Remarks by the Acting CEO of the Namibia Training Authority ANNA ESTER NGHIPONDOKA at the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the NTA and the Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Skills Sector Education and Training Authority (merSETA)

EMBARGO: MONDAY, APRIL 22ND, 2013.

NAMPOWER CONVENTION CENTRE, WINDHOEK.
• CEO OF THE MANUFACTURING, ENGINEERING AND RELATED SKILLS SECTOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING AUTHORITY (merSETA), Dr. RAYMOND PATEL;
• CHAIRPERSONS AND MEMBERS OF THE NTA’s INDUSTRY SKILLS COMMITTEES;
• REPRESENTATIVES OF INDUSTRY;
• ESTEEMED INVITED GUESTS;
• MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA
• LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

Good Morning

Allow me first of all to welcome you all. The Namibia Training Authority is delighted to host you at this breakfast meeting to witness the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Skills Sector Education and Training Authority (merSETA).

A special welcome to our friends from South Africa – Dr. Raymond Patel and team, we hope you enjoy your short visit and we look forward to you crossing the Orange River on a far more frequent basis in future to visit the Land of The Brave!

• ESTEEMED INVITED GUESTS;
• LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

More and more countries are seeing the potential of Vocational Education and Training in bringing about economic growth and development. And our government is no exception.

As such, our government has entrusted the Namibia Training Authority with the responsibility to grow the quality and quantity of Vocational Education and Training in our country. This objective is encapsulated in our new five-year strategic plan, which in turn is driven by five main key focus areas:
  o Organisational Effectiveness;
  o Funding;
  o Regulation;
  o Training and Related Services Provision; and
  o The Collection of the Vocational Education and Training Levy.

In our focus on these objectives, we intend meeting the skills challenges of the future.

However, given the challenges we face as a country, this will require new and innovative ways of collaborating among all of the relevant players involved in Technical and Vocational Education and Training.

As such, it will also require us to increase and intensify collaboration at national, regional and trans-national levels.
• ESTEEMED INVITED GUESTS;
• LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

Negotiations towards this agreement to be signed today, started in 2012.

The Namibia Training Authority targeted the Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Skills Sector Education and Training Authority (merSETA), because of its wide range of successes and innovations in establishing training arrangements and quality assurance mechanisms in the Manufacturing, Engineering and related sectors.

The Memorandum of Understanding makes provision for cooperation in a wide range of areas, which include amongst others:
- Supporting the exchange of training packages, including but not limited to Qualifications, Unit Standards, Curriculum and Training Manuals;
- Encouraging the recognition, articulation and credit transfer where credits on the Namibian and South African Qualifications Frameworks obtained, are aligned; and
- Sharing best practice in the areas of assessment, certification and quality assurance.

The Namibia Training Authority further wishes merSETA to support us in the identification of suitable and accredited South African training providers in areas related to the Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector, where Namibians can obtain South African qualifications, if such capacity does not exist within the borders of Namibia.

In our endeavor to promote Technical and Vocational Education and Training as a viable career path for young Namibians, we also would like to draw on merSETA’s wealth of experience to support us in the preparation and successful implementation of skills competitions within the Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector.

• merSETA CEO, Dr. Raymond Patel

There continues to exist significant scope for more substantive and mutually beneficial cooperation in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training field. Your institution, and indeed your country, are considered leaders in this area in the sub-region.

As such, we will continue to innovate how we can intensify our strategic and mutually beneficial partnership with your institution and your country in bringing together industry, education and research in delivering a Vocational Education and Training regime that is relevant to our country’s development needs and which is able to respond to new technological, economic and demographic challenges.

As an organization, the NTA views collaboration as an effective means towards meeting the huge skills development challenges before us. As such, we will continue to explore similar collaborations with other Sector Education and Training Authorities in your country to encompass a wider range of industry and private sector stakeholders in delivering effective
Technical and Vocational Education and Training solutions for our country.

• **ESTEEMED INVITED GUESTS;**
• **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**

The support offered by merSETA in the areas of cooperation must be interpreted in a spirit of good will, and not strictly as obligatory requirements of our agreement.

Therefore, in as much as the Namibia Training Authority expects merSETA to make available experts in the relevant areas of cooperation to support us in the establishment and maintenance of systems required for the successful implementation of this Memorandum, we accept the fact that our cooperation will be based on the availability of experts and resources.

However, the Namibia Training Authority will do its utmost to ensure that we benefit from the partnership that merSETA has with industries in Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector that operates in both South Africa and Namibia, and vice versa, that merSETA benefits from Namibian companies operating in South Africa.

• **merSETA CEO, Dr. Raymond Patel**

Allow me therefore to thank you for your leadership and your administrative staff for their hard work and commitment, which have culminated in this agreement, we sign today.

Rest assured of the Namibia Training Authority’s full commitment towards our cooperation.

• **ESTEEMED INVITED GUESTS;**
• **LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:**

Allow me to conclude by offering you a quote by African-American writer, Ashkari Johnson Hodari, who wrote, and I quote:

“If everyone helps to hold up the sky, then one person does not become tired.”

This quote, I believe is at the heart of what cooperation is all about. It teaches us that cooperation continues to be a higher moral principle than competition.

I thank you.