

CLOSING REMARKS BY HONOURABLE PENDA YA NDAKOLO, MINISTER OF DEFENCE, AT THE VALIDATION MEETING ON THE DRAFT NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY HELD AT SAFARI HOTEL ON SATURDAY, 07 JULY 2018

Honourable Doreen Sioka, Minister of Gender Equality and Child welfare

Rear Admiral (JG) Setson S. Hangula - Chief of Staff Human Resources and Chairperson of the Technical Task Force Committee on National Action Plan

Distinguished Permanent Secretaries

General Officers

UNDP Resident Coordinator

SADC Secretariat Representative

Madame Jebbeh Forster, UN Women Regional Advisor on Women, Peace and Security, Eastern and Southern Region (ESARO)

Madame Anne Githuku Shongwe, UN Women, South Africa Multi Country Office (SAMCO)

Professor Cheryl Hendricks, Technical Advisor to the Namibia National Action Plan

Senior Officers and Officials from various Government Institutions

Civil Society Representatives

Members of Media present here

Distinguished Invited Guests

I am delighted to have the opportunity to officiate at the closing ceremony of this very important Validation Meeting of the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security of the Republic of Namibia.

We are happy to see that the Meeting, which is chaired by the Ministry of Defence, has the representation of other key stakeholders such as the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, Ministry of International Relations Cooperation (MIRCO) and the Namibian Police Force (NAMPOL), under the Theme “Namibia Moving The

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 Forward 2018 – 2022”.

I am also happy that we, as a Country, are moving this international legal framework forward. In fact, our Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Honourable Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, suggested during the just ended SADC Ministerial Committee of the Organ (MCO) held in Luanda, Angola, that United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 should become a standing agenda item of the MCO and her suggestion was unanimously accepted. This is how serious Namibia is with regard to the popularisation and implementation of Resolution 1325.

Now, why and how is Namibia is championing the implementation of Resolution 1325? Namibia is doing this because it was under the chairmanship of Namibia of the United Nations Security Council that Resolution 1325 was adopted in May 200. Resolution 1325 seeks equal participation and opportunities for both women and men in peace processes and development efforts.

As they say, *strength of the military is not just in weapons but the strength of the military is in its PEOPLE, RESPECT and TEAMWORK – pushing for a common goal, to win the battle.*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This National Action Plan (NAP) serves as a strategy that translates the objectives of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 into national and local realities. It articulates some of the key challenges that the Women, Peace and Security agenda faces and the way in which the Government of Namibia seek to address such challenges, mostly through **the 4 key Pillars of Participation, Prevention, Protection, Relief and Recovery**. These four (4) pillars ensure that the State will mainstream gender into conflict prevention, peace- making, peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

The National Action Plan is an instrument, that not only defines the priorities, but also guides the implementation and facilitates the monitoring and reporting on the Women, Peace and Security agenda nationally.

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 clearly states that women play a pivotal role in conflict management, conflict resolution and sustainable peace as well as providing strategies towards peacebuilding that focus on creating ties across opposing factions and increasing the inclusiveness, transparency and sustainable peace processes.

Peacebuilding requires an AWARENESS of how Men and Women TOGETHER can better contribute to sustainable peace and security.

We are convinced that equal participation and opportunities for women and men in peace processes and development efforts will galvanise governments and citizens into action to bring about more gender sensitive and responsive security sectors.

Ladies and Gentlemen

These closing remarks will not be complete without thanking all our stakeholders – Professor Cheryl Hendricks - our expert and Consultant to the National Action Plan, the UN Women for providing funding to make this happen, the MOD Gender Division and the capable NDF members who were involved in this project, Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, MIRCO, NAMPOL and all those who contributed to make this Validation Meeting a success. You all have given your best and have worked with dedication, commitment and resourcefulness to make this Validation Meeting takes place! Thank you very much to all of you.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

From here, our two Ministries of Defence and Gender Equality and Child Welfare will work together on a submission of the National Action Plan to Cabinet for approval and implementation thereafter.

In the meantime, all those of us who are going to implement the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security must start making the necessary budgetary provisions for its immediate implementation after Cabinet approval.

In that spirit, it is now my distinct honour to declare this Validation Meeting officially closed.

I THANK YOU!