

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY HONOURABLE NETUMBO

**NANDI-NDAITWAH, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
AND MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
AND COOPERATION AT OCTOBER GRADUATION
CEREMONY ON 12 OCTOBER 2018 AT 09:00 SAFARI
COURT AND HOTEL**

Chairperson of the Council, Adv. Esi Schimming-Chase, SC

Honourable Members of Parliament

Your Excellencies, Ambassadors and High Commissioners

Distinguished Members of Council

Vice-Chancellor Dr Tjama Tjivikua

Distinguished Invited Guests and Industry Partners

Esteemed parents and guardians

Esteemed Faculty and Staff

Honoured Graduates

Members of the Media

Every student who enters the doors of the Namibian University of Science and Technology looks forward to one thing –GRADUATION. But it is one thing to wish graduation and quite another to work hard and to actually graduate. Therefore, I feel honored to be here with you today, to witness an accomplishment and a start of a new life of **747** young Namibians who are graduating today in different disciplines.

I sincerely and profoundly thank the Vice-Chancellor and the entire management for according me with this rare opportunity. While I may not argue with the programme, for me all those who are graduating today have done the keynote address and I must pause here to congratulate them.

Dear graduate, it might not be obvious to you, but through your achievement today, you have enriched the world, uphold Africa, enhance SADC, and rise up Namibia, made your families' proud and NUST outstanding. Against that background, I congratulate you all for having completed one chapter in your life and I wish you only the best as you start a new life that you must face with openness and confidence. I understand, out of the 7.6 billion people in the world today, it is only 200 million who are higher education students. You should therefore see yourself as a privileged group who have added to the number of those who have achieved milestones in education.

In his analysis of education system in Tanzania in 1976, Mwalimu Nyerere, was concerned that education could discourage the integration of the educated back into the society (that was more rural) and instead promotes an attitude of inequality, intellectual arrogance and individualism. I must say that Mwalimu's concerned is real and our graduates have to safeguard against inequality, intellectual arrogance, individualism and anything that takes us away from the communities we are to develop and take out of poverty.

Instead, you must take your graduation as an enabler to give back to your families, to your communities and by extension to our beloved Namibia.

Director of Ceremonies

Education is the foundation of human development and this explains why it has been a key priority of our government since independence. Education has and continues to be very important to Namibia and a critical driver of our economy. Education and training was also identified by African Heads of State and Government as an enabling tool if Africa has to realise Africa Agenda 2063. To that end, we should all of us embrace education.

This graduation is held under the theme “Creating a World Class University”. I believe this theme is aimed at opening up NUST to the world and join the international league in terms of research, innovation, creation and sharing of knowledge across Namibia, Africa and the entire world. I fully support the idea and I strongly submit that NUST students including those who graduated years back, those who are yet to graduate, the academic and administrative staff, all have a role to play if this University is to hold its’ commendable position within the international academic field. Therefore, what you will do throughout your life professionally, will be linked to NUST.

Namibia is part of that global village we live in, in this era of globalisation. Globalisation is defined by the World Bank as “*the growing integration of economies and societies around the world.*” In this regard, we must understand that globalisation is real. There is no sign of stopping it. Economies particularly small economies like ours must adapt and adjust to survive in this highly integrated world. In effect, it is those people and countries with clear vision of what they want and the needs of their countries and people who will stand the best chance to benefit. I am convinced that one can contribute to Namibia’s wellbeing no matter where you are. H E Dr Hage Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia talks of brain gain as opposed to the old term of brain drain. Brain drain was mostly referred to African academicians who go and work in the developed countries on the expenses of Africa whose resources are used to educate them. Brain gain is a welcome move on the understanding that what is gained will be put to good use for Africa and to be specific to Namibia to uplift the people’s living standard.

I want to reflect on globalisation in a form of International education. Globalisation in a form of International education is in principle related to the mobility of students and scholars who both come to any country and travel across the globe to study, research, or teach. It's not only about the mobility of students, both in and out of Namibia, but it's also about researchers and scholars who come to Namibia to conduct research, faculty who go to other destinations to teach, and

those Namibians who engage communities across all countries of the world. The primary goal of international education is to further knowledge and cultural capital, learn about places and cultures, and gain intercultural skills in the process.

Global students' exchange must not be taken at a face value. This is not just about students reaching across the globe, studying, researching and embracing international cultures and experiences. Above all, it about putting to best use of the knowledge and the skills acquired internationally and bridging the knowledge gaps in own countries. It is also about people to people contact. I therefore, urge the Vice-Chancellor, the administrative and academic staff as well as students to take NUST to high heights as reputable institution of high learning.

Last year, we have reviewed our foreign policy in line with pillar five of the Harambee Prosperity Plan that calls for Namibia to remain respected and relevant in international arena, and to benefit from our international cooperation in line with our policy of economic diplomacy. One of the topics deliberated on at the policy conference review was, who the role players in Namibia's foreign policy are. The conference concluded that every Namibian coming into contact with a non-Namibian at individual, organisation, business or academic levels one way or the other such a person is marketing Namibia. Therefore it is very important that all Namibians who may have access to the outside world

are clear of what Namibia is looking for in the international arena. Of course, the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation will continue to play a leading role in advancing our foreign policy.

Namibia has diplomatic relations with 150 countries around the world and is a member to different international organisation such the UN, AU, SADC among others. Through this diplomatic relations, we seek to foster stronger political engagements, enhance and expand bilateral cooperation, promote trade and investment, tourism, and encourage peace and security and people-to-people contact. We also encourage qualified Namibians to look for employment in regional and international organisation in order to gain more skills and knowledge that can be of great benefit to our country and its people. I have to mention here the Namibian challenge of knowing only one international language i.e. English, at times works against Namibians to get employment in international organisation thus limiting our mobility. I therefore encourage young Namibians to learn other international languages for example French.

It has to be understood that foreign policy is an expression of national policy. That means what is declared at home as a priority, will focus prominently in our contact with the international community or the outside world. That is why education and training be one of the national priorities and must also feature high in our agenda internationally. To the extend that Namibia has entered into educational agreement

with many countries, the latest was between Namibia and Hungary which I signed with my counterpart on the margin of the UN General Assembly last September. To understand the level of our international engagements, I am glad to inform you that, in 2017, 30 Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding with various countries and organisations, aimed to strength bilateral and multilateral cooperation at both political economic and trade were signed.

Based on those Agreements with specific reference to education, over the years many Namibians were offered scholarships all over the world and student mobility to different countries either on government scholarships or family funding is growing day by day. At the same time, Namibia does benefit through the fertilisation of ideas and knowledge when foreign students, teachers and lectures come to Namibia. As we know education is a two-way traffic. I am happy that NUST and all our institution of high learning and of course schools are all benefiting from our international cooperation. In fact, it is not only education that is benefiting from our international cooperation as all sectors of our economy and society such as health, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, youth and women among others are all benefiting.

Graduates

The moment you have been waiting for is finally here. This is an occasion that marks both the completion of one chapter in your life and the beginning of another. I know well you have

travelled through bumpy road by spending sleepless nights and restless day in order to ensure the realisation of this day. Be proud of yourselves. Hard work pays. I must however, remind you that the new chapter you are about to embark on is more demanding and would require practical and systematic approach. Your future academic and professional activities will determine what kind of graduates you are. Be once more reminded that you have now reached a critical junction in your life. In a few minutes to come, you will be no longer NUST students, but NUST graduates who must be futuristic and be able to chart own roadmaps.

You must now see yourselves as citizens of the world, and partners of the global village. The ball is now in your court to carry all of the goals, aspirations and dreams of all citizens of the global village. NUST, your parents, teachers, siblings, government and friends have helped prepare you for the world. The rest are squarely in your hands. But always remember Namibia and Namibians will always look up to you to plough back in the country for prosperity.

You must also be mindful that, as you start a new life, you will face a lot of challenges. But those challenges must not deter you from achieving your future goals. The best to deal with challenges is to turn them into opportunities for the best use. In this case, you must identify the best out of yourselves in this global village. As the then UN Secretary General Kofi Annan once said: (may his soul rest in eternal peace) "The main losers in today's unequal world are not those that are too

much exposed to globalisation but those that that have been left out”.

Graduates,

This is your time and your moment. Be ready to lead and to inspire those that will graduate in the years to come. Become trailblazers as thought leaders and as architects of the destiny of our young Republic in the global economy and as members of the global village.

Before I conclude, let me thank all the parents and sponsors who have rendered support throughout your academic years. Now that you have successfully completed your studies, it is time to look after them. I must also add that our graduates should not only be job seekers, you must think out of the box and be job creators.

Finally, I once again congratulate you and thank you for allowing me to be a part of this very important day in your lives, our lives! I wish you the very best in all your future endeavours!

I thank you!