

STATEMENT BY HON DR ITAH KANDJII-MURANGI, MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INNOVATION AT THE PUBLIC TVET CENTRES ENGAGEMENT, THURSDAY, 24TH JANUARY 2019 AT THE NTA

Director of Ceremonies,
Mr Jerry Beukes, NTA CEO
Dr. Alfred Van Kent, the Permanent Secretary of MHETI,
Dr. Raimo Naanda, Deputy Permanent Secretary and Acting NTA Board Chairperson,
Mr. Frans Gertze, NQA, CEO,
Mr. Muvatera, Director, DVET, MHETI
Members of the NTA Executive
VTC and COSDEC Centre Managers
Ladies and gentlemen

GOOD MORNING

1. I wish to thank the NTA CEO, Mr Jerry Beukes, the NTA Executive, Management, and Centre Managers from all our TVET Institutions, and everyone present here, for your availability. A special word of gratitude goes to Mr Beukes for agreeing to provide the venue for our meeting this morning. Inaugural meeting on TVET Leadership, Development and Provision Get-Together.
2. I am addressing you this morning as leaders of an important sub-sector of the Namibian Education system, the Technical and Vocational Education System (TVET). I am aware of the leadership tiers or layers within the TVET sub-sector, but occasionally, it is critical that I meet, inform and consult you, collectively on matters of relevance to TVET overall development and quality, in our country.
3. The objectives of this meeting are as follows, to i) reiterate Government's position on TVET Transformation; ii) inform you about new developments; iii) share with you what we expect of you and your institutions; and finally, iv.) look at TVET programs' relevance and their sustainability.
4. On behalf of Government and the Namibian public, it is important that I first, commend you for your collective and individual efforts towards the improvement of the TVET System in our country. The different initiatives directed at, for instance, correcting the public's negative perceptions about TVET; your efforts involved in taking TVET to the regions; developing new, relevant and responsive programs to the needs of our industries and economy; enrolment expansion; and many others, which you all strive to achieve under severe financial constraints are noted with great appreciation. However, more still has to be done, and soon, to effect real TVET transformation on curricula harmonization, standards settings and levels' articulation.
5. Now, as strategically placed leaders and drivers of the TVET System, understanding the country's key strategic policy documents regarding the TVET sub-sector is of paramount importance. Vision 2030, NDP 5 and Harambee Prosperity Plan, speak to, and underscore many guiding principles. I have summarized a few here :
 - i) Provision of quality education and training at all levels, is a prerequisite for improved livelihoods, shared prosperity and sustainable development,

- ii) Through “relevant” knowledge creation, skills development, leveraging technology and research, tertiary institutions’ graduates should contribute meaningfully towards making Namibia a knowledge - based society; a competitive and industrialized nation, and a stable growing economy,
 - iii) The ever changing world of technologies and the impending 4th revolution, necessitate the adoption and use of methods and approaches that identify and develop students’ creative power (their ability to innovate) and entrench lifelong learning for re-tooling, as and when needed in life.
6. As far as new developments, change is inevitable for the TVET sub-sector. Now is the time to apply the recommendations of the Scoping Mission:
- i) The overlaps in mandates and duplication of functions of the NCHE, NTA and NQA will be addressed this year.
 - ii) The development of the Faculty of TVET (Instructor) Education at NUST and Certificate and Diploma Programs, for pre- and in-service (upskilling) of unqualified and under-qualified Instructors, is at an advanced stage. The aim is to have the first group of Instructors, start with the upskilling course, this year.
 - iii) I will present to the second Deliberative Cabinet Meeting a submission to revive and formalize again the use of senior TVET trainees by the Ministries of Education, Arts and Culture, Works and Transport and Urban Rural Development for furniture repairs and minor repairs on government houses and in house construction where possible. And this exposure should be worked out to be part of their industry education component.
 - iv) TVET Institutions must work hard at reducing trainees’ dropout rates. TVET trainees are fully paid for by Government and they should be accounted for. Everything has to be done within the institution to support trainees who face challenges to stay on and graduate. There should be no unaccounted for drop outs.
 - v) There is an urgent need to reorganize and streamline the functions of the TVET implementing structures. New recruitments that are justified are for trade instructors. Unnecessary and costly recruitments should be stopped.
7. Expectations: Trades offered at TVET institutions should be aligned to the needs of the industries, the economy and the interest of trainees; every TVET Centre should demonstrate and display at all time Professionalism and commitment to quality. Forging Partnerships and sourcing external funds are encouraged and welcome. However, Namibia is transforming its TVET to develop a National TVET System, one that should benefit from and benchmark on all our partner countries that have succeeded in developing robust and responsive systems. We are not, with our TVET transformation transplanting any country’s TVET system here. The sustainability of a National TVET System will rely on a well-established instructor education Faculty and that is supported by all TVET stakeholders. Once, the Faculty is operational, the majority of instructors should be funded and study locally at NUST. Instructor education is a professional qualification and the prerequisite is a trade qualification.
8. Programs / Trades’ relevance: existing trades need to be audited to determine their current and future relevance; develop research skills and encourage data collection on community, industry and regions’ needs to direct new programs or trades’ development. Strengthen and establish active production hubs at TVET Institutions or centres. The 30% : 70% or 40% -

60% theory to practice should be formalized. STEM subjects are should be part of TVET education.

9. Finally, sustainability of TVET: The economic down turn has affected all sectors of the economy. This constraint will not go away any soon. Therefore, it cannot be business as usual. There has to be a shift and an immediate one, towards consolidation and prioritization. At the central level, and at centres level, avoid committing to costly and unnecessary programs and activities that are not cost-effective. Trips abroad should be scaled down to a bare minimum per year, and only when it is absolutely necessary. No large groups' travel should be allowed. Training and skills development is your core function and therefore the bulk of whatever is invested in TVET should go towards that.

10. Thank you and all the best for the New Year!