



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

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PRESS RELEASE

Ambassador of Namibia presents credentials to the King of the Netherlands

Relationship of more than 350 years affirmed

The Ambassador of Namibia to the Benelux countries and the EU, H.E. Dr. Kaire Mbuende, presented last week Wednesday, 14 September 2016, during a ceremony at the Royal Palace Noordeinde in The Hague his Letters of Credence to King Willem-Alexander, the King of the Netherlands. This enables him to begin official engagements with Dutch government officials in his capacity as representative of the Namibian government. The Ambassador was accompanied Mrs. Latungika Loide Shikwambi, First Secretary at the Namibian Embassy in Brussels.

Ambassador Mbuende used the occasion of presenting his credentials to convey the best wishes of the President of the Republic of Namibia, Dr. Hage Geingob, to His Royal Highness the King of the Netherlands. The presentation of his credentials is also an affirmation of the longstanding relations between the Republic of Namibia and the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The relationship between the two countries has evolved over many years and went through different stages ranging from the exploration of the coast of Namibia by the Dutch East India Company in 1670 to the support for the struggle for the independence of Namibia by the Dutch people through among others the Southern Africa Committee and the broader anti-apartheid solidarity movement. The two countries established diplomatic relations on 23 April 1990 after the attainment of the independence of Namibia on 21 March 1990.

The relationship between Namibia and the Netherlands can be characterized in four ways. Firstly, there are bilateral relations between the two governments. Secondly, there is people to people diplomacy, for example in the form of the twinning partnerships between towns in Namibia and the Netherlands. At the moment there are four partnerships: Rundu-Nieuwegein, Gobabis-Smallingerland, Otjiwarongo-Heusden and Outjo-Maarsden. The third way is through multilateral institutions, such as through the ACP and the EU. The fourth and most crucial type of cooperation is through trade and investment. A good example of this is the decision of Dutch

airline company KLM to fly from end of October three times a week from Amsterdam to Windhoek.

After the presentation to King Willem-Alexander, Ambassador Mbuende presented his credentials to the Organizations for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in a ceremony at the OPCW headquarters in The Hague with the Director-General of the OPCW, H.E. Mr. Ahmet Üzümcü. The OPCW promotes and verifies the adherence to the Chemical Weapons Convention, which prohibits the use of chemical weapons and requires their destruction. Namibia, which is a stable, peaceful and democratic country, signed and ratified this convention.

In the evening, the Ambassador hosted a networking event with Dutch businesspeople who are interested in investing in Namibia, representatives from Dutch towns twinning with Namibian towns, academics that are doing research on Namibia, leaders from Dutch NGOs that are active in Namibia and former activists from the Dutch anti-apartheid movement.

Previously, Ambassador Mbuende served as Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations (2006-2010). During his tenure at the UN, Ambassador Mbuende chaired important working groups on the reform of the UN. From 1994 till 1999, he served as Executive Secretary of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) during a crucial period in the history of the organization that involved the incorporation of South Africa and the development of new instruments for cooperation and integration. He was also a member of Namibia`s Constituent Assembly and subsequently National Assembly for two terms (1990-1993 and 2000-2005). Additionally, he served as Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development (1990-1993) and Foreign Affairs (2002-2004), respectively.

Annex: Statement of H.E. Dr. Kaire Mbuende at networking event, organized in the evening of 14 September 2016 in The Hague

For further information, interviews, pictures, video or quotes from the guests on the networking event, please contact:

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STATEMENT BY

H.E. DR. KAIRE MBUENDE
AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

ON THE OCCASION OF THE

PRESENTATION OF LETTER OF CREDENCE TO

THE NETHERLANDS

14 September 2016
The Hague

The presentation of my credentials today represents an affirmation of the longstanding relations between the Republic of Namibia and the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The relationship between the two countries has evolved over many years and went through different stages ranging from the exploration of the coast of Namibia by the Dutch East India Company in 1670 to the support for the struggle for the independence of Namibia by the Dutch people through among others the Southern Africa Committee and the broader anti-apartheid solidarity movement. The two countries established diplomatic relations on 23 April 1990 after the attainment of the independence of Namibia on 21 March 1990. These relations have grown from strength to strength ever since.

Today the relationship between Namibia and the Netherlands can be characterized in four ways, namely bilateral relations between the two governments. The two governments had a program of development cooperation in accordance with which the Dutch Government granted financial and technical assistance to Namibia. On 26 November 1990 Namibia and the Netherlands signed an Agreement on Technical Cooperation. There has been political dialogue on issues of mutual concern between the two countries over the years. The two countries have also been supporting each other in multilateral fora.

The second form of cooperation is what is called people to people diplomacy. In this regard four Dutch local authorities are working with Namibian local authorities through twinning arrangements or partnerships. It gives me great pleasure to recognize the presence of the representatives of Nieuwegein that has twinning arrangements with Rundu, Smallingerland with Gobabis, Heusden with Otjiwarongo and Maarssen with Outjo. I am equally delighted that the Governor of the Omaheke Region, Hon. Festus Ueitele is in our midst. His region has had a longstanding partnership with Smallingerland.

The third form of cooperation is through multilateral institutions. The ACP-EU partnership stands out in this regard. The Government of the Netherlands contributes to the EU budget through which Namibia and other ACP countries benefit. Namibia benefits through the national indicative program, the regional indicative program (mainly through SADC) and the intra-ACP program which are all funded through the European Development Fund to which the Netherlands contribute about 4.7%. Equally important is the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership.

The fourth and most crucial form of cooperation is through trade and investments. On 26 November 2002 the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and that of the Republic of Namibia signed an Agreement on Encouragement and Reciprocal Protection of Investments between the two countries. We are pleased with the level of the business relationship between the Netherlands and Namibia. KLM will soon start to fly from Amsterdam to Windhoek, thanks to the demands of travelers between the two countries.

There is greater scope for trade and investments between the two countries than what has been exploited thus far. A Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen bilateral business and trade relations between the two business communities was signed in 2014. Namibia's private sector is keen to put this agreement into practice. In this regard, I invite Dutch business people to come to Namibia and to take advantage of the friendly business environment that Namibia offers. Namibia is a stable, peaceful and democratic country. It has a stable macro-economic framework. Return on investment is quite high and investments are secured. On 8-9 November 2016 there will be an Investment Conference in Windhoek to which you are all invited. Information about the Conference can be obtained, among others, from the Embassy of Namibia in Brussels.

Your Excellencies,
Ladies & Gentlemen

The Government of the Republic of Namibia has embarked on an ambitious program to fight against poverty through what is known as The Harambee Prosperity Plan. The Plan aims to expedite the implementation of certain government programs with the view to provide immediate relief to the vulnerable groups within our society. The Plan is based on five pillars: effective governance and service delivery; economic advancement; social progression, infrastructure development and international relations and cooperation.

The peace and stability that we are enjoying today can only be sustained if we grow the economy and create more jobs. We live in an inter-dependent world and investments in Namibia will not only be good for the people of Namibia but will also benefit the economy of the Netherlands. Both countries stand to benefit from investment and other forms of co-operation.

Namibia is a member of the SACU and SADC and is working with other African countries to facilitate greater integration on the continent through inter alia the tri-partite agreement between SADC, COMESA and the East African Community, as well as, the African continent wide free trade area. These larger markets are essential for the development of Namibia and other African countries and European investors will derive greater benefits there-from by taking advantage of economies of scale.

Thank you for your attention.