



Republic of Namibia

**Ministry of Information and Communication  
Technology**

**PRESS STATEMENT ON THE RESOLUTIONS OF THE  
SECOND NATIONAL LAND CONFERENCE**

**October 6, 2018 Windhoek**

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## **PRESS STATEMENT ON THE 2<sup>ND</sup> LAND CONFERENCE, 06 October 2018**

1. The Government hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Land Conference, held from 01 to 05 October at Safari Hotel Conference Centre, Windhoek, under the theme: “*Towards a Comprehensive and Sustainable Land Reform in Namibia*”. The Conference was held under the chairpersonship of the Rt Hon Dr Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila, Prime Minister of the Republic of Namibia, under the High Level Committee which comprised of Government, Civil Society, Traditional Authorities and NGOs. The High Level committee was supported by Inter-Ministerial Committee, chaired by the Secretary to Cabinet.
2. The Conference was officially opened by His Excellency Dr Hage Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia. In his opening address, the President reiterated the need for dialogue, and extended an invitation to all those that chose to boycott the event to attend. It is worth noting that this genuine and fatherly call was well embraced, as was evidenced by the attendance of the conference by some civil society organizations and traditional authorities that earlier indicated their intention to boycott. Government appreciates such positive response.
3. The Conference was attended by over 800 delegates, drawn from Government, communities, civil society, traditional authorities, representatives of the marginalized communities, local authorities, regional councils, political parties, workers union, church leaders. The Founding President and Former President Their Excellencies Dr Sam Nujoma and Dr Hifikepunje Pohamba respectively, also attended the 5-days long Conference. The conference also benefited from presentations from invited guests from a host of countries and organizations, notably Zimbabwe, South Africa, Botswana, Nigeria and Cuba, as well as the African Development Bank and the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nations. These presentations highlighted their land reform experiences in their respective countries /organizations.
4. The first two days of the conference were structured to hear statements from various personalities on the question of land, as well as some international and historical perspectives on land reform. It is worth nothing that, in the spirit of inclusivity, most civil society and traditional authorities were accorded the opportunity to share their views on the land question, including the much talked about ancestral land issue. This opportunity was granted in line with the President’s call for the conference to hear the concerns of all Namibians on the question of land and to also receive their proposals. I must state that both plenary and group discussions were conducted in an atmosphere of freedom of expression and mutual respect.
5. The following two days, Wednesday and Thursday, were dedicated to group discussions. The groups were established to thoroughly interrogate specific thematic areas, derived from issues emanating from

regional consultations, and present proposals to the plenary, and for such proposals once validated, to constitute conference resolutions. This is contrary to earlier views paraded by some detractors that government had pre-determined resolutions before the conference. On the last day of the conference, recommendations from all groups were presented to the plenary, and were discussed openly. Consequently, these recommendations were adopted by consensus as resolutions of the 2nd Land Conference.

6. Let me now share with you the summary these Resolutions. Before I do that let me state that the Conference underscored the following :-

- The imperative to maintain peace and stability in the country;
- The imperative to recognize unity in diversity;
- The imperative to uphold Chapter Three of the Namibian Constitution as an enshrined provision; and
- The imperative to ensure the dignity and wellbeing in all communities;

7. On the Thematic Areas: Commercial Land reform Programmes and Related Matters:

- The Conference resolved to abolish the Willing Seller-Willing Buyer, as a primary method of land acquisition, and agreed to implement the expropriation of land within the confines of the Namibian Constitution, which include with just compensation.
- The Conference also resolved to develop national land valuation models to address high prices.
- The conference resolved to expropriate foreign owned agricultural land, and to also subject the under-utilised commercial farms owned by Namibians to expropriation.
- The Conference agreed to a principle of One Namibian-One Farm.
- The conference resolved to develop strategies to ensure food security. In this context, Government is requested to prioritize the development of a desalination plant, for the use of such water to irrigate the land in the desert along the Namib Desert, and develop it for national food production, given erratic rainfall and risk of droughts.
- On the resettlement programme, the Conference resolved to review all policies related to this programme , and also to develop pre-and post resettlement support programmes for the farmers.
- The conference reiterated the need of the dispossessed and landless Namibians, and resolved that the allocation of land should be on 70:30 basis in favour of dispossessed communities and the veterans of the liberation struggles and the latter's dependants.
- The needs and priortisation of designated groups was also resolved to be taken into account in the resettlement programmes and land reform, and this include the youth, women, marginalized

communities, persons with disabilities and veterans of the liberation struggle.

6. On the Thematic Area: Communal Land reform Programme, some of the major resolutions include:-

- The implementation of local sourcing by government to cater for the market needs of the farmers north of the veterinary cordon fence, and government to continue with efforts to address the issues on the removal of the veterinary cordon fence as a long term issue.
- To ensure land rights, the Conference urged all Traditional Authorities to implement the Communal Land Reform Act, 2002, and to register the rights of all communal households and farmers.
- The conference also resolved that the Government must support measures to ensure that communities without communal land are provided with such land; and also that issues of unrecognized traditional leaders are attended.
- The Conference resolved that Government assist the traditional authorities in enforcing the provisions of the Communal Land Reform Act 2002 to address illegal fencing, which is rife in communal areas.
- The conference also resolved that government develop regulations to compel Traditional Authorities to consult communities before allocating land.
- The conference also noted the diminishing spaces in communal areas, for both human and livestock. In this regard, the Conference agreed that Government, where feasible, enlarge the communal areas, by for example purchasing commercial farms adjacent to communal areas, and integrating such purchased farms to become part of the communal area. In this context, the peculiarity of each communal area would be considered.
- The Conference also encouraged large communal farmers to be relocated to commercial areas, in order to free grazing for communal areas.

7. With regards to Thematic Area: Urban Land reform and related matters, the Conference developed a number of resolutions, which mandate Government to develop appropriate policies and reform programmes, and also to disallow the ownership of urban land to foreigners.

8. With regards to the Thematic Area: Land Tax & Valuation System and Related Matters.

- The Conference agreed to fully implement the progressive tax system, and to also introduce a tax for absentee landlords.
- On the valuation of land, the Conference resolved that Government should implement the Property Valuers Act, 2012.

9. The Thematic Area: Ancestral Land Rights and Restitution.

- On this theme, I wish to indicate that the Conference agreed to freely discuss this subject matter. This is contrary to some views that this matter was not to be discussed at the conference.
- The Conference noted that there is need for common understanding on the issue of Ancestral Land Rights and Restitution. It is in this regard that the Conference resolved that Government establish a Commission to investigate the matter, and make appropriate recommendations to government. The terms of reference for the commission will be developed.
- The Conference also resolved that Government identify alternative restorative methods to address the plight of landless communities.
- The Conference also noted the change of names to colonial names, and resolved that Government should initiate the process of renaming the distorted colonial names back to original traditional names, where there are no controversies.

10. As I indicated, those are just a summary of the resolutions. These resolutions were presented, discussed and adopted by the Conference. The detailed resolutions are presented in full.

11. The Conference was officially closed by His Excellency Dr Hage Geingob on Friday 05 October 2018. In his Closing Statement, The President expressed his appreciation to all the participants for “deliberating peacefully, agreeing and disagreeing without being disagreeable in the Namibian spirit of tolerance”. The President also assured of Government commitment to implement the resolutions.

12. I wish to conclude by extending Government's appreciation to all the stakeholders and delegates, without whose inputs, this Conference would not have been a resounding success. The atmosphere, as observed, at the Conference was very respectful, free and open for constructive dialogue. I wish to thank our government staff members and all members of Secretariat. They worked long hours and provided maximum efforts to the organization of this conference. I also thank all our service providers for their excellent services.

13. To borrow the words of H. E. the President when he closed the very successful 2nd Land Conference "It is a privilege for government to lead a nation that subscribes to dialogue".

I thank you.