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MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM



**STATEMENT BY Hon. POHAMBA SHIFETA, MP
Deputy Minister of Environment and Tourism**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE
OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF NAMIBIA TOURISM TRAINING PLATFORM**

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Safari Conference Hotel - Windhoek, Namibia

STATEMENT BY HON. POHAMBA SHIFETA, DEPUTY MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM, ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF NAMIBIA TOURISM TRAINING PLATFORM.

Director of ceremonies

Your Excellency Mr. Onno Hueckmann, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany

Invited guest,

Senior Government Officials

Colleagues,

Members of the media,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to address you all today at this official launch of the Namibia Tourism Training Platform.

One of the primary functions of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism is to develop programs which can assist Namibians in understanding the importance of tourism to their standard of living and to the economic, social and environmental development of the country. The Ministry of Environment and Tourism will actively seek to make training in the tourism sector more accessible to previously disadvantaged Namibians and vulnerable groups through liaison with relevant stakeholders.

This year, we have truly seen that tourism is an engine for economic growth. It has been placed at the centre stage of the road towards true economic independence through job creation, empowerment and poverty alleviation as outlined in the fourth National Development Plan.

As you know the multiplier effect of tourism is powerful. You all experience it everyday. This contributes significantly to the true transformation and empowerment of ALL Namibians from urban to rural areas.

This transformation has been most visible in the conservancy sectors where trophy hunting, cultural tourism and joint ventures are transforming rural development and taking it to a level never seen before in development circles.

In this quest for excellence through tourism development it is important to also consider the skills in the Namibian tourism sector. We need well qualified tourism human resources at all levels that are able to understand the needs of the visitors and the vitality of efficient and friendly customer service. The importance of training can therefore not be over emphasized.

It is against this background, that GIZ and the Ministry of Environment and Tourism together with other relevant stakeholders have initiated the development and establishment of the Online Tourism Training Platform. The Tourism Training Namibia web-platform is designed to answer the training needs of the tourism industry in Namibia. It lets training providers advertise themselves and their courses.

The main objective to develop the Tourism Training Platform Namibia is to provide an innovative tourism training platform for Namibia in order to ensure both the creation of a transparent tourism market and training in the sector as well as the capacity development of the various stakeholders involved. The platform brings together major and smaller players from within the tourism industry and the education sector and offers opportunities to widen training access improve quality of training and increase training opportunities in the tourism sector.

The project will have different components ranging from gathering of tourism training and employment info, pilot course development, marketing and process concept development, stakeholder networking and training of stakeholders and partners. The training platform aims to meet the needs of the end consumer/user /Employer.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The Ministry of Environment and Tourism believes that through this kind of tourism training platform the ministry could address a elements contained in NDP4 and specific focus on tourism. All in all the platform can be seen as a clearing house mechanism for the Namibian tourism sector in that it will made information about training and job opportunities available on line. This becomes important especially for learners and job seekers as they will have a one stop shop where they can find all information regarding training and job opportunities in one place.

The Ministry of Environment and Tourism and relevant stakeholders involved in the implementation of the project stand to gain additional human skills in training management, training development and technical skills. The platform shall be a quality

assurance mechanism in tourism training in cooperation with the Namibia Training Authority (NTA) & Namibia Qualification Authority (NQA).

On behalf my Ministry and the Namibian Government, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to the German Government for the financial, technical administration, and marketing support of the platform.

Lastly, I urge committment by both parties and all releant stakeholders to support this tourism training platform for it to become a widely used tool by all stakeholders in the interest of tourism growth and development.

It is now my honor to officially launch the Namibia Tourism Training Platform.

I thank you.