

As written

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**Five Years After ICPD - CAIRO  
Action by the Government of Namibia**

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*Mr President*

1. The Republic of Namibia shall celebrate nine years of its independence anniversary in March 1999. The International Conference on Population and Development came barely four years after our independence. It was a great coincidence that the ICPD Programme of Action has similarities to some of the Namibian development objectives and priorities.
2. Article 95 of the Namibian Constitution imposes upon the State the obligation and responsibility of promoting the welfare of the Namibian people. As a mandate, the State is required to enact legislation devoted to equal opportunities for women, elimination of inequalities, protection of children, vulnerable groups, promotion of freedom of association and the promotion of participation of all citizens in the shaping of policies and programmes as well as the implementation thereof.
3. In order to ensure human centered development, the socio-economic reconstruction as embodied in the First National Development Plan (NDP1) has the main development objectives directed to the following:
  - (i) Reviving and sustaining economic growth
  - (ii) Reduction of poverty
  - (iii) Creation of employment opportunities
  - (iv) Reduction of inequality in income distribution

As a strategy, the Government of Namibia has chosen the following priority sectors:

- (i) Education and Training
- (ii) Health
- (iii) Agriculture and;
- (iv) Housing

Both the national development objectives and programmes/projects implemented under these priority sectors in no small way contribute to the implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action by the Namibian Government.

4. *Mr President,*  
As part of ICPD 1994 Programme Implementation, the Government of the Republic of Namibia has undertaken the following activities:
  - (i) Enactment of Married Persons Equality Act- aimed at empowering the Namibian women in relation to their menfolk in marriage and in relation to property
  - (ii) Enactment of an Act which outlaws the sale of uniodised salt with the view to improve the health of children and expecting mothers
  - (iii) Enactment of Affirmative Action legislation - aimed at opening employment opportunity for disadvantaged people including women and the disabled.
  - (iv) Enactment of Social Security legislation

In addition to these laws, the Government of Namibia has put in place required policy instruments among which are:

- (i) Population Policy for Sustainable Development
- (ii) National Gender Policy
- (iii) Decentralization Policy
- (iv) Regional Planning and Development Policy
- (v) Employment Policy
- (vi) Land Policy
- (vii) Agricultural Policy
- (viii) HIV/AIDS Policy, just to mention few.

5. *Mr President,*

The Government of Namibia recognises and is aware of the fact that putting in place laws and policies is not an end in itself, there has to be allocation of sufficient resources. The Government of Namibia has therefore been committing over sixty per cent(60%) of its total annual budget to social sectors( mainly 28% to education and 24% to health)

6. *Mr President,*

I must acknowledge the important role played by our development partners in Namibia, their role was not only confined to complementing Government resources, but they have also supported the priority sectors as set by the Government. These development partners include the UNFPA, bilateral and other multilateral donors. I must, however, lament here, Mr President, that Namibia is becoming a victim of its own success. Because of its GDP per capita, Namibia is being classified as a middle income country, thus not accessible to some of the concessional facilities available to less developed countries.

Mr President, considering the importance of population and development, the social deficit inherited and gross inequality in income distribution, my Country deserves to be treated as an As If Least Developed country when it comes to resources earmarked to social sectors or to rural development. Current practices deny Namibia the chance to make a required dent on social development. Even the UNFPA classifies Namibia into category B instead of A.

7. *Mr President,*

During the remaining years of the Cairo Programme of Action, the Government of Namibia with the support and assistance of development partners shall continue to implement the following programmes:

- (i) Capacity building for managing and implementing population policy activities.
- (ii) Poverty reduction strategy implementation
- (iii) Reproductive health including STD and HIV/AIDS- by making facilities and information available.
- (iv) Empowerment: Gender and Development promotion
- (v) Population research promotion
- (vi) Population information, education and communication promotion

8. *Mr President,*  
Namibia will continue to support regional efforts in population and development through the Southern African Ministers Conference on Population and Development(SAMCPD). For both national and regional efforts on population and development, we are counting on the support of our Development Partners. The partners should provide both development assistance and investments in productive sectors to support employment creation and economic growth using available resources in Namibia.

**I thank you**