



**REMARKS BY**

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**ON THE OCCASION OF**

**THE LOGISTICS SCHOLARSHIP HANDOVER CEREMONY**

**POLYTECHNIC HOTEL SCHOOL**

**18 MAY 2010**

Master of Ceremonies, Mr. Albin Jacobs

Your Excellency Egon Kochanke, the German Ambassador to Namibia

Ms. Jannje Bohlke-Iltzen, the representative of the German Development Exchange Services (DAAD)

Government and Industry Representatives

Faculty and Staff of the Polytechnic

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

All protocol observed

Today we are celebrating a moment of achievement in a tripartite relationship defined by a partnership between the German government - through the **German Academic Exchange (DAAD)**, the **Polytechnic of Namibia** and **Flensburg University of Applied Sciences**. This relationship was cemented a year ago with the establishment of the German-Namibian Centre for Logistics (the NGCL).

The **main goals of this Centre** are as follows:

- a. easy access to all major logistics information for the public/industry/authorities,
- b. research/knowledge database and knowledge transfer,
- c. post-graduate course and study programs to establish leaders in logistics,
- d. advanced training of professionals in industry and authorities (life-long learning),
- e. demand-oriented in-house training and consultancy capacity for companies and authorities, and
- f. resource facilities for SMEs and start-up companies to fill their capacity gap, and logistics-oriented student education.

A year later we look back with a sense of achievement noting all the successful initiatives and projects undertaken by the NGCL as delineated in its mission. The tripartite collaboration is founded in the academic partnership between the Polytechnic of Namibia and Flensburg University of Applied Sciences which was built over a number of years. Through a number of successful **joint projects**, covering areas such as faculty and student exchange.

With these activities as the foundation the two institutions submitted a funding proposal to the German Development Exchange Service (DAAD). Out of **70 proposals, only five were funded**, after being selected by an independent selection committee. The Namibian-German Centre for Logistics is one of the five.

The project is part of a larger initiative by the German government called "Action Afrika", a zone project that supports the development of University Centres of Excellence in Africa in respective disciplines, whose goal is to build stronger partnerships between Germany and Africa, focusing on capacity building through the development of **cultural and educational partnerships, and educational infrastructure**.

The area of logistics was decided upon due to the importance it plays in the broader concept of **national and regional development** for the Namibian and SADC economies. Logistics is a key factor in **communication, transportation, international travel, shipping, freight forwarding and trade facilitation**, and therefore it is critical that we develop the human resources that can provide professional, efficient and effective logistics services in a modern economy.

Through the development of the Port of Walvis Bay and the various road corridors - Trans Caprivi, Trans Kalahari, etc and soon the broadband connectivity - Namibia has established itself as a hub for logistics not only for the Southern African Subcontinent, but I believe for the world as well.

This project is about sustainable development that will ensure that educated and skilled human resources plan, develop and maintain the infrastructure and systems of a modern economy. This surely implies that our students must be **trained to international standards**, and are **performing competitively internationally**.

In line with its mission, one of key goals that were set for the NGCL was the development of an academic programme in Logistics. Originally, a Master's degree was foreseen, but soon we realized that the foundation – the Bachelor's degree is missing the Namibian economy. This led to the development of the **Bachelor of Logistics (Honours) in 2009** as a **bridge** between the aforesaid qualifications.

The result was an overwhelming interest expressed in the Honours degree with about 300 applications received for a programme with capacity for only 25 candidates at a time. Today we are awarding **10 scholarships** worth N\$ 10 000 each to those students who were fortunate enough to be selected. These scholarships are availing more opportunities for more access to higher education, particularly for post-graduate qualifications.

This selection of candidates was made in line with the DAAD prescribed criteria for this process, with DAAD's participation. The Polytechnic of Namibia is indeed grateful for this **unique opportunity** available to our **student community**, whose majority are still of disadvantaged background, one generation away from independence.

In any event, students, we all know that any opportunity comes with responsibility and accountability. The Polytechnic of Namibia, Flensburg University of Applied Sciences and DAAD have put their trust in you. Please, give no cause for our concern, during your studies and in your professions.

You are granted a unique opportunity to be amongst the first to acquire this novel qualification in the field for the first time ever offered in Namibia. Therefore, you also have the opportunity to be **pioneers and novices** in logistics in Namibia and in Africa.

To ensure that the capacity is built for the logistics industry in Namibia and beyond, the NGCL is in the process of developing a Bachelor of Logistics as well as a Master of Logistics. At the same time, the Centre has secured the **Education Provider status** from various professional bodies in the Logistics and Transport fields. These include **the Chartered Institute for Logistics and Transport (CILT), Chartered Institute for Procurement and Supply (CIPS), and the Operations Management Association for Southern Africa (SAPICS)**. The NGCL is now in a position to offer the skills development courses of all these institutions to the Namibian industry.

This is in line with the Polytechnic of Namibia's practice not only to develop academic programmes for industry but to ensure that we contribute towards the development of the industry as a whole. We would like to see that **Logistics and Transport professionals** become **continuous learners** as well as becoming **members of professional bodies**.

Those of you who are granted these scholarships are at the forefront of this process and a lot will depend on your commitment to your studies, and ultimately to your careers.

Once again I thank you, the German government, DAAD, Flensburg University of Applied Sciences for a successful partnership.

I wish you all a wonderful day.

**- End**