



**Remarks by Honourable Dr. Peya Mushelenga, MP  
Minister of Information and Communication  
Technology at the World Press Freedom Day 2021  
Media Partnership Branch**

**24 February 2021  
Hilton Hotel  
10h00**

Mr. Jaffar Moussa-Elkahdum - UNESCO country Representative,  
Mr. Mbeuta Ua Ndjarakana, the Executive Director of MICT  
Mrr. Frank Steffan – Chairperson of the Editors Forum of Namibia  
Mr. Toivo Ndjebele – WPFD Champion  
The Media Fraternity  
Ladies and gentlemen

We are gathered today to create partnerships for World Press Freedom Day that will be held in Namibia in May 2021. The significance of this day is that it reiterates commitment to democracy and values of good governance. American academic, Professor Peter T. Leeson contends in his publication titled “Media freedom, political knowledge and participation”<sup>1</sup> that media freedom fosters political participation and awareness. It pleases me to note that Namibia has sound credentials for press freedom and the safety of our journalists. The land of the brave has been ranked number one in Africa for the last four years, with the exception of 2018, and 23 in the world, for upholding press freedom. It is worth noting that Namibia is among a few countries in the world with no journalist or media practitioner killed thus far, detained, imprisoned or threatened with their lives, resulting from performing their duties.

It is therefore our pleasure and honour as Namibians to host this year’s World Press Freedom Day celebrations, co-inciding with the 30th anniversary of the Windhoek Declaration. The hosting of this global event provides us with an opportunity to recast our minds on the journey travelled to rekindle the country’s history of being the seat of this historic Declaration. I further wish to inform you that preparations for the global event are well underway with our partner, UNESCO, and I can assure you that various teams are working around the clock to ensure that everything is place, come that time.

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<sup>1</sup> Leeson P. T., 2008, Media Freedom, Political Knowledge, and Participation, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 22 (2) 155–169.

Press freedom require a multi-pronged approach and, therefore, multiple stakeholders. Accordingly, the successful hosting of the World Press Freedom Day 2021 will not be possible without the support from you, the media, who over the years continue to inform and educate the Namibian nation. Thus, we are here to seek media partnerships for this auspicious event and I count on your support in this venture. Your continued support is highly commendable and the Namibian government remains grateful to your generosity.

The theme for this year's WPDF conference is ***“Information as a Public Good”***, a befitting theme as we would finalise the Access to Information Bill, which seeks to promote access to public and private information by citizens of this country. This Bill further aims to strengthen the country's democracy and its continued efforts for accountable, transparent and inclusive governance.

### **Director of Ceremonies**

His Excellency, President Hage Geingob, in his New Year's message, declared 2021 the Year of Resilience, calling on unity among Namibians amidst the challenges facing the country. Our media houses captains are with us this morning and my plea to you is to join hands with us, to make this event a resounding success. Government sees the media fraternity as the fourth pillar of democracy and a vital partner in its quest for socio and economic development.

We will be welcoming close to Two-Hundred local and international delegates for the 1-3 May event, and in compliance with our covid-19 regulations, the global conference will be held both physically and virtually and I believe the conference will draw greater participation through its online platforms.

As we embrace the new normal, let us welcome our guests with true Namibian hospitality, so-that all of us can be proud for having contributed to the hosting of a world class event.

I thank you