



**Motivational Address**  
 by Veronica De Klerk - WAD Executive Director  
 during the 6<sup>th</sup> Graduation Ceremony of unemployed people  
 held at  
 The WAD Karas Training Centre, Keetmanshoop  
 Friday, 14 September 2012

[Director of Ceremonies – Mr Jordaan Rikambura– WAD Regional Coordinator - Karas]

- **Director of Ceremonies:**
- **Hon. Lucia Basson – Special Advisor to the Hon. Governor for the Karas region;**
- **Your Worship, Cllr. Moses Titus - Mayor of Keetmanshoop;**
- **Hon. Jims Christiaan - Regional Cllr for the Keetmanshoop Rural Const;**
- **Mr Holger Haibach: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung - Resident Representative and EU Project Director: *“My Rights as a Woman and Namibian Citizen”***
- **Mr Schott Richards: Old Mutual Property Executive**
- **Ms Beatrice De Koe: Nedloans Loan Officer of the Keetmanshoop Branch of Nedbank Namibia;**
- **Pastor Zezito Epifanio: From the Logos Family Church;**
- **Members of the Media;**
- **Chairperson and Members of the “Karas Community Voice”**
- **Members of the WAD Management;**
- **WAD Trainers; Distinguished Invited Guests; and**
- **Dear Graduants;**

**Good Morning!**

It is a great pleasure for me to be present here at Keetmanshoop today, at the 6<sup>th</sup> Graduation Ceremony of the WAD Karas Training Centre - and as I am looking over this impressive audience, consisting of a large number of graduants who have

successfully completed their courses in various subjects, I feel a wonderful sense of pride because you have taken the first step towards improving the quality of your lives and in the process, you have made your parents very proud!

I welcome and acknowledge with appreciation, the presence of the Hon. Lucia Basson, the Special Advisor to the Governor of the Karas region who will present the Keynote Address of the Hon. Governor. I further acknowledge with appreciation, the presence of His Worship, Cllr Moses Titus, the Mayor of Keetmanshoop, as well as our respected leaders at the Head Table for their presence. This clearly attests to your profound interest in the empowerment of unemployed young people in your region, which is greatly appreciated.

Ladies & Gentlemen: the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung has acted as the main Sponsor of WAD since the organisation's establishment 18 years ago. I therefore, express my profound appreciation to the Foundation for its commitment towards the upliftment of the people of Namibia and for having sponsored a large part of the training of the students which enabled them to graduate during this event.

I furthermore, acknowledge the sponsorship of the Namdeb Diamond Corporation towards this training centre for 2011/2012, with great appreciation, to the tune of N\$100 000,00. This has assisted the centre profoundly to carry out its development programmes for the past year.

It is further with great appreciation that I express my special appreciation towards the Manager of the OK Grocer Store, Mr Roy Oosthuizen, for his sponsorship towards the refreshments of our past workshops. This is a shining example of how members of the Private Sector are eager to demonstrate their social responsibility towards the empowerment of the youth at the town.

Ladies and Gentlemen, focusing on equally important sponsors - Old Mutual Namibia and Nedbank Namibia, are trusted names in the country. This Graduation Ceremony would not have been possible had it not been for their wonderful financial support towards all WAD's graduations across the country, for the past 7 years.

**Ladies & Gentlemen: Please join me in giving all these wonderful aforementioned sponsors a big hand!**

I trust that you have listened carefully to what Old Mutual and Nedbank have to offer rural communities. One important example is, that it is crucial for parents, to acquire study insurance policies for their children already now, to enable them to advance to higher learning institutions, such as the University of Namibia, the Polytechnic, Vocational Training Centres, IUM etc, once they had completed Grade 12.

I would therefore advise you to plan timeously and wisely, and not to wait until it is too late.

\*\*\*Most importantly – L & G: I wish to mention that all business which will be concluded with the Old Mutual or Nedbank today, is very important, because this will enable WAD to earn financial points for such transactions, which will eventually be converted into cash. These funds will immediately be ploughed back into community development.

Ladies & Gentlemen: I am particularly proud of what this training centre has achieved since it opened its doors during 2007. It is WAD's pride that this Human Development Centre has, since its establishment, succeeded in giving hope and opening windows of opportunity to many young people who have found jobs in the labour market or who have established their own income-generating ventures.

I am further pleased that this centre has served as a “catchment” area for school-leavers and school drop-outs since its establishment, and very proud that the centre has hitherto trained close to 1 000 unemployed young people. According to the Head of the Centre, an estimated 70% of the students trained, have already found jobs in the labour market or started their own income-generating ventures.

In this regard, I wish to express my sincere gratitude towards the dedicated trainers here at the centre, which is headed by highly committed staff and I request them to stand as I mention their names. Firstly, a vibrant young man, Njede as well as the computer trainer, **Frank Frederiks** and the Needlework trainer, **Fredrika Vries** - all these young people are highly dedicated Trainers and who are really doing a great job! Let us give these wonderful Trainers a big hand of applause!

I am therefore very pleased to announce that, after having written their examinations, a total of 145 students will receive their certificates this morning, in Computer Literacy; Office Administration and Typing; Tailoring; as well as highly interesting training in the Contents of Gender-related laws, which include: the Combating of the Rape Act; the Combating of the Domestic Violence Act; the Child Maintenance Act; and the Married Persons' Equality Act".

There is no doubt that this centre should be viewed as a "*Beacon of Hope*" which can change lives, depending on how you, as young people, would utilize the opportunities it offers.

However, Ladies and Gentlemen - Irrespective of the large number of students which this centre is training to equip unemployed young people with needed skills for the labour market, it is most unfortunate that Gender Based Violence, the raping of women, murder and attempted murder; and the general high crime rate in the South, are burdening the souls of the people here.

I am saying this, because most disturbing statistics of the aforementioned crimes committed within the Karas region for 2011 alone, were recently provided to WAD by the Statistics Department of the Namibian Police. But before I mention these statistics, I wish to congratulate the Karas region that no single case of "Baby Dumping" was reported to the Police during 2011.

This is most encouraging and indeed, an outstanding achievement for this region, especially in view of the fact, that it is a huge problem in other parts of the country.

But allow me to mention the following disturbing crime-related statistics for the Karas region, as reported to the Police for 2011 alone –

<b>109</b>	<b>Cases of Gender Based Violence related crimes were reported;</b>
<b>52</b>	<b>Rape cases:</b>
<b>22</b>	<b>Murder cases:</b>
<b>60</b>	<b>cases of Attempted Murder</b>
<b>1 716</b>	<b>cases of Robbery and theft</b>
<b>1 649</b>	<b>cases of Assault; and</b>
<b>1 270</b>	<b>other Crime-related cases were reported which <u>exclude</u> the aforementioned categories.</b>

Ladies & Gentlemen: These figures are most alarming! But something which is tremendously disturbing, is the high prevalence of various types of crime, in which **the youth** are involved.

These crimes which are being committed by the youth, are in stark contrast with the responsibility resting on their shoulders, because the youth are the flag bearers of the future..... the leaders of tomorrow.

Our hopes are pinned on you, dear young people, to make Namibia the proud industrialized nation which we want it to become by 2030.

Ladies and Gentlemen: Just as our name indicates, women remain close to our hearts and remain our business! It is therefore, disheartening for Women's Action for Development to express its horror and condemnation regarding the spate of gruesome killings of women and the dumping of babies by young girls which are currently happening across the country, unabatedly. Needless to say, these evils have sent shockwaves all over the country.

**The question is: "What has gone wrong in our society - and what on earth have we become as a nation?"**

It remains shameful that Namibia counts among those countries in which horrific violence against women and baby dumping are conspicuous social evils. Hardly a day goes by without reports in the media of the killings of women, or the discovery of a new born infant, unscrupulously dumped by its mother!

Key to this issue is undoubtedly the parental home which has failed society in the upbringing of their sons and daughters. If this were not true, why then are our sons and daughters engaging in these gruesome passion killings and dumping their babies?

The great concern which brings a cloud of pessimism over the souls of the nation, is that reports of such crimes which are being sent by the media all over the world and which are very negative for the image of the country in the eyes of foreign investors, may create the impression that Namibia is a crime-ridden country and therefore unsuitable for foreign investment.

It is time that we should admit to ourselves that we are finding ourselves in a serious crisis of Gender Based Violence and other forms of crime!

WAD therefore, urgently appeals to Government to take the lead to launch a National Campaign against all forms of crime, as well as all forms of violence which are being committed against women in the country, as can be seen in the media every single day of our lives.

Since there is still an enormous lack of co-operation and support for the work of the Police by the Namibian citizenry, this National Campaign should result in at least the following examples of how crime can be curbed:

1. That much greater sensitization and involvement of the entire citizenry should be achieved, in the national **“Stand-up Against Crime” campaigns** of the Namibian Police all over the country;
2. That much greater efforts by the Police should result in sensitizing NGO’s; Churches; Higher Learning institutions; youth movements, schools, etc to participate in the national **“Stand-up Against Crime” campaigns** across the country;
3. That the school subject, ***“Life Skills”***, should include a chapter on all aspects of criminality to prepare and inform learners at an early age about the consequences of crime and for them to refrain from crime in all its forms;
4. That such **“Stand-up Against Crime” campaigns** should include the print and electronic media, which should run campaign advertisements, **free of charge**, to continuously sensitize and educate the public against crime;
5. That, at all entry points of Namibia, large bill boards should inform visitors, possible drug smugglers and other potential criminals that they are entering a **“Zero-tolerance for Crime “ country**, and that transgressors will surely feel the wrath of the law;
6. That for this reason, our Honourable Members of Parliament should take the lead, to promulgate very tough laws which will give impetus to the concept of Namibia being a **“Zero-tolerance for Crime” country**, which in turn, will give jurisdiction to our Courts of Justice to impose such tough sentences on perpetrators, as promulgated by the two Houses of Parliament; and lastly -
7. That all offenders who are sentenced to serve time in prison, should be exposed to substantial compulsory labour on national projects (and here I am thinking of free labour, for instance, the envisaged Neckartal Dam), as

well as compulsory classes for inmates on character-building and the re-shaping of their lives.

Having said that, Ladies & Gentlemen - and seeing that Namibia is currently finding itself in a crisis of Gender Based Violence and other forms of crime which scare off investors, I sincerely trust that the aforementioned proposals will be taken in a serious light by the appropriate authorities in Government, to once and for all, address the shocking evils which are getting a stranglehold on our country.

...And now, turning to you, dear Graduants: I am immensely proud of what you have achieved today, because you have taken the first step in the right direction, which is paving the way to a bright future for yourselves. I congratulate you and I wish you the best for the future.

It is indeed a shame that many young people are still sadly lacking the assertiveness to be enterprising enough to step forward with the courage of their conviction, to start own viable income-generating ventures which will develop into established businesses, such as a street market for tourists.

It is thus my plea for you to be courageous enough, to come forward to start producing any kind of articles for which there is a market, since Keetmanshoop is the Gateway to 2 crossing points of the Namibian border to South Africa, which therefore provides an active flow of tourists continuously crossing the border.

Keetmanshoop should not take a back seat for these wonderful opportunities which currently exist! You, as young and energetic people, should be bold enough to venture into the unknown. After all, pioneers are not found among those who sit back and only dream about the cause of history. No! Pioneers are indeed found among those who **make** history!

Let us motivate one another to forge ahead, even in the face of great adversity!

And speaking about adversity, it reminds me that when the great British Admiral Nelson, who had the use of only one eye - once fought a battle at sea against a very strong enemy, and when his men fearfully shouted: ..."Sir, we are **losing** the battle", he defiantly put his telescope to his **blind eye** and pointed it towards the enemy and shouted: "*I cannot see that we are losing the battle*"! Needless to say, his men fought on, and **won** the battle!

Therefore, dear graduants: let us fight on and win the battle against poverty! Let us think bigger; Let us work smarter and perform greater.....!

...And finally, dear Graduants, It is my prayer that, in the next couple of months, you will step forward as young, confident entrepreneurs, who are brave enough to start your own business ventures, or to find employment in the labour market.

Be in control and emerge from the chains of poverty, and move without fear, towards your destiny!

The time for change is NOW! Step out of Poverty NOW, and do what you have to do! .....And if you say to me..... "**BUT NO, I CAN'T**" - Then I say to you.....  
**YES, YOU CAN!**      **THANK YOU!**