



OPENING REMARKS BY

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**AT THE COMMUNICATIONS REGULATORY AUTHORITY
OF NAMIBIA (CRAN) ANNUAL STAKEHOLDER
CONSULTATIVE MEETING WITH TELECOMMUNICATIONS
SERVICE LICENSEES**

Date: Monday, 28 March 2022

Time: 08h30

Venue: Stratos Ballroom, Avani Hotel

- Esteemed Telecommunications Service Licensees,
- CRAN Executive Management and team,
- Director of Ceremonies,

Good morning and a very warm welcome! Thank you for accepting our invitation to this important consultative meeting established to create an engagement platform for among other, matters pertaining to the 2020 Market Report, Universal Service Study, Data Study 2021, Termination Rates, Market Saturation Assessment, SIM Registration Implementation, and the way forward on Number Portability.

Effective stakeholder engagement with captains and members of our industry provides a platform for us to communicate meaningfully and create dialogue between CRAN and our Telecommunications Service Licensees.

It is critical for CRAN to share information on a proactive and timely basis with all our Licensees in order to facilitate understanding of the needs and expectations, so that CRAN serves the interest of all inclusive of our ICT consumers in Namibia.

Director of Ceremonies,

So much has transpired since we last met in March 2021. You may recall that shortly after our engagement, our country and the globe lost many people due to the pandemic. Sadly, our industry was not spared, we lost great men and women who were passionate about ICT and they had visions to move our industry to greatness. May I request that we all stand and observe a moment of silence as we remember the captains of our industry that we lost due to COVID-19.

You may be seated.

The business of today, bears reference to the discussions we had in March 2021 and the various actions that were undertaken between then and today.

Concerns were raised around the challenges on expansion and market entry by new Telecommunications Service Licensees entrants. Furthermore, the following issues were highlighted and raised:

- Unavailability of Mobile Virtual Network Operator (MVNO) in Namibia after more the 5 years of discussions;
- Delay in implementation of Number Portability;
- No active infrastructure sharing (national roaming);
- High backhauling costs to expand to other area's other than Windhoek and Swakopmund/Walvisbay;
- Limited spectrum – especially in the spectrum bands below 1GHz;
- Limited infrastructure sharing;
- No real open access allowed by any licensee at this stage; and
- Cost to provide service into unserved rural areas is costly and can only be achieved if a licensee starts to share active and passive infrastructure sharing.

Director of Ceremonies,

CRAN drafted various assessment reports which are the Data Study report, Asymmetric Termination Rates report, UAS Gap Analysis and Levy Projection Report, 2020 Market report, and Market Saturation Assessment report. All these reports will be presented and discussed today.

As you may be aware, the purpose of the Data Study report is to assess data prices and their affordability. There are two main findings or outcomes from this assessment in that international benchmarking illustrates that Namibia is no longer a price leader in Africa, and insufficient competition leads to higher prices and insufficient investment for fast and affordable Internet for all segments of society. Helene will present further on this topic in her presentation.

The report on Asymmetric Termination rates assessment investigated the implementation of asymmetric termination rates of all Licensees holding Number Licenses, it must be noted that only MTC and Focus Engineering responded. In the presentation and discussions by Helene, we shall in depth discuss the recommendations proposed by this report.

Director of ceremonies,

The Universal Access and Service Study Report highlights the infrastructure aspects of mobile broadband, namely access, usage and affordability, which fall under CRAN's supervision.

Whereas the 2020 Market Report assessed developments in the Telecommunication Sectors for 2020, it further takes into account the financial health and performance of Namibian operators; consumer price developments in the sector; changes in the competitive landscape; and general trends for 2021. Helene will take us through this report and highlight the important sections that require our attention and further actions.

On the other hand, conditions on Service Providers in terms of SIM registration were imposed and consultation in this regard has been completed and we will today discuss the implementation timelines day.

Director of Ceremonies,

Namibia is yet to implement telecommunications Number Portability, two years after publishing the regulations. The delay pertains to the finalisation of some of the action items contained in the implementation plan and readiness matrix in respect of some operators. The timeline will be determined once all the steps in

the implementation plan and readiness matrix are finalised. We shall have a detailed discussion on this topic later in the day.

Director of Ceremonies, Ladies and gentleman,

We have many issues to discuss and unpack in the time available to us today. Allow me in conclusion to welcome everyone again and may our conversation today bear fruit towards fostering long, lasting and positive relations for the benefit of our industry and all ICT consumers.

I thank you for your kind attention!