

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**STATEMENT BY DR. KALUMBI SHANGULA, MINISTER OF HEALTH AND
SOCIAL SERVICES ON THE OCCASION OF THE FIRST CONSIGNMENT OF
THE COVID-19 VACCINE.**

16 MARCH 2021

**HOSEA KUTAKO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
WINDHOEK**

**Check Against Delivery*

Programme Director, Mr Ben Nangombe, Executive Director, MOHSS
Hon Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, DPM and Minister of MIRCO Cooperation
Hon Jenelly Matundu, Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation
Hon Dr. David Mangwiro, Deputy Minister of Health and Child Care, Zimbabwe
Hon Dr. John Musabayana, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
Your Excellency, Mr. Zhang Yiming, Ambassador of China to Namibia
Your Excellency, Mrs. Rofina Chikava, Ambassador of Zimbabwe to Namibia
Ambassador Penda Naanda, Executive Director, MIRCO
Your Excellency Dr George Kaiyamo, Ambassador of Namibia to China
Senior Government Officials
Distinguished Invited Guests
Members of the Media
Ladies and Gentlemen!

1. Exactly one month ago, on the 16 February 2021, I delivered a Ministerial Statement in the National Assembly on the state of COVID-19 in our country. In that statement, I recounted the long and arduous road our country has traversed since the announcement of the positive COVID-19 index case on the 13 March 2020, the Covid-19 vaccination programme and the status of clinical and pharmaceuticals supplies in Namibia. The COVID-19 preparedness and response has been one of the most extraordinary programmes ever implemented by Government since independence, in terms of its scale, depth and reach. We have proven that when we stand together and pull in the same direction, we can overcome any impediment, no matter how formidable it may be or appears to be. The task is made easier when we have the support and solidarity of our friends in fighting a common enemy. COVID-19 has affected all parts of the world to differing degrees of severity. However, the common denominator is that we are all affected.
2. In the midst of all the challenges, we are here today to witness and to celebrate an historic milestone in this epic battle against the Corona Virus pandemic. The development of vaccines has been hailed globally as one of the strongest weapons in the fight against the pandemic. Humanity owes a great debt of gratitude to the thousands of men and women who have toiled day and night to develop safe and efficacious vaccines of good quality against corona virus in record time. With the roll out of the vaccines, the impact of the pandemic on our societies is going to recede. I take this opportunity to pay tribute and express our sincere gratitude to the Government of the Peoples' Republic of China for their selfless generosity in donating the COVID-19 Vaccine to Namibia. This is a demonstration of true solidarity and friendship between our two countries.
3. At the same time, I wish to sincerely thank the fraternal Government and people of the Republic of Zimbabwe for literally going out of their way, to help deliver Namibia's first consignment of the COVID-19 vaccine from the Peoples Republic of China. We all know that global supply and logistics chains have been disrupted by COVID-19.

Our brothers and sister from Zimbabwe graciously agreed to deliver this consignment so that we can roll out our vaccination campaign.

4. Like other countries, Namibia views the COVID-19 vaccine as a critical tool in returning our country to normalcy. We believe that a safe, effective and well-planned COVID-19 vaccination programme will put our country on a trajectory towards reaching the required levels of herd immunity and eventually overcoming the pandemic. Now that the COVID-19 vaccine has arrived in Namibia, we will hit the ground running. We will not waste any second. Our work will start immediately, guided by a well-articulated plan of action. Vaccination in Namibia will be conducted in Phases. It will be rolled out under the auspices of our existing Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI), latching on to the existing infrastructure, human resources and experience. Although I will provide a more complete statement in the National Assembly on the subject matter, I would like to briefly share some of the salient aspects of Phase 1 of the vaccination plan.

- Vaccination will start in 2 regions, namely Khomas Region and Erongo Region. As it will be recalled, these two regions have, at different times, been classified as epicentres of the COVID-19 pandemic in Namibia.
- The campaign will involve the vaccination of individuals from eligible demographics identified under Phase I of the National Deployment Plan. Vaccination will take place at fixed health facilities, and will be administered by trained Nurses.
- The target populations include frontline health care workers, Community Health Workers, persons who are between 18 to 59 years, persons in close settings and those operating cross-border transportation (Truck drivers, Pilots, cross-border public transport bus drivers), employees at Points of Entry, Police Officers, Journalists, members of the diplomatic corps, Mining and fishery sector employees, religious and traditional leaders, people with disability, minorities and refugees will be prioritised in Phase I. Persons with comorbidities, those older than 60 years old, as well as pregnant and lactating women will be excluded, to allow the country obtain more data on use of the Sinopharm vaccine.
- Vaccination will be conducted at the following sites:

Region	District	Site
1. Khomas	Windhoek	Windhoek Central Hospital
2. Khomas	Windhoek	Katutura Intermediate Hospital
3. Khomas	Windhoek	Rhino Park Hospital
4. Khomas	Windhoek	Lady Pohamba Private Hospital
5. Erongo	Swakopmund	Swakopmund State Hospital
6. Erongo	Swakopmund	Walvis Bay State Hospital
7. Erongo	Walvis Bay	Cottage Private Hospital
8. Erongo	Walvis Bay	Welwitschia Private Hospital

- The period of vaccination under Phase I commences concurrently on 19th March - 16th April 2021 in the selected districts.
 - The vaccine to be used is the Sinopharm SARS-CoV-2 Vaccine. It is a two-dose vaccine, of 0.5ml, administered at Day 0 and Day 28. Individuals confirmed as positive with COVID must wait for 90 days before receiving their first dose. The vaccine has been rolled-out in countries such as China, Seychelles, Morocco, United Arab Emirates, Zimbabwe and others.
 - Clients will be observed for 15 Minutes, and 30 minutes after vaccination. They are encouraged to report telephonically or visit the nearest health facility if they experience any potential side effects or adverse event following immunization (AEFI).
5. Once again, I wish to thank the Governments of the People’s Republic of China and the Republic of Zimbabwe for the selfless generosity. I thank the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Dr Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah for availing herself to receive this generous donation. I thank the media for covering this event. The constant question of “when is Namibia receiving vaccines” is now put to rest. I implore you dear compatriots to welcome and embrace this positive development and avail yourself to be vaccinated. Namibia is a living example of a successful vaccination campaign. When we had nationwide polio outbreak in 2005, we mounted a nationwide polio vaccination campaign. Today we are certified by WHO as polio-free country. We aim to do the same with Covid-19 so that we return to normalcy. Let us work together in the interest of all Namibians.

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