

Eggs

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economy while guarding against the over-exploitation of our mineral, marine and other natural resources.”

The president noted that agriculture was a major driver of economic development in the world. Namibia's GDP's growth generated from agriculture was at least twice effective in reducing poverty compared to other sectors.

Many Namibians depend on subsistence farming, thus making the agricultural sector one of the key sectors in the Namibian economy and an important source of livelihood, which accounts for six per cent of the country's GDP.

Namibia is a dry country, but it offers scope for extensive irrigation in areas where water is relatively abundant and where suitable soil conditions exist. The President called on participants to strategize towards improved agricultural performance, underpinned by agricultural research, investment and management.



President Hifikepunye Pohamba with Agribank Chief Executive Officer, Ambassador Leonard Lipumbu at the Agricultural Investment Conference. Photo by Levi Upula.

But the President was quick to point out that improved agricultural performance required increased investments for the maintenance of existing infrastructure and productive resources.

This includes irrigation systems, reclamation of degraded land, infrastructure development, the development of processing and value addition fa-

cilities, product development and the creation of facilities for product testing and certification to comply with international standards.

This process, however, calls for effective management which ensures that there was adequate knowledge transfer to exploit opportunities in the domestic, regional and international markets.

“As an emerging economy,” said President Pohamba, “agriculture is at the center of socio-economic development of our country. During the past 20 years of our independence, our government has indeed made significant strides in the promotion and development of our agricultural sector.”

Namibia has developed its Green Scheme Policy to pro-

mote increased agricultural production through skills development and investment in the irrigation sub-sector. Government wants to put more than 27 000 hectares of land under irrigation by 2030 as part of its Green Scheme Programme.

This, however, means that the country's investment in agriculture should go beyond the current stop-gap improvements in on-farm productivity to include large-scale development of the agri-business and agro-industry sectors, towards an agriculture-led economic transformation and industrialization in Namibia.

“Namibia takes pride in the world class quality of its agricultural products such as beef, table grapes and dates. This is despite the fact that Namibia is a semi-arid country with erratic rainfall patterns,” said President Pohamba.

“Our agricultural sector has the potential to produce industrial inputs and generate service-related business opportunities such as transport and haulage. With the development of the port of Walvis Bay and our well-maintained road network, especially the Trans-

Caprivi and Trans-Kalahari highways, Namibia serves as the ideal access point for people and goods to other markets in the region.”

Themes guiding the conference discussions are agri-business, agro-technology, agro-inputs, agro-logistics and supply and agro-finance, which are crucial for the country's increased agricultural production.

“A developed agricultural sector with maximized outputs can provide impetus to other sectors of our economy to grow. At the end of this conference, we can map the road ahead in creating synergies between various industrial sectors in the country and agricultural development in order to increase quality, gain competitive advantage and generate additional revenues out of increased sales and competitiveness.

“Our investor-friendly climate, coupled with various incentives for investors provides an opportunity for greater investment in the agriculture value chain. It is, therefore, my hope that this conference will yield positive results towards increased investment in the agro-industry.”



Founding President Dr Sam Nujoma with the widow of the first Angolan President, the late Agostinho Neto, Madam Neto, in Luanda.

for the diplomatic and material support Cuba had rendered to Angola and Namibia.

Upon independence in 1975, Angola was invaded by the then South African colonial regime in an attempt to reverse the country's independence. UNITA banded together with the South African colonial regime to oust the MPLA government in Luanda.

At the request of the newly established MPLA government in Luanda, Cuba sent its internationalist forces to Angola to

assist the MPLA government to defend its independence and territorial integrity.

The aggression was part of the apartheid regime's quests to destroy liberation movements, as well as to install a puppet government that would have worked in its interest and

those of the western imperialist countries.

“Hundreds of Angolans were maimed by bombs and landmines, numerous others were displaced because of the war, but the Angolan people and the MPLA government were not cowed down by this brutality and stood in solidarity with our heroic struggle for independence until final victory was achieved on 21st March 1990,” said Founding President Nujoma.

“The people of Namibia will forever remain thankful and indebted to the revolutionary people of Cuba, Angola and other friendly countries around the world for the solidarity and assistance they have rendered to us during the difficult years of the liberation struggle for our freedom and independence.”

The Founding President said that the world continued to be concerned about the economic and financial blockade imposed

on Cuba by the USA government, adding that such economic sanctions continued to cause economic hardships to the people of Cuba and should therefore be lifted without further delay.

“The merits of the Cuban revolution can be measured by the fact that such a small nation that is only 90 miles off the coast of the Empire has for so long been capable of putting up resistance against the hostile policy and criminal actions carried out against its people by the USA,” said Dr Nujoma.

“This resistance would never have been possible without the dignity and ethics of the Cuban policies, a country harassed with revolting lies and slanders. Alongside ethics, there was built a culture and conscience that made possible the resistance of more than five decades, thanks to the revolutionary Cuban people and their revolutionary leadership.”

On the Cuban Five, Dr Nujoma said that their continued incarceration in US jails was a clear violation of fundamental human rights and freedoms. The Cuban Five have been held in US high security prisons for 12 years now.

“The USA claims to be the most democratic country in the world, yet it is the most violator of human rights in the world,” said Dr Nujoma. “It holds prisoners who have never been tried. It exposes the hypocrisy, intransigence and lies of the USA government and its commitment to the ideals of freedom and justice.

“Their continued detention is the most barbaric and heinous act of human rights violation by the USA, which must be condemned in the strongest terms. Until the Cuban Five are released from USA jails, we will continue to raise our voices and condemn their barbaric detention.”

SWAPO

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not the tribe, age, sex, race or region of origin. Above all, we appeal to all rank and file to place the interest of our Party above all individual interests.

In the spirit of youth empowerment, we also wish to welcome the successful outcome of the NUNW Congress and its subsequent new leadership in particular the re-election of Cde Evilastus Kaaronda as Secretary General of the progressive NUNW with the new mandate of five more years. His re-election is a boost towards youth empowerment and young workers' hope for a better and economically prosperous Namibia. We appeal to

the new leadership of NUNW to plant the seeds of unity across the federation. We appeal to the new leadership of NUNW to operationalise the Accord entered into between SWAPO Party and the NUNW. We appeal to the new leadership of NUNW to ensure that tribalism is cleansed from all members of the NUNW and forge a united front as it marches to an admirable agenda of “Back to Basics” which ought to be defined by the genuine need to address the plight of the Namibian workers, without fear or favour. At all material times, the interest of the NUNW and of Namibia must reign supreme.

As for the recently married opposition parties or those who are still working hard on finding coalition political concu-

binies, they should be reminded that the masses of our people will not vote for the reincarnation of political Sodom and Gomorra including the so-called rate payers association who in most cases are a camouflage of the same opposition parties. Equally, the current covert manoeuvres in some government ministries aimed at favouring these new political projects in the upcoming elections will fail.

Finally, the youth of today should remain vigilant, militant and patriotic in defence of the gains of the Namibian revolution. It is also the obligation of our generation to advocate for genuine economic empowerment of our people especially those in rural areas and urban informal settlement. We must

remember that SWAPO Party is the only party with the capacity to genuinely address THE BREAD AND BUTTER ISSUES of our people including the challenges of unemployment, youth empowerment, rural development and nation building. We therefore call on all progressive young people all over Namibia to campaign for the total and comprehensive victory of the SWAPO Party in November 2010.

Our message and appeal to all structures of SWAPO Party and its Government: do not ignore the voices of young people of our country. Embrace them, because they are the only promissory note of the future for the SWAPO Party and Namibia.

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