



Remarks

By:

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**UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident
Representative**

**Model United Nations Namibia
Opening Ceremony,**

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Windhoek,

**Ms. Sanet Steenkamp, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education,
Arts and Culture,**

UN Heads of Agency present

**Keith Handura, Finance and Administrative Manager, MTN Business
Namibia,**

Members of the media,

MUNNAM delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with great pleasure that I give this speech on behalf of the UN, and in support of Model United Nations Namibia. Many thanks to my colleagues from the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) Windhoek, as well as to MTN Business Namibia, for making this event possible.

Over the next two days, you will debate two topics, namely: “The Green Economy and Emergency Response Coordination to Natural Disasters and other shocks.”

These topics are in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, a global agenda of action aimed at eradicating poverty, saving the planet and ensuring prosperity for all by 2030.

Delegates,

The green economy relates to SDG 8, and ensures that we reach our development agenda without posing risks to the environment; for example by ensuring we reduce carbon emissions and manage scarce commodities such as water, carefully.

We know that population growth will have a tremendous effect on the availability of our scarce resources. By 2050, the world will need to produce twice as much food as was produced in the year 2000, but with the same amount of land and using less water.¹

Therefore a green economy, with sustainable production and consumption patterns that minimises waste, makes sense.

As of 2014, 7.7 million jobs were created in the renewable energy sector²(SDG7): demonstrating that a green economy will generate new jobs and incomes through cleaner industries and technologies thereby improving our health, our environment and our future.

¹ The Second Report on the State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, FAO 2010.

² UNEP 2015. Uncovering Pathways Towards an Inclusive Green Economy: A Summary for Leaders.

See:

http://www.unep.org/greeneconomy/Portals/88/documents/ger/IGE%20NARRATIVE%20SUMMARY_Web.pdf

Delegates,

Namibia, is no stranger to disasters and is known to be one of the driest countries in the world with a disaster-prone climate pattern.

In Namibia, 97 % of rainfall is lost through some form of evaporation and only 1% of rainfall becomes available to recharge groundwater³.

Namibia has begun taking action, with support from the UN system, by implementing clear policy directives. These include mainstreaming: climate change adaptation; disaster risk reduction; and food and livelihood security, into development planning.

MUNNAM Delegates,

The adaption of the green economy will also allow for enhanced prevention and response to Natural Disasters and other emergencies.

³ <http://enviro-awareness.org.na/common-files/files/%5BThink%20Namibia%20Factsheet%203%5D%20Saving%20Water.pdf>

In 2016 natural disasters reached a four-year high causing damages of \$175 billion worldwide⁴.

Here in Namibia we have experienced four years of consecutive drought, which directly affected approximately 600 000 people⁵.

However, despite these disasters, Namibia has some good stories to tell.

Namibia has developed an impressive Disaster Risk Management legislation and policy framework (exemplified by The DRM Act (2012)); and put in place a solid DRM institutional structure (the Directorate for Disaster Risk Management in the Office of the Prime Minister); to help guide action.

We must mitigate against the causes of climate change and ensure that communities are resilient to its impact.

⁴ *Insurer: 2016 saw highest natural disaster losses in 4 years.*

See: <http://www.mysanantonio.com/business/national/article/Insurer-2016-saw-highest-natural-disaster-losses-10835928.php>

⁵ *Namibia Vulnerability Assessment Committee Results 2016.*

See: http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/sadc_namibia_2016.pdf

His Excellency the President has declared a war on poverty, elaborated the Harambee Prosperity Plan (HPP) and asked that 2017 is the year implementation.

We will not accelerate development nor eradicate poverty if we do not find solutions to climate change and disasters.

Ultimately the concept of a Green Economy will help to eradicate poverty and inequality sustainably and inclusively.

Young Delegates,

At the UN our messages on young people is clear: young people need to be empowered, educated and employed. If we invest in our young people today, we will harness the rewards tomorrow.

It is therefore so inspiring to look up and to see 70 bright students, eager to learn and find innovative, realistic and progressive solutions to challenges that world leaders face today.

Today's generation of youth is the largest the world has ever known. One in every three people today is under the age of 30. In Namibia 66% percent of the population is 30 or younger.

Therefore, allow me to end with a question to YOU, the world's majority: how can we, together, ensure the youth engage and implement our development agenda, particularly around the green economy?

With these few words, I wish you the best of luck in your deliberations and anxiously await your innovative feedback from these sessions.

I thank you