

CLOSING SPEECH BY HONOURABLE PENDA YA NDAKOLO, MP, MINISTER OF DEFENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA, AT THE GRADUATION CEREMONY OF THE JUNIOR STAFF COURSE NO 13 OF 2019, HELD FRIDAY, ON 26 JULY 2019, AT NAMIBIA COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE-OKAHANDJA

ACTING CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE FORCE

HONOURABLE GOVERNOR OF OTJOZONDJUPA REGION

SERVICE COMMANDERS

HONOURABLE COUNCILLOR OF OKAHANDJA CONSTITUENCY

YOUR WORSHIP THE MAYOR OF OKAHANDJA TOWN

COMMANDANT NAMIBIA COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE

GENERAL OFFICERS

CEO OF OKAHANDJA TOWN

SENIOR OFFICERS AND JUNIOR OFFICERS

DISTINGUISHED INVITED GUESTS

CHIEF INSTRUCTOR JUNIOR DIVISION

DIRECTING STAFF

GRADUATES

WARRANT OFFICERS

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

It is my honour and privilege to be here today to officially close the 13th Junior Staff Course (JSC), where 20 officers are graduating after having successfully completed their studies. Today, the 26th July 2019, marks the end of 26 weeks of hard work, commitment and determination by the twenty (20) graduates.

This graduation ceremony marks yet another important milestone in the success, progress and achievements of the Namibia Command and Staff College (NCSC). The progress achieved by this College, from its inception to this day, is indeed remarkable and praiseworthy.

The graduates of this College are a clear testimony of the good repute this

institution has set, as they are succeeding in the rank and file of the NDF. Most of them are now being suitably deployed at different positions and levels of both Command and Staff functions. The products of this College are not only visible in the current Directing Staff (DS) body, but also at most of the NDF training institutions.

The Ministry of Defence is committed to enhancing its operational efficiency, by providing opportunities for training and advancement of its workforce. The graduation of these 20 graduates today is an added proof that the Ministry is steadfast in its intent to build a competent and professional Defence Force, despite the current financial constraints.

Training and staff development are some of the top priorities of the Ministry of Defence, especially in peacetime, when we have time to prepare ourselves well to be in a better position to face potential threats that might endanger the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our country.

I am aware that these graduate officers have gone through an extensive study programme that is pertinent to their duties, and covered topics such as military doctrine, decision making, critical thinking, leadership, staff duties and peacekeeping operations, among others. The Junior Staff Course being a competitive course, I understand fully the stress and the strain that all of you graduates as well as your Directing Staff had to undergo.

Nevertheless, you must take solace in the fact that training is an important journey through which your knowledge, skills and abilities as commanders and staff

officers are developed to improve your performance at present and future postings. It is an exercise worth doing because training, education and development are enabling means that can create synergy in ensuring that staff officers carry out their tasks competently. The quality of competence is particularly important if the NDF is to remain on course toward the attainment of Vision 2030 and Harambee Prosperity Plan (HPP), particularly in ensuring that the Force is adequately educated and developed to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Director of Ceremonies

Ladies and Gentlemen

Today, we are witnessing the graduation of the thirteenth Junior Staff Course, which started on 28 January 2019. The course is designed to develop the analytical abilities of the selected officers, enhance their tactical knowledge and understanding of pertinent non-operational military issues. Instructions were therefore structured to examine military and pertinent non-military subjects that included contemporary global and regional security as well as geostrategic issues to enable the officers to understand those factors that might affect national policies.

I am informed that the course started with 24 student officers but only 20 students are graduating today. I am pleased to note that six of the Graduates are females, who, together with their male counterparts, were able to weather the storm. The assured involvement of female members in all NDF activities is in line with the Ministry' Policy on Gender that seeks to further the ideals and virtues of women as equal partners in our society, thereby addressing the question of gender mainstreaming within the Force. I, therefore, once more, encourage the CDF and Service Commanders to continue nominating female officers for future courses.

Graduates, the staff training that you have undergone during the past 26 weeks, has allowed you to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge that will be useful for you to carry out staff functions efficiently and effectively. Thus, the sacrifices that you have made throughout the course were not in vain, but have helped to put you in an advanced level of military knowledge. Someday, you will realise this when you perform well at challenging and demanding positions. At that time, the knowledge that you acquired at this Junior Staff Course will be very useful, as it will guide you through many difficult situations. For that reason, you are expected to demonstrate competence, professionalism and proficiency, as qualities that have been instilled in you during this course, in the execution of your staff duties.

We are confident that now you are qualified enough to deliver quality service and make a difference wherever you will be posted or assigned. We encourage you to boldly apply the acquired knowledge and skills to bring to the table innovative and creative ideas that are necessary to bring about positive changes and improvement in the Namibian Defence Force, always having in mind our ultimate goal of ensuring that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Namibia are protected at all times.

Moving forward, remember that training and learning are lifelong processes. Therefore, it is advisable that you keep developing yourselves, by furthering your education through continuous reading and taking up advanced courses that may come your way.

Let me, therefore, use this opportunity to congratulate all of you for having completed the Junior Staff Course. Congratulations!

Director of Ceremonies

Ladies and Gentlemen

Before I conclude, let me take this opportunity to commend the Commandant Namibia Command and Staff College and the entire NCSC fraternity for steering this course No. 13/2019 to its successful conclusion and for upholding the tradition of excellence and good repute associated with the College. We can see from this graduation that you have delivered quality training to obtain quality outcomes, and that should remain the clarion call for this College.

I am also proud to inform our esteemed audience that the Junior Staff Course Programme run by this College has been Accredited by the National Qualification Authority as a **Diploma in Military Science** Junior Staff Course Level six (6). Therefore, the Ministry of Defence shall continue to support this College and ensure that it measures up to its challenges of training officers of the highest calibre who would be ready to assume higher responsibilities in command and staff appointments.

Once again, let me thank the Acting CDF, Service Commanders, General Officers, Senior and Junior officers, Warrant officers and other ranks, all the distinguished guests here present for having made time to be with us today.

Graduates, you are now challenged to maintain high values of character once you are back to your work stations and continue to use the knowledge gained for personal and institutional development.

It is now my singular honour to declare the thirteenth Junior Staff Course officially closed.

I THANK YOU!