

## Namibia commemorates Day of the African Child



Namibia joined the rest of the African continent in commemorating Day of the African Child on 16 June. National commemorations were held in Tsumeb, where children celebrated the day through a variety of traditional songs and dance.

The Day of the African Child has been celebrated throughout Africa on 16 June each year since 1991. It is a day to honour and pay

tribute to the students who were killed in Soweto, South Africa, in 1976 for protesting against injustice and inequality under the apartheid regime.

“The Day of the African Child is celebrated to remember these children in Africa as well as to inspire a sober reflection and action towards addressing the challenges that children in Africa face on a daily basis,” said Minister of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, Hon. Doreen Sioka.

UNICEF Representative, Micaela Marques de Sousa, highlighted that this year’s theme, ***‘2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for Children in Africa: Accelerating Protection, Empowerment and Equal Opportunity’***, reflects on the central role of children to all development initiatives.

“I wish to pledge our continued commitment to support the Government of Namibia to achieve the targets of the SDGs and to give every child a healthy, happy and more productive future. A future where no child goes to bed hungry, where no girl is forced into early marriage, but instead completes school, a future where water and sanitation are within easy reach of every child and where no child dies of easily preventable or curable diseases.”

Representing the voices of the children, Tsumeb Junior Mayor, Jonas Tapiso encouraged Government and other stakeholders to continuously strive to remove barriers to children’s development, “Every child must be given an opportunity to develop, grow and be the best that they can be.”

Throughout the country, children took part in local level commemorations organised by Government through schools, Junior Councils and through Civil Society Organisations.