



POLYTECHNIC OF NAMIBIA

SPEECH

BY

PPOF TJAMA TJIVIKUA

RECTOR OF THE POLYTECHNIC OF NAMIBIA

ON THE OCCASION OF THE MTC BURSARY AWARDS

CEREMONY

27 MAY 2013

08:00

PROTEA HOTEL – FURSTENHOFF

WINDHOEK

Director of Ceremonies, Ms Jessica Moore

MTC Chief Human Capital and Corporate Affair Manager, Mr Tim Ekandjo

Minister of Education, Hon David Namwandi

MTC Management

Polytechnic Staff Members

Distinguished Invited Guests

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

This occasion is a testimony to the strong linkages that exist between industry, government and academic institutions. This tripartite relationship enriches and promotes the effectiveness of education vis-a-vis the national human resources development strategy.

Let me first focus on the students from the Polytechnic, who are the recipients of the MTC Bursary Scheme. It is always a very special occasion when we honour students for their achievements; it is particularly special when we acknowledge the hard work you have put into your studies, and thus receiving a bursary is, indeed, a recognition of excellence and success in your educational endeavours. Congratulations!

The award of bursaries to deserving students at the Polytechnic provides access and equality to education, thereby fostering a quality society. By this I mean we continue to supply the steady stream of needed manpower in the economy in fields such as ICT, electronics and the telecommunication field. These bursaries will go a long way to support deserving students with great needs and equally great potential to realise their dreams.

Today, I would like to address the question why MTC sponsors students in fields relevant to their industry profile, especially ICT.

We live in the digital age which has brought on us unimaginable changes in the economic, political, and social dimensions of our lives and it continues to transform the way that we interact as individuals and communities. This is through advances in networking and telecommunication technologies; the way our organisations and our nations build greater efficiencies, make smarter decisions and provide new services, through advances in data mining, interrogation and visualisation, and the creation of communication channels between groups, agencies and devices; and the way we as global citizens overcome the tyranny of distance.

Other developments, too, impact us globally. The rise, and popularity, of social media applications, mobile computing, flash mobs, and anonymous hacker groups are all signs of how powerful information and communication technologies and the Internet have become on a global scale to show how we depend on technology.

Of the billion people on this planet that were connected to the Internet in mid-2010 , 700 million were active users of Facebook, with another four million people yet to be connected to facebook, The use of the information and communication technologies has grown phenomenally and yet there is still ample room for further growth. Think of other seven billion people who are yet to be connected to the Internet.

As the Internet and digital device users, we, especially as academic researchers and teachers, are extraordinary producers of digital data and this data requires storage and sharing *via* communication and telecom networks. In fact, we have moved far beyond a collection of random servers and *ad hoc* networking to manage our own data and communication needs

Interestingly, data of every kind is everywhere around us, be it data on Twitter, from remote sensors around the world, CCTV footage, voice networks and digital photos. Most are invisible and unknown and unusable to the average person. This, however, throws other challenges to us, namely problems of storing, accessing and analysing our own old and 'dead' data. Think of converting the massive data from the vinyl albums and tape recordings to voice! As higher education institutions we need to plan for a world where we develop new protocols that will, especially in wireless networking environment, enable us to speedily and conveniently share this massive data.

It is in this context that we value our relationship with MTC and our joint commitment to the production and development of a generation of young Namibian Telecoms, Electronics and Network Engineers who can draw Namibia more firmly into the exciting Information Age. MTC recognises the importance of giving back to the Namibian community and assisting those less fortunate or needy. The bursary scheme is made available to assist worthy students with financial needs to study further in related fields of MTC's industry requirements.

We are currently upgrading our electronic and telecom engineering and IT curricula so as to provide more expertise in, and amongst others, focus on 3 and 4 G networks, moving beyond the world of LAN and WAN to examine Communication Networks from all aspects - in this way we will develop our relationship and support ICT usage and hardware maintenance in Namibia.

Finally, the Polytechnic as the Namibia University of Science and Technology will continually position itself to meet the needs of industry through excellent programmes, research and community engagement. I wish to thank MTC for the example they are setting today and hope that other stakeholders will follow suit.

I thank you.