



President Hifikepunye Pohamba, flanked by Health and Social Services Minister, Dr Richard Kamwi and First Lady Meme Penexupifo Pohamba after cutting the ribbon to launch the campaign.

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Health and Social Welfare Services Minister, Dr Richard Kamwi and several other cabinet ministers.

Although President Pohamba had acknowledged that progress in this regard had been made, he was still concerned that a survey conducted last year revealed that HIV prevalence among pregnant women attending antenatal care had risen to 18.8 per cent, up from 17, 8 percent recorded in 2008.

“These statistics should motivate us to work harder in order to halt the epidemic,” said President Pohamba. “Similarly,

we should intensify our efforts to achieve the MDGs by 2015, specifically goal No. 4, which addresses the reduction of death amongst children, as well as goal No. 5, which focuses on the reduction of deaths of mothers.”

PMTCT was introduced at Katutura and Oshakati State Hospital in 2002, and has since been rolled out to all 34 district hospitals in the country. Ninety four out of every 100 antenatal care facilities in the country offer PMTCT services, making such services fully accessible in the public sector to every woman in the country.

“Our objective is to ensure that all babies who are born to HIV positive mothers receive

essential services to ensure their survival,” said President Pohamba. “One of the main concerns in the efforts to combat HIV/AIDS pandemic and the promotion of PMTCT is the low participation by men.

“Available statistics indicate that only three percent of male partners were involved in the care and support of their female partners when they seek to access these services.

“This is a very worrying trend and must be reversed. The fight against HIV requires the involvement of both men and women. I therefore urge Namibian men to support their spouses and contribute more meaningfully to the fight against this pandemic.”

The World Health Organization, WHO, and the United Nations Children Fund, UNICEF, have acknowledged progress Namibia has made since the introduction of PMTCT ten years ago.

In a joint statement at the launch, both WHO and UNICEF agreed that the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV was a reachable goal for Namibia by 2015.

“It is reachable because we know what needs to be done, and there is an undeniable commitment and determination of the President and the government to ensure an AIDS-free generation of children,” said the

joint statement. “We are already a long way towards this target – with around 80 percent PMTCT coverage, Namibia has one of the highest levels in the world and has made remarkable progress in less than 10 years since the first PMTCT pilot initiative started in 2002.” HIV transmission from mothers to newborn babies has reduced by almost 50 percent in just two years from 13, 4 percent in 2006/07 to seven percent 2008/09. This indicates that almost one in every two parents in Namibia who start PMTCT services early, adhere to treatment and lead a healthy

lifestyle can give birth to an HIV-free baby. The joint statement by WHO and UNICEF ended by quoting an HIV-positive mother, who had religiously followed PMTCT. She said: “Nobody will ever love my children the way I do. And while my children deeply love and trust many adults, none of them can take my place. “So please, let us remember as we all work hard to protect babies from being born with HIV, to work equally hard for the health of their mothers, so we can be there for them, care for them, and see them grow up.”



President Pohamba flanked by Health Minister, Dr Richard Kamwi, left. On the right are First Lady Meme Penexupifo Pohamba, WHO's Dr Magda Robalo, US Ambassador to Namibia, and Khomas Regional Governor Samwel Nuuyoma. Photo by Levi Upula.

NBC

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retirement soon” and was busy with an orderly hand-over of his functions to Jantje, adding that two people were not performing the same functions as raised in the Open Letter to the President last week.

In the Open Letter, NBC employees, also said that they were not consulted, and that five layers of management, costly predetermined structure and they were not consulted. Aochamub said these were “lies.”

He said the NBC’s strategic plan was crafted in January this year by NBC directors, present EXCO, select middle managers and representatives of the NBC Shop-steward’s Council. He said that he found it ex-



Albertus Aochamub

tremely difficult to work with “soothsayers” and “mind-readers.” He said the Board had only approved the senior leadership structure of the NBC.

“How do these soothsayers know how many other layers there will be at the NBC if the discussion has not even commenced,?” he asked. “Where



Mr. Sven Thieme

did they see the five layers? Where are they extracting the costs from as well for this supposedly top heavy structure?”

But some NBC employees and managers Namibia Today had spoken spoke to were not impressed by Aochamub’s explanation, dismissing it as a mere cover-up for what was obviously an un-procedural appointment.

They said there was more to the appointment than what met the eye, and the DG and the Board should come clean on this issue.

They maintained that Jantje’s position was neither advertised nor was it on the NBC structure at the time of her appointment. They also dismissed as mere speculation that Gawaseb was going on early retirement, saying that he was actually retiring early next year.

“How on earth is this plausible that such a handing over

is done over a period of longer than six months if Jantje is a highly experienced chartered accountant who takes over from people who know nothing,” said one employee.

“The structure of the NBC has been implemented in such a manner that a big number of people are being affected and they have not been consulted. The fact is that there will be a bloating in cost because at the end of the day, everybody will still be absorbed by the same structure – both the old and the new management.”

NBC employees also dismissed speculation that the “racism” aspect was only fuelled by the Amunjela/Sorenson saga, saying that it was raised long before the Amunjela/Sorenson

saga came into the open. They said it was raised on February, 03 this year in a meeting in the NBC which was addressed by the Deputy Minister of Information and Communication Technology, Stanley Simata, and was broadcast on NBC TV news the same night.

“We are being taken for a ride here,” said one employee. “This is a hide and seek game. It is good that the DG has admitted that Jantje’s CV came from the Chairman of the Board, Sven Thiemer” said one middle manager.

“So Aochamub merely ‘recommended’ Jantje to the Board as the ‘best candidate.’ The Board is chaired by the very same person who brought in her CV. The same Board ap-

pointed Aochamub! Did you expect Aochamub to go against a CV brought in by the very same person who appointed him? What is this?”

“If he had gathered some CVs as well, why did he only ‘recommend’ one candidate, instead of, say, three so that the Board could discuss and choose from three people? That could have been fairer.

“The recruitment of Daun Jantje was solely done by the Director General and the NBC Chairman of the Board. Other NBC Board members were unaware and unhappy with the manner in which her appointment was made. We will see when the sun rises. The truth will out. Something is fishy and smelly here.”

In the meantime we hereby request you to provide us with an undertaking that until this matter is amicably resolved the intended recruitment into the new positions will be stayed, Should we not receive the undertaking as requested on or before 10 March 2011 our instructions are to take such legal steps as may be necessary on an urgent basis.

Kindly revert to us on or before 10H00, to MARCH 2011,

Yours faithfully,

 SISA NAMANDJE & CO. INC
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 Tel: 061-276370/78/79/80
 Fax: 061-276381

Cell: 081 124 2749

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