



Remarks

By:

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Representative**

**UNICEF Advocacy, Partnership and Resource
Mobilisation Gala Event and Launch of the “Kulila” Song**

28 July 2017

Walvis Bay

Director of Ceremonies,
Hon. Deputy Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources, Dr
Samuel Chief Ankama
His Worship the Mayor of Walvis Bay, Immanuel Wilfred
Ms. Yvonne Chaka Chaka, UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador
Ms. Micaela Marques de Sousa, UNICEF Representative
Chairperson of Sunshine Centre Board
Ms. Johanna Benson, Paralympian Gold medallist
Mr. Gerson Mwatile (Dollar), Writer of the “Kulila” song
Sunshine Centre Children’s Choir
Pastor Immanuel Wilfried (Alderman),
Development Partners
NGOs, CSOs, Private Sector and Academia
Members of the Press and Media
Invited Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to be back in the beautiful Erongo region, on this very special occasion, focused on advocacy for the rights of all children.

On behalf of the UN family in Namibia, allow me, to start my remarks, by congratulating the Sunshine Centre Choir, and the UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Yvonne Chaka Chaka, for this extraordinary collaboration that has culminated in the Kulila song, a song that reminds us that with dedication and belief, great things can happen.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In 2015, the world agreed on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development focused on ending poverty, protecting the planet, and ensuring prosperity and peace for all.

Goal 4 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), resonates well with the premise for our gathering tonight. Goal four calls for inclusive, equitable, and quality education; goal four calls for the promotion of lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Education is our best tool for transformation and achieving the goals that we have set out for ourselves as individuals, as communities, and as Nations.

However, socially marginalised young people are more likely to permanently leave the formal education system, thereby perpetuating the cycles of poverty.

Global conventions on people and children with disabilities exist such as: The 2007 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child; both are meant to guide and protect our children.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is an international human rights treaty intended to protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities. Similarly, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (commonly abbreviated as the CRC or UNCRC) is a human rights treaty which sets out the civil, political, economic, social, health and cultural rights of children.

Distinguished Guests,

Namibia has launched a war on poverty. And through the Harambee Prosperity Plan, the 5th National Development Plan (NDP5) and the Poverty Blue Print, committed that no one should be left behind.

In Namibia, of the 98,000¹ people living with disabilities, 21 percent are estimated to be children below the age of 14. Many face challenges such as low enrollment into the education system. For example, the number of children with disabilities aged 0-4 that are not attending ECD programs has increased from 3,359 (2001) to 5,135 (2011)².

There is work to be done.

The good news is the Government of Namibia has progressive policies and laws in place namely, the Education Sector Policy for Orphans and Vulnerable Children and, the National Policy on OVC. There is a need

¹ Namibia Statistics Agency. 2016. Namibia 2011 Census. Disability report

² Namibia Statistics Agency. 2016. Namibia 2011 Census. Disability report

to ensure these policies are fully implemented to enhance the rights of children in the country.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The SDGs call on all of us to build and strengthen partnerships if we are to achieve our development goals sustainably and inclusively.

Partnerships such as the one we are celebrating today, between, Government, the Private Sector and Civil Society are therefore key, if people, especially the most vulnerable, are to be at the centre of development.

And we recognize the important role that the Private Sector plays in development.

Through private sector resources, pragmatism and innovation the possibilities are boundless when it comes to accelerating development, eradicating poverty and creating an enabling environment for our children.

Let me therefore conclude by reaffirming that the UN, your partner of choice, continues to believe in Namibia's vision. A vision of a peaceful and industrialized Nation, driven by a healthy and educated people, a country where we continue to celebrate the 'hope that is every child' and a Nation where no child feels left out.