

REMAKRS BY TOM ALWEENDO, DIRECTOR GENERAL NATIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
AT THE LAUNCH OF THE 2011 POPULATION AND HOUSING BASIC REPORT
27 MARCH 2013, WINDHOEK

His Excellency the President,
The Right Honorable Prime Minister, Dr Hage Geingob,
Honorable Ministers,
Members of Parliament
Representatives of the Diplomatic Corps and International Organizations
Chairperson, Namibia Statistics Agency
Statistician General, NSA
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The launch this morning of the 2011 Population and Housing Census report marks yet another milestone in the history of statistical development in Namibia. This is the third post-independence census. The United Nations recommends that member countries should conduct a census every 10 years. The period of ten years is seen as sufficient to allow for the capture of changes in structure and movement of population.

A population and housing census is the total process of collecting, compiling, evaluating, analysing and disseminating data on demographic, economic and social conditions of the citizens. Censuses are also important in determining the conditions under which people live at a specific period of time. Censuses are primary sources of basic benchmark statistics on the population and housing characteristics of the nation. They provide information on population size, age and sex composition, geographic distribution and housing characteristics and facilities that have bearing on the social aspects of the housing.

The fundamental purpose of the census is to provide the facts that are essential to government for policy-making, planning and administration. The characteristics of the population drive the decision-making that facilitates the development of socio-economic policies that will enhance the welfare of the population. Additionally, the population census provides important data for the analysis and appraisal of the changing patterns of rural/urban movement and concentration, the development of urban areas, geographical distribution of the population according to such variables such as occupation and education, as well as the socio-economic characteristics of the population and the labor force. Decisions such as where to build schools and health facilities, the provision of amenities such as electricity and water, are made easier having accurate census data.

The findings of the census are also critical in the decision-making processes of the private sector. Population size and characteristics influence the location of businesses and services that

satisfy the needs of the target population. Population censuses also constitute the principal source of records for use as a sampling frame for the household surveys during the years between censuses.

Today we can confirm that we have the most recent and comprehensive data pertaining to the population and housing. For the next ten years the 2011 census shall remain the primary source of data for our policy formulation and program development. The 2011 census results will also assist us greatly in the process of monitoring and evaluating our progress towards the achievements of the goals and targets as per our national development plans and the MDG.

Conducting a population and housing census is a complex and expensive undertaking that requires careful planning and execution. I would therefore like to thank all those who have been involved in the census project from the beginning to today when we are launching the main report. I specifically want to thank Dr John Steytler and his colleagues at the Namibia Statistics Agency for a job well done.

I would also like to thank Your Excellency for your support towards the modernization of our national statistical system. The creation of the Namibia Statistics Agency as an autonomous body is a clear testimony of your support. The NSA has the mandate to be the central statistical authority and repository of all official statistics produced in Namibia. The agency is tasked to ensure the production of timely, relevant and quality statistics for evidenced-based planning and decision making. However, it is important to note that the statistics agency can only deliver on its mandate if it is given the required financial resources.

It is our hope that we all start to recognize the importance of statistics in the process of our development and provide the necessary support to those who are tasked with the responsibility of providing statistics.

I thank you all.