



WELCOMING REMARKS BY

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**MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY
(MICT)**

**Official Visit on the Establishment of Diplomatic Internet Data
Corridors Between Malawi and Namibia**

Date: Thursday, 12 September 2022

Venue: AM Weinberg Estate

Time: 08h00

- Director of Ceremonies,
- Mr. Daud Suleman, Director General – MACRA,
- Dr. Paulos Nyirenda, Chairperson – ISP Association,
- Esteemed MACRA Delegates,
- Esteemed Captains of Industry,
- Executive Management teams,
- Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning and thank you for choosing to convene in our beautiful capital city, Windhoek, for this important bilateral engagement with Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA).

Allow me to extend our warm welcome to the delegation from MACRA. Thank you for reaching out to the Communications Regulatory Authority of Namibia (CRAN) with the request to collaborate with Namibia on establishing diplomatic internet data corridors.

Director of Ceremonies,

The Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is particularly excited about this engagement, as it strengthens our tenacity, as a country to become a leader in the provision of digital infrastructure and capacity in the SADC region. I am particularly pleased that this engagement is in line with SADC's objective on

development of digital infrastructural projects, that drive regional integration as outlined in the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (2020-2023).

Indeed, ICTs are vital in driving progress towards achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). ICTs are already empowering billions of individuals around the world – by providing access to education, healthcare, e-government, mobile banking, and many other services.

The challenge for Namibia, and indeed the entire SADC region, is to achieve universal connectivity – to promote technological innovation and the deployment of advanced facilities for the benefit of all our citizens.

New trends and approaches to regulation advocate for collaborative regulation as an essential tool for digital transformation and bridging the digital gap. Collaborative regulation in this context primarily means the sharing of key resources to ensure that the underserved and unserved communities receive access to affordable and quality ICT services and products. This is also in line with the draft SADC Digital Transformation Strategy, which calls for universal affordable access and inclusive adoption, supported by robust resilient and secure infrastructure.

Namibia has been fortunate to have two landing undersea cables and an excellent optic fibre network. We believe that both assets have sufficient capacity to provide services not only to Namibians, but also to the people of Malawi. Our preparedness to share these resources lies in our dream of a digitally transformed SADC region. I am thus pleased that CRAN and the operators, positively responded to the invitation.

Equally, Namibia needs collaborations like these to bring together regional experts to share experiences, opportunities, lessons, and ideas on how to accelerate digital inclusion and transformation in our developing countries.

Distinguished delegates,

The undersea submarine cables will not only provide reliable internet connection for Namibia but can also extend this connectivity to various landlocked countries in southern Africa. I trust that your v your engagement with the operators will present opportunities to your respective countries, as Namibia has positioned herself not just as a provider of dry ports for our landlocked neighbours, but also for data connectivity.

In conclusion, with these few words, I wish to welcome you again heartedly to our beautiful country and its friendly people. May this visit

be fruitful for ICT consumers in both countries, and I hope that you will have an enjoyable visit and constructive dialogues.

I thank you!