



Director General of the National Planning Commission

&

MCA Namibia Board Chairman

Mr. Tom Alweendo

**WELCOMING REMARKS BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL
AT THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF
THE COMMUNAL LAND SUPPORT PROJECT OF
THE MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE ACCOUNT NAMIBIA
CLS OFFICE, OSHAKATI, NAMIBIA
19 JULY 2010**

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**His Excellency, the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany;
Hon. Governors of the Oshana, Oshikoto, Ohangwena, Omusati, Kavango
and Kunene Regions;
The Millennium Challenge Corporation Country Director;
Respected Traditional Leaders;
Development Partners;
The Chief Executive Officer of MCA-Namibia;
Regional Heads of Various Ministries/Offices/Agencies present here
today;
Members of the Media;
Distinguished Guests;
Ladies and Gentlemen.**

It gives me a great pleasure to welcome you all to the occasion marking the official launch of Communal Land Support Activity of the Agriculture Project in the MCA Namibia Compact.

The MCA Namibia Compact is funded by the US Government through the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) to the tune of USD304.5 million, at today's exchange rate some NAD2.3 billion.

The Compact aims to reduce poverty through economic growth by investing in a number of activities in the Education, Tourism and Agriculture sectors. We started with the implementation of the Compact in September 2009 when the Compact formally entered into force.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to provide you some insight into the **Agriculture Project** of the Compact under which the Communal Land Support Sub-Activity resorts.

In Agriculture, we are implementing three main activities:

- The Livestock Activity
- The Indigenous Natural Products Activity
- The Land Access and Management Activity

1) The **Livestock Activity** seeks to bring the marketing opportunities for farmers who live North of the Veterinary Cordon Fence closer to the opportunities farmers enjoy South of this fence. The focus is on improving veterinary services aimed at obtaining animal disease-free status for the Northern Communal Areas (NCA) in order to gain access

to international markets. The overall objective is to increase the farmers' cash income derived from livestock and smallstock farming in the NCA.

To date we have invited tenders for the final design and costing of the State Veterinary Offices to be constructed in Outapi, Eenhana, Omuthiya, Okakarara and Epukiro. The planning for the tagging of 1 million cattle in the North is near complete with the procurement of the tags and the development of the Namibia Animal Identification and Traceability System (NAMLITS) in the pipeline.

- 2) Increasing direct participation of the primary producers in the processes of value addition to raw, natural products such as Marula, Kalahari Melon Seed, Hoodia, Devil's Claw and Ximenia is the key objective of the **Indigenous Natural Products Activity**. The value chain approach that the MCA Namibia Programme has adopted will ensure that the activities are responsive to the fast-changing market realities for natural products. At present, most of the revenue from selling products made of these valuable commodities is generated outside Namibia. The INP Activity will facilitate an increased participation by the primary producers in the final processing, packaging and marketing of these products.

The Facilitator for the Support to Primary Producer and Processor Organisations was mobilized last week and we look forward to a

successful kick-off of this Activity.

Honourable Minister, Ladies & Gentlemen,

- 3) Through the **Land Access and Management Activity** the Communal Land Boards, traditional authorities and other key stakeholders will be empowered to better manage the available land resources. Farmers will be assisted to better manage their rangelands and their herds towards improved productivity.

As is the case for most of the MCA Namibia Compact activities, the support to communal land boards and the land registration process is designed to fast-track and upscale existing Government initiatives. The Compact is not a new set of activities but was carefully crafted to support the Government development agenda, NDP3 and Vision 2010.

So far, we have mobilized the Facilitator for the Community Based Rangeland and Livestock Management Sub-Activity – A Consortium made up of GOPA a German company, our NNFU and GRM from South Africa was contracted for this work – and we are gearing up for an intensive programme of training and capacity building as well as supportive infrastructure in some 20 Rangeland Intervention Areas, or RIAs, in the NCA.

The Facilitator for the Communal Land Support Sub-Activity is also mobilized – this time GTZ International Services won the tender – and it is this Sub-Activity we will be launching officially today.

Honourable Minister Alpheus !Naruseb of the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement, in his keynote address, will explain how the MCA Namibia Communal Land Support Sub-Activity fits into his Ministry's agenda to make operational the Commercial and Communal Land Acts.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Compact is implemented by the MCA Namibia Management Unit, a unit that falls under the National Planning Commission. The CEO of the unit reports to the MCA Namibia Board, which is chaired by me.

This large project could not possibly be implemented by one single unit and MCA Namibia has formally entered into Implementing Partner Agreements (IPAs) with 6 Government entities. For the Agriculture Project, such IPAs were signed with the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry and the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement. Certain components of the Compact activities are in fact implemented by line ministries, such as the physical tagging of cattle and also the actual communal land registration.

Increasing implementation capacities, MCA Namibia is further engaging

with a series of service providers, local and international, through open competitive procurement procedures to provide services, goods and works. MCC provides technical support and oversight to the MCA Namibia Programme.

Respected key stakeholders and partners,

MCA Namibia is on the move. As the Chairman of the MCA Namibia Board I am witnessing actual progress made. By mid July 2010, the value of contracts signed by MCA-N with service and goods providers amounted to USD40.6 million or 13.4% of the Compact. Today we are 300 days into the 1,826 days or 5 years we were given to implement the Compact. With the works contracts for the first package of schools to be renovated near ready for signing and other, funding-intensive, infrastructure projects to follow suit, we are well on track to deliver on the Compact.

I would personally wish to thank all of you present for your interest and engagement in the Namibia Compact and look forward to a successful implementation of the Communal Land Support Sub-Activity. Partnership is key in development and today's attendance is a reflection of this partnership.

I thank you.