



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT

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28 May 2018

Opening address by Honourable John Mutorwa, MP and Minister of Works and Transport, at the official opening of the GIWACAF Sub-Regional Workshop on Shoreline Response to Oil Spills 28-31 May 2018, Sea Side Hotel & Spa Swakopmund, Namibia.

Representatives of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association (IPIECA);

Representatives of participating countries;

Members of the Operations Team of the National Marine Pollution Contingency Plan;

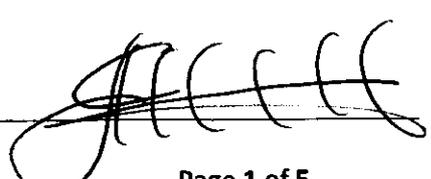
Management and staff of the Ministry of Works and Transport;

Members of the media;

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen;

"Effective and Efficient Delivery of Service"

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It gives me great pleasure to extend to you all a very warm welcome on behalf of the Government of Namibia and, in particular, the Ministry of Works and Transport to this important workshop, which is aimed at assisting the region to address the unique challenges associated with shoreline response to oil spills.

I thank IMO and IPIECA for electing to convene this important meeting in Namibia, back-to-back with the National OPRC Level 2 Oil Spill Response Training Workshop that took place last week in this very same venue.

As a proud member of GIWACAF, Namibia is pleased to have collaborated with the IMO and IPIECA in staging this event, which follows several other GIWACAF activities that were successfully organized in Namibia, most notably the 2013 Bi-Annual Conference which brought together over 130 delegates from the 22 GIWACAF member countries.

It is therefore befitting to acknowledge that the collaboration between Namibia and the GIWACAF project has been growing over the years. We would like to cement this relationship even further, and these two workshops bear testimony to that.

I am encouraged by the progress made by the GIWACAF project since its inception in 2006 in enhancing oil spill preparedness and response capability in the region, especially in regard to developing of national oil spill contingency plans, sensitivity mapping and training and exercises.

Equally, I am happy to see that participation in this important event is not limited to Government representatives but industry representatives are present as well. That, I am informed, is the spirit of the GIWACAF project – government and industry cooperation.



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These meetings enable the building of a productive dialogue between GIWACAF member countries and the oil industry. They also provide an invaluable opportunity for networking and establishment of fruitful contacts between countries.

Namibia is giving strong emphasis on improving its marine pollution preparedness and response system in order to mitigate the growing risk of oil and chemical pollution that may result from increasing maritime activities in Namibia.

In addition to the increasing maritime traffic to our ports, Namibia has over the last 25 years attracted significant investments in offshore oil and gas exploration.

Offshore drilling activities pose new and unique risks of marine pollution from incidents of navigation and uncontrolled well blowouts as happened in the 2009 "Montara" incident in Australia, the 2010 "Deepwater Horizon" incident in the US, and the 2012 "KS Endeavour" incident in Nigeria. Uncontrolled well blowouts are rare events, but as a budding oil and gas producer, the Namibia has to be prepared for such unfortunate events when they occur.

Accordingly, Namibia has over the last five years embarked on a reform process which culminated in the replacing of the 2007 National Oil Spill Contingency Plan with the 2017 National Marine Pollution Contingency Plan and the activation of the prescribed processes and structures.

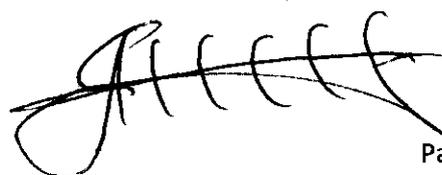
This reform is aimed at ensuring that Namibia achieves all the key elements of preparedness as enshrined in the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Cooperation (OPRC) of 1990 and that the National Plan is responsive to the evolving marine pollution risk profile in Namibia.

However, as the National Plan is almost entirely tax-payer funded and there are other competing national priorities, critical projects and activities of the National Plan such as the much needed national marine pollution risk assessment project, equipment renewal and even training and exercises are negatively affected by a lack of sustainable funding mechanisms.

Namibia is therefore looking into the possibility of establishing a dedicated marine pollution fund, the objective of which will be to provide sustainable funding for an effective marine pollution preparedness and response system in Namibia, including response to so-called mystery spills like the recent oil pollution which affected parts of Afrodite Beach north of Walvis Bay and the Walvis Bay lagoon.

Marine pollution, especially oil spills, knows no international boundaries, and no single nation can respond to a large oil or chemical pollution incident without the assistance of other states. As we have learned from the 2010 "Deepwater Horizon" incident, even the most powerful and richest nation in the world could not have managed that spill without outside assistance.

Similarly, during the "Erica" incident off France in 1999, it was demonstrated that without regional cooperation agreements in place, assistance by other European states would have been more difficult and the outcome of the response actions less impressive. The "Deep Water Horizon", "Erica" and other incidents of note highlight the need for regional and international cooperation in oil spill response in line with the OPRC Convention.

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However, regional and international cooperation cannot be effective until national preparedness and response systems have reached an acceptable level of development.

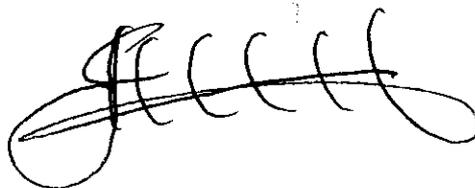
This workshop, as with other GIWACAF activities, will no doubt contribute to the enhancement of national systems and the development of bi-lateral, regional or international cooperation arrangements.

In closing, I thank IMO and IPIECA once again for electing to host this event in Namibia and convey my best wishes for a fruitful and productive event and a very pleasant stay in Namibia.

I also thank our local sponsors for their kind contribution to the hosting of this event in Namibia. They are: DebMarine Namibia, National Petroleum Corporation of Namibia (Namcor), Bachmus Oil and Fuel Supplies, and Sturrock Grindrod Maritime.

I now declare the GIWACAF Sub-Regional Workshop on Shoreline Response to Oil Spills open.

I thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. C. C. C. C.', written in a cursive style.