



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MICT

Ministry of Information and
Communication Technology

**STATEMENT BY HON. EMMA THEOFELUS, DEPUTY MINISTER OF ICT
AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) OF THE INTERNET
EXCHANGE POINT (IXP) ASSOCIATION**

23 February 2021

National Planning Commission – Auditorium Room

The Executive Director, Ministry of ICT;
The Chairperson, IXP Association of Namibia;
Executive members of the IXP Association;
IXP Peering members;
MICT officials
Distinguished invited ICT stakeholders;
Ladies and Gentlemen;
Good morning!

I take this opportunity to convey my sincere appreciation for the opportunity accorded to officiate at this important AGM for the Internet Exchange Point (IXP) Association.

The National Internet Exchange Points and Regional Internet Exchange Points (RIXPs) was one of the projects under the SADC Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan (RIDMP) which was approved by the Heads of State at the SADC Summit held in August 2012. The principal role of an IXP is to keep local Internet traffic within local infrastructure and to reduce costs associated with overseas carriers to exchange local and intercontinental internet traffic. On this basis, the Ministry of ICT on behalf of the Namibian government received technical and material support from the African Union Commission and the African Internet Exchange System project, to establish the National Internet Exchange Point. On the 7th of March 2014, Namibia joined other countries globally by launching its first National IXP with the support from African Union Commission.

For the past Seven (7) good years, Namibian Internet Service Providers (ISPs) connected to the National IXP have been offering better quality services to their customers through their exchange of internet traffic between their networks and to interconnect directly.

The establishment of the IXP reduced costs of paying overseas carriers to exchange local and continental internet traffic. The IXP allowed local traffic to be exchanged in the country and this has met the demand for and facilitated speedy exchange and flow of local internet traffic. On the other hand, it also cuts down the operating costs, reduces

internet access prices to the public and provide faster response times from local websites and other local interactive services.

Despite the many challenges the Association is faced with, the Ministry appreciates the generous efforts the current Association's executive members and the industry stakeholders put in keeping this project IXP functional and thanks them for their patriotism. These commitments compliment the Namibian government's efforts to ensure that ICT services are accessible to the nation. Similarly, a round of applause to the ISPs and other institutions from the educational and financial market, who grabbed the opportunity to be connected to the IXP and again, I urge those that are yet to join to do so because there is no reason for them to be left behind and out.

The Ministry therefore pledges its continuous support and commitment to the Association in finding solutions to the challenges. The government's wish is to oversee the growth of the National IXP into a Regional Internet Exchange Point (RIXP) and be able to connect with other regional and international peers and bring more investment and services to our country and will provide our outmost support to achieve this milestone.

Ladies and Gentleman, allow me to call upon all other ISPs and private institutions who are not yet connected to this prestigious infrastructure to come on board and enjoy the benefits and be able to provide services to their customers. As you might be aware, the IXP Association is registered with the Ministry of Industrialization and Trade as a non-profit organization and its source of funding is merely from membership contributions. I therefore humbly request the industry stakeholders to provide financial support for the Association to be able to carry out maintenance on its infrastructure and manage the needed operations.

Ladies and Gentleman, as you gather here today to elect the new leadership and chart the way forward, I would like to urge you to strategise on finalising the website in order to enhance the Association's visibility; finalising the Procurement Policy and Governance Model as well as connecting to the Regional IXP. I therefore wish you all fruitful deliberations.

I thank you

