



## REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

Keynote Address

by

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Minister of Higher Education, Training and Innovation

The Launch of the Research and Experimental Development (R&D)

Survey Report (2013/14 fiscal year)

Windhoek

09 March 2017

Director of Ceremonies;

Hon. Tom Alweendo, Minister of Economic Planning and Director General of the national Planning Commission;

Dr. John Shoopala, Chairperson of the National Commission on Research, Science and Technology;

Commissioners of National Commission on Research, Science and Technology;

Dr. Eino Mvula, CEO of the National Commission on Research, Science and Technology;

Dr Neo Molotja, Senior Research Specialist, Centre for Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators, South Africa

Representatives from Government Ministries and SOEs,

Representatives from the Private Sector,

Representatives from Non-Governmental Organisations,

Distinguished Guests,

Members of the Media,

Ladies and Gentlemen;

It is with great pride and honour for me to participate at the official launch of the Research and Experimental Development (R&D) survey report (2013/14).

As many of you are aware, there is increasing recognition worldwide that Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) are key to economic growth and sustainable development. Indeed, any successful economy, particularly in today's quest for knowledge-based economies; Science, Technology, and Innovation are the basic prerequisites. As a country, we

take Science, Technology and Innovation seriously because we believe they are strategic for national development, and for the attainment of our national development aspirations as spelled out in Vision 2030, NDPs and the Harambee Prosperity Plan.

The Ministry of Higher Education, Training and Innovation is pleased to note progress made in the establishment and strengthening of our national system of innovation. A programme level intervention has been developed in the form of the National Programme on Research, Science, Technology and Innovation (NPRSTI) for 2014/15 to 2016/17, in terms of Section 18 of Research, Science and Technology Act, 2004 (Act 23 of 2004) with the aim of providing a comprehensive framework for actualizing Namibia's Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) development aspirations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The realisation of objectives set out in Vision 2030, NDPs and the Harambee Prosperity Plan cannot be achieved by government alone - the private sectors and non-governmental organisations also have a pivotal role to play. It is only through our collective efforts that we will be able to upturn the pace of adoption of Science, Technology and Innovation to underpin socio-economic development in our country.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to emphasise that Science, Technology and Innovation can only yield inclusive and sustainable development, if the development agendas are people-centred and that enabling environments are created to harness

Science, Technology and Innovation for national development and poverty alleviation. This implies that we must develop, implement and monitor national and regional Science, Technology and Innovation policies and programmes that promote knowledge production, dissemination and utilization, as well as the development and appropriation of technologies that spur innovation. This would require us not only to focus on large production facilities, but also at grassroots level, involving small and medium enterprises as part of a broader development agenda. Special attention must be given to human capital development and the promotion of a broader public participation in decision making in Science, Technology and Innovation related issues, promoting the participation of vulnerable groups such as women, the youth and the disabled.

For us to assess whether our efforts are yielding desired outcomes, we continue to establish systems that allow for reliable collection of Science, Technology and Innovation indicators that would eventually inform policy and the necessary strategic interventions. The fourth National Development Plan (NDP4) has set the target for increasing research and development (R&D) expenditure to 0.3% of GDP during the NDP4 period (2012-2017). This first annual R&D has revealed important information regarding the size and composition of R&D expenditure and human capital devoted to R&D. Although the NDP4 target is below the 1% of GDP as set out in the SADC Protocol for Science, Technology and Innovation, it is pleasing to note that the 2013/14 R&D survey shows that the gross expenditure on research and development (GERD) is 0.35%, slightly exceeding the NDP 4 target.

I am pleased to note that the National Commission on Research, Science and Technology (NCRST) in collaboration with the Namibia Statistics Agency and the University of Namibia have joined hands to conduct this important Survey to establish core Indicators, which are being release just on time to inform the fifth National Development Plan (NDP5). This effort is in line with the initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) for Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action (CPA), which develops Science Technology and Innovation indicators for African countries launched in 2007. The CPA was adopted in 2005 by the African Ministerial Council on Science and Technology (AMCOST) as the framework for Science, Technology and Innovation to respond to the socio-economic challenges facing the continent. Namibia joined this initiative in 2008.

In March 2005 an agreement on collaboration in Science and Technology was signed between the governments of South Africa and Namibia. This was followed by a Programme of Cooperation (PoC) aimed at implementation of the agreement. The PoC sought to facilitate scientific and technological cooperation between the two countries on equal and mutually beneficial basis. As a ministry we are very pleased with the degree of implementation of this agreement. Therefore, I would like to use this opportunity to thank the Centre for Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators (CeSTII) Human Sciences Research Council in South Africa for providing human capacity assistance that led to the finalization of the report I am launching today. Let me also thank the New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD's)/ African

Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators Initiative (NEPAD/ASTII) imparting skills to our people on STI data collection and Indicators. My sincere gratitude also goes to all stakeholders from the private sector enterprises, government departments, public own enterprises, and universities for their cooperation with the enumerators which lead to the success of this exercise.

Director of ceremonies, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is now my honour and privilege to declare the Research and Experimental Development (R&D) survey report (2013/14 fiscal year) officially launched.

I thank you