

**Statement by the Hon. Director-general of the National Planning Commission during the signing of the Financial Co-operation Agreement: Namibia National Parks Programme**

Mr. Thomas Wollenzien, Director of South and Central Africa, KfW Development Bank, Director for GIZ Namibia, Mr. Romeo Bertolini, Counsellor for Development Cooperation, Mr. Michael Jainzik, Director for KfW, members of the German delegation and representatives from the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Namibia Senior Government Officials, Representatives of the media, ladies and gentlemen.

The Director, Ladies and Gentlemen, development cooperation between Namibia and Germany has three main objectives: reduction of poverty, improving sustainable use of natural resources and to foster economic development. These are key priorities for our Government.

Today marks again another milestone in the bilateral cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Namibia and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany where a governmental grant agreement for the Namibia National Parks Programme will be signed. The agreement to the tune of EUR 14.0 million (N\$180 million) will benefit and support the Ministry of Environment and Tourism for the establishment and integrated management of national parks in the northern part of Namibia. This funding is part of the commitments that were done during the governmental negotiations that took place from 23-24 May 2011 in Germany.

The grant will fund phase four of the programme which will include:

- The establishment and development of the Bwabwata Wildlife Institute and Conservation Education Center. The center will be developed and equipped to support Park staff and game wardens, Rangers, Scouts, neighbouring and resident communities as well as schools, to enhance their knowledge in biodiversity conservation and environmental education.

- To protect the rich biodiversity of the Tsau //Khaeb, Bwabwata, Mudumu and Nkasa Rupara National Parks and neighbouring conservancies and ensure that natural resources are used wisely.
- Develop and maintain corridors for animal migration and develop the area as a competitive tourism destination through effective management and tourism plans and infrastructure development so that Namibians receive the maximum social and economic benefits from the Parks.
- Finally, Infrastructure planning and development will be done in the Sperrgebiet National Park, now renamed Tsau //Khaeb (Sperrgebiet) National Park in the South of Namibia.

I sincerely thank the German Government for partnering with us to speed up development in these sectors.