

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**STATEMENT BY HON. NETUMBO NANDI-NDAITWAH,
MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM
AT THE GALA DINNER EVENT HOSTED BY THE MINISTER**

**19th September 2011
20H00**

**BEIJING
CHINA**

His Excellency Mr. SHAO Qiwei, Chairman; National Tourism Administration of P.R. of China

His Excellency Ambassador Nambahu to the People's Republic of China

Invited esteemed guests and operators with interest in Namibia

Distinguished guests, media, ladies and gentlemen,

It is really a great pleasure to be here today to share some thoughts about the collaboration between China and Namibia. When I talk about the collaboration between China and Namibia in the field of tourism, I have two issues to share with you, as part of my mission.

First, for the past 5 years since we took a decision to explore ways and means to enter the China Market to showcase to, and attract, Chinese to convert them into tourists to Namibia, as we have seen growth in tourism numbers. But most of the arrivals are those coming on employment. We need to work hard to attract those who would be the tourists to experience our country.

Tourism is the third largest industry in Namibia. When people visit our country the smile they leave with is due in no small part to our efforts as welcoming hosts. But even if our local tourism industry is doing well, standing still is not an option. **Standing still means falling behind....** That is why the Government of the Republic of Namibia, through the Head of State, requested me to lead this delegation. Along with the strong delegation of Namibia's tourism team, we are here to make the most of

the long sought Approved Destination Status that Namibia was accorded to advocate and cement Namibia's commitment to our special relationship with the Republic China and to extend invitation to its citizens to take time and visit our country as tourists.

One of the priorities that I want to announce tonight is the need to open up business links and draw new visitors to our country from China by continuing to market Namibia as a preferred destination for Chinese tourists in Southern Africa. **We are fully aware that the two cultures differ.** There is one difference between western tourists and Chinese tourists. Western tourists would like to taste different local foods and cuisines when they travel anywhere. Chinese usually want to have Chinese cuisines during their travels. However, in four to five-star hotels, there are excellent Chinese cuisines. **For the three-star hotels, Chinese tourists cannot find Chinese cuisines.** They do not feel comfortable because of that. That requires a better understanding of customs of the tourists from China and provide specialized package for them so that they can feel more comfortable when they travel. Also we are aware that Chinese tourists are mainly known for shopping, so it is important to develop holiday packages that will appeal to them. Whilst we offer specialty offers for shopping such as diamonds, prestige leather fashion clothes and other gems stones, we offer keenly wildlife and open landscape experiences. And those who aspire to be full of energy, Namibia offers hunting, mountain climbing, hot air ballooning adventure experiences, amongst others. As in China,

Namibia boasts with diverse authentic cultural heritages for people to explore.

Secondly, I want to make an important announcement and talk for the last few minutes about our special relationship with Beijing. With the frequent exchanges of the leaders between the two countries, lots of consensuses have been reached. We are here to work with you and we will be looking for you to come to the table for a real push on tourism in China just as we will need you at the table for our nation to prosper. As you can see, China is a critical market for our country's future prosperity. That is why I am pleased to announce that we will work closely with the Chinese National Tourism Authority and key tourism operators and partners, through appointed Representative Agents in China, to raise the awareness, so that Chinese people know Namibia and to visit it. Realizing this goal means working together to ensure we are known in China as a great place to visit.

As I conclude, it is critical to attract direct foreign investment from China to Namibia in the tourism industry through development of tourism resorts and restaurants that shall cater for the Chinese traveler. This is an opportunity to be tapped.

I am confident that there will be more people coming to this area as we improve the situations and provide more diversified packages to those tourists from China.

Thank you again for having responded so positively to my invitation and for your presence here tonight. I look forward to years of partnership, prosperity, community and success!!!!

THANK YOU