



Welcoming Remarks

By

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Chief Executive Officer

National Commission on Research, Science and Technology (NCRST)

At the Signing Ceremony of the Memorandum of Understanding between
NCRST and CRAN

NCRST Head Office, Windhoek

12 January 2016

Director of Ceremonies,

Mr Festus Mbandeka, the Chief Executive Officer of CRAN,

The CRAN and NCRST Team;

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen;

It is a great pleasure to welcome you to the signing ceremony of the Memorandum of Understanding between the National Commission on Research, Science and Technology (NCRST) and the Communications Regulatory Authority of Namibia (CRAN).

This agency to agency agreement that we are going to sign today is based on the recognition of the important and complimentary roles that our institutions can play in developing research, science, technology and innovation in Namibia. The NCRST and CRAN started discussing this collaboration last year and we thought that it is important for our two institutions to enter into a strategic partnership to foster Research and Development (R&D) with special emphasis on empowering local talent and skills of enterprises to innovate in order to meet global demands for Namibian ICT products and services.

In this partnership, the roles and responsibilities of each agency are clearly defined. Allow me to say a few words regarding the roles of the NCRST in

this partnership. The NCRST is mandated with the management of the Research, Science and Technology Fund established in terms of section 23 of the Research, Science and Technology Act No. 23 of 2004. The Fund has been duly operationalized and since 2013, we have funded a number of projects in priority areas as set out in the National Programme on Research, Science and Technology and Innovation (NPRSTI), which include research and innovation projects in ICT. More resources are still needed to grow the Fund and the NCRST continues to engage key stakeholders in order to mobilise resources required to address challenges and opportunities in the National Innovation System (NIS) to support the socio-economic growth of Namibia. For the implementation of this MOU the NCRST shall provide resources through the Research, Science and Technology Fund for joint funding of planned collaborative efforts; manage the research and development grant in line with Grant Management rules and guidelines of the Fund; and provide technical and financial reports to CRAN

We are excited about this partnership between CRAN and NCRST as we believe it would further stimulate the growth and development of applied research and application on sectoral information systems and promote green ICT practices with specific focus on e-waste. We also expect through this initiative, to build collaborative capacities between industry, government and institutions of higher learning to address some of the challenges that are generally encountered in the innovation value chain.

A Joint Technical Committee would be constituted in terms of this MOU to ensure its effective implementation. The committee has clear terms of references which includes amongst others the formulation of joint calls for application for the co-funded research and development grants and evaluation of applications received under the joint calls.

I would like to thank you, Mr. Mbandeka and your team for the commitment you have shown which lead to the finalization of the MOU. This demonstrates the importance that you attach to the development of ICT innovation in Namibia. We look forward to the formulation of the detailed implementation plan by the Joint Technical Committee and its successful execution by the two Agencies.

I thank you.