



**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

**Key note address**

by

Hon Dr. David Namwandi, MP

Minister of Education

At the Launch of the NCRST Strategic Plan and Website

16 April 2014

Safari Court Hotel

Director of Ceremonies,  
Prof Andre du Pisani, Chairperson of the National Commission on Research,  
Science and Technology,  
NCRST Commissioners  
Dr. Eino Mvula, CEO of the National Commission on Research, Science and  
Technology,  
NCRST Staff Members  
Representatives from Government Ministries and SOEs,  
Representatives from the Private Sector,  
Representatives from Non-Governmental Organisations,  
Fellow Researchers and Innovators,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Members of the Media,  
Ladies and Gentlemen;

It gives me great pleasure to participate at the launch of the NCRST Strategic Plan and website. This event follows only a few days after I officially opened the National Consultative Workshop on the Development of the National Research Science, Technology and Innovation Programme on 24 March. I am pleased to note this young organization is making significant strides towards a fully functional organization that fulfills its mandate.

Recognising the importance of Research, Science, Technology and Innovation as an engine for economic growth and development, Namibia adopted the national policy on Research, Science and Technology as far back as 1999 and the enacted the Research Science and Technology Act, 2004 (Act No. 23 of 2004). Although initially, the implementation of these policies and legislative instruments were

somewhat slow, this is changing, especially with the emphasis placed on investing in Research and Development in Namibia as set out in Vision 2030 and the Fourth National Development Plan (NDP4).

Today we are witnessing the launch of the Strategic Plan of this newly established entity, which is very pleasing indeed. It is important for an organisation to have a strategy in place as it gives an organisation a defined approach towards achieving its objectives. In the broader context, organisational strategy is a comprehensive guiding delineation of how it will go about achieving success in the context of its mandate.

Having read through the NCRST Strategic Plan document for the period 2014/15 to 2018/19 as submitted to me by the NCRST Chairperson, I would like to express my satisfaction that the NCRST has correctly interpreted its mandate as set out in the Science and Technology Act, 2004. This has assisted in clearly defining its role in the Research, Science, Technology and Innovation delivery funnel - with emphasis on establishing an effective framework for Research, Science, Technology and Innovation development, promotion, coordination and the creation of linkages to harness Research, Science, Technology and Innovation potential and its contribution to socio-economic development.

I am also delighted to note that the formulation of this Strategic Plan took into consideration, Vision 2030 and NDP4 as well as the Research, Science and Technology Policy, Namibia's Industrial Policy and other National Policies. As a special agency of the Government, under the Ministry of Education, effort has been made to ensure alignment with the Ministry of Education Strategic Plan 2012-2017.

Now that you have your Strategic Plan in place which has also been submitted to my office, I now expect to receive the annual business plan and budget and also to conclude the performance and governance agreements with all Commissioners in line with the State-Owned Enterprises Governance Act, 2006. I am informed that the drafting of the annual business plan and budget, and the performance and governance agreements are at an advanced stage. I therefore urge the Commission to expedite the process of finalising these documents.

Ladies and Gentlemen, allow me to emphasise what I as the portfolio Minister expect from Board/Council Members or Commissioners of the SOEs under my Ministry and also from Management of such institutions.

**To Board/Council Members or Commissioners:**

As the appointing Authority, I shall demand commitment in performance of your duties. This is a national call and you should serve the nation with vigour and determination. It is expected of you to carry out fiduciary duties and due diligence in the performance of your functions. Commissioner must not make use of their positions as a member to gain directly or indirectly, advantage for himself or herself or for any other person or cause detriment to NCRST. You must ensure that you regularly attend Commission meetings, and contribute meaningfully to discussions. The quality of Commissioners' dialogue are of utmost importance.

**To Management:**

You are entrusted with the day-to-day running of the organisation. First and foremost you must ensure that you serve the public well, without any nepotism. You must put in place effective internal control procedures to provide reasonable

assurance that the NCRST is achieving its objectives, reliable financial reporting, operational efficiency, and compliance with laws and regulations.

In today' information age, a website gives the organisation a virtual presence and enhances its communication with its stakeholders. The development of this site should not be an end in itself. Being at the centre of science and technology and innovation, the NCRST must lead by example. Your website must contain up-to-date information and the site must be lively and interactive.

As you continuously improve your website, take into consideration the possibility of creating platforms for researchers that would enhance interaction with one another and exchange of ideas. You should also look at developing platforms on your website for online based Science and Mathematics learning to assist my Ministry in improving the teaching of science and mathematics in our schools.

Let me also emphasise the point that the NCRST cannot and should not play its role in isolation. There is a need for meaningful collaboration and consultation between the NCRST and other stakeholders of the National System of Innovation. The stakeholder consultation process that you initiated during the development of the National Research, Science, Technology and Innovation Programme is commendable as it underscores the role of various Research, Science, Technology and Innovation stakeholders in national development. The NCRST must therefore facilitate the establishment of a framework that would

create linkages among all actors in the Research, Science, Technology and Innovation delivery funnel.

Let me conclude by, once again reminding you that the NCRST is an important organisation that will go a long way in contributing to Namibia's competitiveness in becoming a nation that is able to contribute to the body of knowledge - a nation of innovators. My Ministry is committed to be part of this process and will work with all stakeholders to ensure the establishment of a fully functional system of innovation which will make meaningfully contribution to socio-economic development of our country.

I thank you.