



Republic of Namibia

STATEMENT

BY

**HON. DR. DAVID NAMWANDI, MP,
DEPUTY MINISTER OF EDUCATION OF
THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA AT THE**

**HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OF
THE UNITED NATIONS,**

***“Implementing the internationally agreed goals
and commitments in regard to education”***

GENEVA

5 July 2011

President of the Economic and Social Council
Your Excellencies, Ministers and Heads of Delegation
Distinguished Delegates .
Ladies and Gentlemen .

May I now say a few words on behalf of my own country. Namibia aligns itself with the statement delivered by Argentina on behalf of the G 77 and China.

The Namibian Government has been working hard to ensure that our people are not left behind in the provision of education. At independence in 1990, the Ministry of Education set for itself the goals of **access, equity, quality, democracy and efficiency** as being key to the success of our education system. The goals are interrelated, in the sense that if we provide all learners access to schooling, we are providing them with equal opportunities to access the necessary knowledge and skills. Twenty one years after independence, we are committed to continue with the implementation of these goals.

Mr. President

We just concluded a National Conference on Education whose theme was *“Collective delivery on the education promise. Improving the education system for quality learning outcomes and quality of life”* The Conference was necessary in order to respond to the call for us to re-examine the state of our education as a nation, exchange ideas on ways to improve the system and seek a new mandate for the next 10 years. The Conference came up with findings, conclusions and recommendations that will be studied and analysed with a view to improve our education system.

Namibia's education system currently covers the entire spectrum from Early Childhood Development, pre-primary, primary, secondary, vocational training to tertiary. The Government has continued to play a very strong political role in ensuring that adequate resources are allocated to education. This year Government has allocated 23% of the national budget to education i.e 7.5% of the country's GDP. Thanks to this, our enrolment in early grades has expanded to over 98%. Physical infrastructure at both Primary and secondary levels has equally expanded let alone increase in the number of professionally qualified teachers.

With the establishment of the Namibia Training Authority, National Council for Higher Education and strengthening of the Namibia Qualifications Authority, Namibia's education system has begun to see several important and positive changes. Tertiary education enrolment has increased from a mere 2 000 students in 1990 to over 42 000 students in our Tertiary institutions. This figure includes those in private tertiary institutions.

Mr. President

The Namibian Government is committed to MDGs 2 and 3, namely: Achieving Universal Primary Education and Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, thus focused on the achievement of both the Education for All Goals and Millennium Development Goals. In terms of achieving Universal Primary Education, enrolment at early grades and primary up to middle schools, have witnessed unprecedented increase. Our enrolments at these levels are now at 98 %, with girls far outnumbering boys at certain levels of the system. In terms of gender parity, it is worth noting that in Namibia, for every 100 male learners in Primary, there are 98 girls, 100 males to 117 girls at secondary level and 100 males to 88 girls at tertiary level. We continue to monitor these indicators closely.

Our efforts in the literacy programmes have recorded an increase of 75% literacy levels compared to pre Independence levels of 30% . This programme, currently enrolls 40 000 students. Over 70% of these are females, marking a significant contribution to the empowerment of women in our society.

Mr. President,

The Namibian Government has intensified efforts, to improve efficiency and quality of education and training. Cooperation between public and private sector is an indication that the achievement of MDGs and EFA goals is inevitable.

Notwithstanding the above positive signs, there are still numerous challenges facing us including;

- capacity to grow the economy in a global recession at rates commensurate with improved and increasing education output;
- attracting and retaining quality teachers, especially in the rural areas, and to ensure that students and learners are timeously exposed to technical, vocational training and ICT;
- the adverse impacts of HIV and AIDS on teaching staff, parents and learners;
- the absorption and integration of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs in education and training programmes),

Mr. President,

We are reminded that the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals is a collective responsibility, thus cannot be left to Governments alone. All of us, public, private sector, NGOs and other stakeholders alike should collectively work towards this noble goal.

I thank you.