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Remarks by the UN Resident Coordinator, Ms Hopolang Phororo

The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of UNCTAD.



**Remarks for the UN Resident Coordinator, Ms Hopolang Phororo
Launch of the report, "*Rapid Assessment for Value Addition and Diversification to support Namibia*"
Windhoek, 19 February 2026**

Director of Programme, Mr. Ned Sibeya, NPC

Hon Ambassador Selma Ashipala-Musavyi, Minister of International Relations and Trade.
Hon. Ambassador Dr. Kaire Mbuende, Director General of the National Planning Commission
Mr. Noriaki Sadamoto, Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of Japan in Namibia
Ms. Rebeca Grynspan, Secretary-General, UNCTAD

Honourable Ministers,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Representatives of Government,
Development Partners,
Private Sector Leaders,
Colleagues from the United Nations,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour for me to join you this morning for the launch of the Rapid Assessment for Value Addition and Diversification within and beyond the critical energy transition minerals value chain in Namibia.

Allow me to begin by expressing my sincere appreciation to the National Planning Commission and UNCTAD for their leadership in advancing this important work, as well as to all national institutions, partners, and stakeholders whose collaboration and insights made this assessment possible. I acknowledge the Government of Japan for making the assessment possible and all the other work the UN does jointly in Namibia.

Today's launch is both timely and strategic.

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Namibia finds itself at a pivotal moment in its development journey. The country's rich endowment of natural resources—particularly critical minerals that are essential for the global energy transition—places Namibia in a position of growing international relevance. At the same time, persistent challenges related to unemployment, economic concentration, and vulnerability to external shocks underscore the urgency of economic transformation. This report speaks directly to that challenge.

It sends a clear message that: sustainable development will not be achieved through natural resources extraction alone. The real opportunity lies in value addition, diversification, and the deliberate building

of productive capabilities across the economy—in ways that create decent jobs, strengthen domestic industries, and ensure that growth is inclusive and resilient.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The assessment provides practical, evidence-based insights into how Namibia can move from potential to impact. It identifies concrete opportunities across multiple sectors, highlights key capacity gaps, and points to policy actions that can help translate national ambition into real economic outcomes.

Importantly, this work is fully aligned with Namibia’s national development priorities, including the objectives of the Sixth National Development Plan (NDP6), which places strong emphasis on industrialisation, job creation, and inclusive growth. It also reinforces Namibia’s broader vision of positioning itself as a competitive, value-driven economy within the region and the global marketplace.

From the perspective of the United Nations, this report strongly supports the direction set out in the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF 2025 - 2029) for Namibia. It reflects our shared commitment to supporting economic transformation that is people entered, environmentally responsible, and grounded in strong national ownership.

At its core, diversification is not just about new products or new markets. It is about ensuring that communities benefit meaningfully from Namibia’s natural wealth. And it is about building an economy that is resilient in the face of global change.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The report also reminds us that transformation requires coordination and partnership. Addressing constraints related to skills, finance, technology, infrastructure, and implementation cannot be done by any single institution alone. Success will depend on sustained collaboration between Government, the private sector, development partners, and the UN system—working together in a coherent and strategic manner.

The United Nations stands firmly committed to this partnership. Through our collective programmes and technical support, we will continue to work closely with the Government of Namibia to support policy coherence, institutional strengthening, investment mobilisation, and programmes implementation—so that the findings of this assessment lead to tangible results on the ground.

In closing, let me emphasise that this report is a starting point and a continuation. A starting point for dialogue, for coordinated action, and for bold but practical decisions that move Namibia further along the path of inclusive and sustainable development, complementing all our achievements thus far.

I congratulate all those involved in bringing this important work to fruition, and I look forward to the discussions that will follow today.

Thank you for your attention.