



MINISTRY OF MINES AND ENERGY

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

BY

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ON THE OCCASION OF

**NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON DISSEMINATION OF
VEHICLE FUEL EFFICIENCY IN NAMIBIA**

30 SEPTEMBER 2019

**MINISTRY OF MINES AND ENERGY
AUDITORIUM**

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to welcome the UN colleague Ms. Jane Akumu and the project expert Prof. James Nyang'aya to Namibia, followed by a warm welcome to all the stakeholders present this morning. It is an honour and a pleasure to address this important workshop that would provide us with the findings of the important project on “Promoting Automotive Fuel Efficiency” in Namibia.

I would like to thank the UN, as well as the stakeholders' representatives for making this long-awaited day a reality.

Today, I will use my allotted time to highlight the essence of having cleaner fuels and efficient vehicle policies in the country. Every day, I learn more about what global warming is doing to our planet, and I become more convinced of the need for us to act now, which is making me very excited about this project.

Of recent, we are experiencing extreme undesired weather events such as heat waves, droughts (currently being experienced in Namibia), floods, tropical cyclones, etc. which clearly indicate that the world around us is changing.

If we do not slow these changes, it will have major consequences for our children and our grandchildren.

This means that we have to open our eyes to the danger, confront the problem and adopt major interventions in form of policies, of which this initiative is one of them.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Global warming is a battle, and it must be fought. The Earth is warming and climate is changing. This warming up is caused mostly by human activity, more specifically the combustion of fossil fuels.

Dear Colleagues,

The reality is that global warming cannot be stopped, however, it can be slowed down by initiatives such as this. That is why I am delighted today, that the Namibian government is part of this great initiative, an initiative that if well implemented, will not only lower harmful pollutant emissions, but will also result in savings in national annual oil imports, and reduction in the importation of fuel inefficient vehicles.

Having said that, the truth is, even with all the possible measures in place, it is not going to be possible to fight climate change and global warming in isolation, and in particular, the role-played by transport and vehicle emissions. Hence, the reason I am calling for all the stakeholders to take a bold action, find a solution, and make the changes necessary to prevent catastrophes.

Ladies and gentlemen, some of us might be wondering, but why are we facing these problems?

It is simple; the sad truth is that our nation is addicted to fossil fuels, diesel and petrol to be specific. It is the burning of these fuels and the greenhouse gases they emit – that is the primary cause of global warming.

Here is the key: Carbon dioxide doesn't dissipate.

It stays in the atmosphere for about five decades or more – causing the Earth's temperature to rise and ultimately causing all other unwanted environmental changes.

That means the carbon dioxide produced in the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, 1990s and 2000s is still in the atmosphere today and the carbon dioxide produced today will still be in the atmosphere in 2060 and beyond.

It is beyond dispute that there will be serious consequences for our planet unless we make major changes to minimize our consumption of fossil fuels, which is why we are here today.

The goal now is to stabilize carbon dioxide emissions by measures such as, amongst others:

1) Development of cleaner fuels policies, for example replacement of dirty fuels (500ppm diesel) with cleaner fuels (50ppm and 10 ppm diesel), leaded petrol by unleaded petrol, and

2) Development of Fuel Efficient Vehicles Policies, which is the intended outcome of this project.

Ladies and gentlemen,

If we act now and if we act decisively, further global warming can be limited and this should be our goal.

We must control and contain the warming. Having said that, I ask you “colleagues” to stand up, be counted, and join me in this effort.

Let us join the UN and commit to this common purpose, working together, to find innovative and sustainable solutions.

With this, I thank the UN for this great initiative and I wish all project stakeholders wisdom, energy and drive to complete this exercise successfully.

I thank you.