola. At the end of their engagement, we issued a Joint Communiqué, where the two countries agreed as follows;

1. That the laws, regulations, territorial integrity, and sovereignty of both countries be respected;

2. That anyone who has illegally put up a fence in Angola, that such as a fence must be removed, as it is done in Namibia;
3. That the two Governments consider a joint campaign to vaccinate and create a database by registering Namibian cattle in Angola, in line with the MoU on the Control, Prevention and Eradication of Transboundary Animal Diseases, signed on 23 May 2013;
4. That Angola considers regularising the stay of Namibian farmers in Angola, either conventionally or through traditional means in line with the existing Bilateral Agreement on the Free Movement of Goods and People along the Common Border, which continues to be in force;
5. That the two Governments fast-track the signing of the Bilateral Agreement on Cooperation in Trade in Bovine, Meat and Meat Products, to allow both countries beef industry to grow together. Once signed, the Agreement will allow Angola to import cattle from Namibia. Should this agreement be signed, it will allow Namibia to export to Angola 10,000 tons of beef and beef products from the northern Namibian abattoirs annually. The Agreement will also allow Namibia to assist Angola to modernize her beef industry;

6. That the Joint Technical Committee be activated to regularly monitor the situation, as per standing directive of 2021 by the respective Home Affairs/Interior/Defence/Foreign Ministers;
7. That the Governor's Forum be re-activated and operationalised as soon as possible, to deal with cross-border issues along the common border as and when they occur;
8. Lastly, as Foreign Ministers we agreed to undertake a Joint Visit to the Ohangwena Region of Namibia and Cunene Province of Angola to engage Namibian farmers to appreciate the situation and to impress upon them the importance of peaceful co-existence and good neighbourliness, and to encourage them to respect the sovereignty and laws of the Republic of Angola.

Undertaking Joint Visit to the borders is not new, last year due to the incident that occurred between Namibia and Botswana along our common border that affected our people. As Ministers of Foreign Affairs of our respective countries we undertook a Joint Visit which we believe has created some level of peaceful co-existence between our people living along our common border.

**Hon. Members of this August House,**



As indicated earlier, MIRCO has been seized with the matter and continues to consistently be in touch with the sister Republic of Angola. Therefore, in line with MIRCO's mandate to ensure and safeguard the well-being of our people, you can be rest-assured that this issue will continue to receive our full undivided attention.