



## **Remarks**

**By**

**Ms. Anita Kiki Gbeho**

**UN Resident Coordinator &**

**UNDP Resident Representative**

**World Radio Day**

**Monday, 13 February 2017,**

**Okahandja Town Hall**

**Okahandja**

- Minister of Information Communication and Technology, Honourable Tjekero Tweya
- Governor of the Otjozondjupa Region, Honourable Otto Ipinge
- Mayor of Okahandja, His worship Johannes Hindjou
- Members of the United Nations Country Team,
- Members of the Diplomatic Corps
- Members of the Media,
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning!

Let me first express my gratitude for the opportunity to speak to you at these Celebrations of the sixth World Radio Day, here in Okahandja, the garden town of Namibia, under the theme “Radio is YOU”.

This year's theme highlights the importance of you, the listeners of radio, our focus is on the importance of giving the voiceless a voice and not just, what is regarded as important by the broadcaster.

Today we would like to raise greater awareness of the importance of radio, to encourage decision makers to establish and provide access to information through radio; as well as to enhance networking and international cooperation among broadcasters.

Radio is a powerful communication tool and a low cost medium. Radio is specifically suited to reach vulnerable people: the illiterate, the disabled, women, youth and the poor, while offering a platform to intervene in the public debate.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

On this very day (13 February 1946) 71 years ago, the UN General Assembly Resolution 13 (I), established UN Radio. At the time the General Assembly concluded that the UN could not achieve the purposes for which it was created, unless the peoples of the world are fully informed of its aims and activities.

Therefore in 1946 UN Radio began broadcasting from makeshift studios and offices at the United Nations Headquarters in Lake

Success, New York. It transmitted its first call sign: "This is the United Nations calling the peoples of the world."<sup>1</sup>

Today, UN Radio produces over 1,200 original features per year, in the six official UN languages, including Mandarin, Portuguese, Swahili, and Bengali, reaching an estimated audience of 30 million+ worldwide, a week.<sup>2</sup>

## **Ladies and gentlemen**

Radio can help enhance transparency and accountability, by facilitating dialogue between decision-makers and the rest of society. They also play a crucial role in improving the public's understanding of current or emerging issues.

For Example, His Excellency the President declared war on poverty in Namibia, and local media is playing a vital role in helping to get the message out and created a platform for the voices of the people from all 14 regions to be heard.

As we celebrate this year's World Radio Day, I would like therefore to urge the media to help us promote the new the Sustainable Development Goals, adopted to end poverty and improve people's lives by working in a sustainable manner. Information and public awareness campaigns are indispensable tools in making the general public understand the concept of sustainable development and be aware of its importance.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.un.org/en/sections/resources/delegates/index.html>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.unmultimedia.org/avlibrary/content/About-US/>

## **Ladies and Gentlemen**

Broadcast media is a powerful tool in which the UN strives to ensure a vast number of people are able to access critical information such as the SDG's. The importance of an effective Public Service Broadcast system cannot be underestimated.

Here in Namibia, UNESCO's work in the field of public service broadcasting focuses on:

- enhancing the utility of Public Service Broadcasting as an educational and cultural vehicle, especially for disadvantaged communities
- promoting best Public Service Broadcasting practices and professional standards and contributing to relevant revisions of national legislation
- Upholding discussions between media professionals, decision-makers, and other stakeholders on major Public Service Broadcasting -related issues.

UNESCO makes use of Public Service Broadcasting in order to support and promote community radios and to facilitate social communication and support a democratic processes within societies.

## **Ladies and Gentlemen**

Community radio so powerful because of its potential to reach people with little or no access to information. It is an efficient tool for educating and informing the society about critical issues such as health, education, and sustainable development. Community radios also add to the elevation and development of local cultures and languages.

Community stations broadcast content that is popular and relevant to local audience but is often overlooked by commercial or mass media broadcasters. They bring a sense of community ownership, allow people to tackle the issues in their communities and foster interactivity in development issues.

In this way communities tell their own stories, share experiences and, become creators and contributors of media.

Namibia has nine community radio stations around the country and our goal is to have at least one in every region of the country that is specific to the needs of those in that environment.

## **Ladies and Gentlemen**

The social impact of community radio must be people centered and based on multi-dimensional understanding of poverty. Therefore the key indicators of community radio's social impact, are linked to voice, empowerment and local ownership of communication processes.

Gender inequality is a key social challenge that can be addressed through community radio. We cannot eradicate poverty in Namibia by 2025, without our women and girls. Community radio will therefore help us ensure, nobody is left behind.

In conclusion, as we celebrate this year's World Radio Day under the theme, "Radio is YOU" allow me to leave you with a short quote by Tony Benn.

"Broadcasting is really too important to be left to the broadcasters."

I thank you!