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Attention: The News Editor

MEDIA RELEASE

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Official Launch of the National Programme on Research, Science, Technology and Innovation (NPRSTI)

The National Commission on Research, Science and Technology (NCRST) officially launched the National Programme on Research, Science, Technology and Innovation (NPRSTI) yesterday in Windhoek.

The three-year NPRSTI seeks to operationalise and instrumentalise the role of driving Namibia's transformation for economic development. This NPRSTI presents the first coherent attempt to address the RSTI challenges currently faced by our country. The focus is not so much on where we are as a nation today in terms of RSTI, but where we should be at the end of this programme, and at the end of NDP4. The targets for 2017 set in this programme specifically outlined the desired future for Namibia if Vision 2030 is to be attained. The principle underpinning this NPRSTI while recognizing that R&D is the key to scientific and technological progress, Namibia's approach to RSTI is to use it as a tool to help solve our society's deep and pressing socioeconomic challenges.

The National Commission on Research, Science and Technology (NCRST) as a coordinating agency can, and will particularly play a central role in coordinating the implementation of this programme.

"The NPRSTI, very much like the NCRST itself, should be seen as facilitators of knowledge creation and dissemination with the purpose of transforming the political-economy and knowledge landscape of the country towards becoming globally more competitive and socially more sustainable. It is also worth stating that the NPRSTI and the Strategic Plan (2014/15 - 2016/17) of the NCRST are meant to co-exist peacefully", said Prof Andre du Pisani, Chairperson of the NCRST during the official launch.

The NPRSTI was developed within the broader context of V2030's goal for Namibia to become "a prosperous and industrialised Namibia, developed by her human resources, enjoying peace, harmony and political stability". Furthermore, according to V2030, Namibia

aspires to become a healthy and food-secure nation, with a resource-based industrial sector and commercial agriculture, and is placing great emphasis on skills development.

“I am pleased to announce here today that, the Cabinet of the Republic of Namibia has approved the National Programme on Research, Science, Technology and Innovation (NPRSTI) on the 24 February 2015. This programme was subsequently tabled in Parliament on 10 March 2015, thus ensuring compliance with the provision of the enabling legislation namely the Research, Science and Technology Act. The National Programme on Research, Science, Technology and Innovation (NPRSTI) identifies Namibia’s priority areas for investment in research, science, technology and innovation and presents an implementation programme for the remainder of the fourth National Development Plan (NDP4). The Programme responds to research priority areas which address and contribute to solving the primary social and economic challenges of Namibia. The Ministry emphasises the need for all Namibians to support the National Programme on Research, Science, Technology and Innovation and enthusiastically assist in its implementation”, said Mr Alfred Ilukena, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education.

Ends:

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