

WELCOMING REMARKS

BY

HON DR ITAH KANDJII-MURANGI

MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INNOVATION

ON

**THE OCCASION OF THE VISIT OF HIS EXCELLENCY SHRI PRANAB
MUKHERJEE, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA TO THE
NAMIBIA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (NUST)**

ON

17 JUNE 2016

AT

10:40

AT

AUDITORIUM 1

NUST CAMPUS

WINDHOEK

Your Excellency Shri Pranab Mukherjee, President of the Republic of India

Honourable And Members of Parliament

The Vice-Chancellor of the Namibia University of Science and Technology, Dr
Tjama Tjivikua

The Academic Community

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am deeply honoured to welcome you, your Excellency and your distinguished delegation, as well as the Namibian academic community to the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST).

We are privileged that you have chosen to engage the Namibian intelligentsia during this important visit to Namibia at one of our two public universities.

Let me emphasise that Namibia as a young country values the historic relationship with India and highly values the generous support and assistance from the Government of India under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation. In that framework, for example, the Government of the Republic of India offers scholarships every year under the Africa Day Scholarship Scheme to Namibian students to pursue undergraduate and postgraduate studies at Indian universities.

Furthermore, the Government of the Republic of India has donated US\$ 12 million for the construction of the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology at the University of Namibia campus in Ongwediva.

I am well-informed that the next academic initiative now in the pipeline for funding is the Centre of Excellence in IT at this University, NUST.

We are highly appreciative of India's government funding and also the quality services that Indian academic staff, even those who are here on their own, are rendering at our universities in the context of South-South Cooperation.

With 36 percent of Namibia's population being between the age group 15 - 34 years, we are one of the countries with a demographic dividend. There is thus a great need for our country to develop and harness this human resource capacity that will contribute to sustainable socio-economic and technological development. Hence Namibia is investing heavily in education, including higher education and research and development.

So many of the lessons in this regard can be learned from India, a country with top scientific and technological capacity to undertake basic research up to applied research that set trends in space technology and planetary exploration, and advanced medicinal applications.

Building on good historic relations between the people of India and Namibia, since long before Namibia's independence, the Ministry of Higher Education, Training and Innovation and our institutions of higher learning intend to intensely collaborate with their counterparts in India. Recognising the strength and world-class core competencies of India in ICT, arising from the burgeoning pool that drives research, development and innovation, a focus on collaboration in this area is desirable, and the establishment of the Centre of Excellence in IT with funding from India is an excellent platform. There are other areas such as biotechnology research and development; harnessing the use of renewable and other sources of energy that deserve attention and this is possible through joint curriculum development and research and academic staff exchange.

Now it is now my distinct privilege and honour to invite to the podium His Excellency Shri Pranab Mukherjee, President of the Republic of India - a powerful orator and scholar whose knowledge is widely admired - to address the academic community in Namibia.

Welcome Your Excellency.

- Ends.