

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY
HIFIKEPUNYE POHAMBA, PRESIDENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA,
ON THE OCCASION OF THE HIGH-LEVEL
PLENARY MEETING OF THE UNITED
NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

15 SEPTEMBER 2005

NEW YORK

** Check Against Delivery*

Distinguished Co-Chairpersons
Your Majesties,
Your Excellencies,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Distinguished Delegates,

1. I wish to congratulate you, Co-Chairpersons, on your election and for the efficient manner in which you are guiding the deliberations of this High-Level Plenary Meeting.

Mr. Chairperson,

2. I would like to take this opportunity to express our sympathy and condolences to the people of the United States of America for the loss of life and destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina.
3. Since the achievement of our independence 15 years ago, the Government of Namibia assumed the historic task of redressing the human, social and economic consequences suffered by our people during the years of apartheid colonialism. In 1990, the World Bank estimated our per capita income at US\$1,200, ranking Namibia as a low middle-income country. However, on a closer look, this figure reveals many contradictions.
4. We inherited a dual society with the worst income disparities seen anywhere in the world. Five percent of the population had access to modern infrastructure and a formal economy and about 0.3% owned 44% of the land, while the remainder of the population occupied 41 percent.
5. On the other hand, 95 percent of the population lived in abject poverty. They did not have electricity, clean water or sanitary facilities. They suffered the effects of poor nutrition and diseases. One out of ten children died before the age of five.
6. **These are stark legacies of apartheid colonialism. Since independence, we have moved with a clear intent to reverse them and we have made tremendous progress. We are moving with the same resolve to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.**

- 7 Therefore, we count on our development partners to join us in our efforts to translate the noble development objectives into concrete outcomes, so that we can promote social justice, democracy, peace and the welfare of all Namibians.
8. By adopting the Millennium Development Goals, member States have taken a bold and historic step. Our resolve should therefore propel us towards a new dawn of hope, to conquer poverty, hunger, ignorance and diseases. We must mobilize resources and bring within the reach of billions of people, the hope that they and their children can have a better life.
9. Let us join hands and move forward to find practical solutions to the challenges of our time. We have a sacred duty and a noble mission. We should not be found wanting.

I thank you.