



**WELCOME STATEMENT**

**BY**

**DR. TJAMA TJIVIKUA**  
***RECTOR: POLYTECHNIC OF NAMIBIA***

**AT THE**

**INAUGURATION OF THE**  
**HAROLD PUPKEWITZ GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS**

**11:00**

**14 JULY 2010**

**WINDHOEK**

Director of Ceremonies, Professor Viola Cruse

Honourable Minister of Education, Dr. Abraham Iyambo

Mr. Harold Pupkewitz, Executive Chairperson of Pupkewitz Holdings (Pty) Ltd

Mr. Oloff Munjanu, Chairperson of the Council of the Polytechnic of Namibia

And Other Members of Council

Special Guest Mr. Keith Kunene, *Chairperson: Kunene Brothers Holdings (Pty) Ltd,  
and Chair of the Governing Council of the University of Zululand*

Distinguished Academics and Students

Media Practitioners

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

All Protocols Observed

At the outset, let me pay my respects to you all for being here today. But let me single out the following persons:

**Firstly**, Hon. Abraham Iyambo, who is representing His Excellency, President Hifikepunye Pohamba. We would like to thank His Excellency for leadership in politics and the economy, and for his support to business and education. Honourable Minister, we officially welcome you to the Polytechnic for the first time since your appointment earlier this year, and thank you for sharing the moment with us. Rest assured that you are in good company as we share your vision and commitment to Namibia's education, the backbone of our development.

**Secondly**, Mr. Harold Pupkewitz, who is the principal benefactor of this GSB, whose life and gift we are celebrating on his 95<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**Thirdly**, Mr. Keith Kunene, one of Africa's greatest entrepreneurs; noted and successful businessman and chairperson and director of at least sixteen major corporations and entities of diverse interests; and also governor of a comprehensive career-focused university in South Africa. Sir, thank you for accepting our humble invitation to share a few lessons about managing education, business, family and life with us. We are indeed highly privileged and look forward to the next phase of this occasion.

## **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Today is a historic day in the annals of educational and business development in Namibia, as we inaugurate the **Harold Pupkewitz Graduate School of Business (HP-GSB)** and also honour its benevolent donor, the iconic Mr. Harold Pupkewitz, whose 95<sup>th</sup> birthday we celebrate on this day. Mr. Pupkewitz, thank you and happy birthday!

One may ask why business schools are such important and essential parts of academe and business. Business Schools are prestigious building blocks of universities where business leaders are trained and qualified. The prestige and accreditation of a business school are based on the quality of inputs and outputs. As much as they are proving grounds for theories and practices, through case studies for instance; they are also wonderful places for personal and professional networking.

In his book, *What they Teach You at Harvard Business School*, Philip Delves Broughton,<sup>1</sup> states in the preface: *“I did not go to Harvard Business School planning to write a book about the experience. In fact ten years as a journalist, I went there to recover from writing, to stop looking at the world around me as a source of potential stories, I wanted to learn about business in order to gain control of my own financial fate and, more important, my time. I was tired of living at the end of a cell phone, prey to an employer’s demands.”* He goes on to say: *For me, and everyone I knew, Harvard changed the view of our futures and the possibilities available to us through business.”*

## **Director of Ceremonies,**

Namibia is in dire need of business leaders – at management and executive levels, and in this competitive world economy, it is absolutely necessary to have the right institutions to build our knowledge systems, surely with a sense of urgency.

Perhaps a graphic description, through facts and figures, of how Namibia is doing in international competitiveness, would enable us to appreciate the need for **a good business school**. According to the **2009 – 2010 Global Competitiveness Report** of the World Economic Forum, Namibia's export companies score 2.6 out of a possible 10 and are ranked at 125 out of 133 countries in **value chain breadth**. This simply means that our **export companies** have a narrow presence in the **value chain**, in other words, there is very little **value-addition** taking place in Namibia. On the production process sophistication, Namibia has a score of 3.6 and is ranked at 68, meaning that our **production processes** are either **labor intensive** or **previous generations of process technology** prevail.

On **capacity for innovation**, Namibia scores 2.5 and is ranked at 113 in the world. This means that our companies mainly obtain technology exclusively from **licensing** or by **imitating foreign companies**. On university-industry collaboration in **research and development (R&D)**, we score 3.0 and are rated at 103.<sup>1</sup> This implies that university-industry collaboration in **R&D** is very minimal. The key reason for the *status quo* is the gaping hole in the human resources profile of Namibia – we do need more educated, qualified and experienced persons across all the sectors of our economy. These are surely strong grounds for **a good business school**.

Consequently, for the HP-GSB to be at the **cutting edge**, it must embrace the culture of **a learning organization**. Learning has to be inspired by change, that is, driven by the fact that critical factors in one's individual and organizational environment are typically changing, and often at a dramatic rate. More than anything else, one might perhaps say that change, as a phenomenon, represents the very rationale for the **necessity to learn**. With rapid change in one's environment, however, the risk of becoming obsolete – of no longer being relevant to one's customers – is indeed real; clearly rapid change leads to strong pressure to learn, for both **individuals and organizations**.<sup>2</sup>

Companies are increasingly coming to the conclusion that the “last remaining source of competitive advantage” can be found only in “investing” in the improvement of their organizations. This can be achieved in many ways, one of which is the periodic education of their executives on the latest, most relevant managerial issues, in order that they may work more effectively in complex and dynamically changing settings. Surely, Messrs Pupkewitz and Kunene are excellent businessmen, because they are visionaries who have been leading successful learning organizations for many, many years.

All in all, this accumulated focus on the **customers’ change agendas** will, of course, also lead to strong pressure for **change on a business school** that focuses on **executive development**. When it comes to the substance of one’s research, program development, and program delivery, it must reflect this **rapidly changing agenda**. In addition, given the growing need to learn on the job by linking education more specifically to the various strategic challenges and actions that executives face, the mastery of new and rapidly evolving types of learning methodology, including distance learning, also becomes essential. All this means more change facing the **business school**, and thus also the need for it to become a more effective **learning organization**.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, the Polytechnic is that **modern learning organization**.

**Honorable Minister, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

This occasion marks a common practice internationally for universities to recognize very large, pioneering or high-impact grants to the institution by naming a project, event, prestigious academic position, laboratory, lecture hall, rooms and even entire buildings after the private or corporate donor concerned. Such naming rights are usually based on a pre-determined degree of correspondence and donor recognition policies between the value of the gift and the cost, visibility, and prestige of the beneficiary project, position, or facility. Universities also confer naming rights to honor exceptional or long-standing service by eminent academics or administrators, civic or political leaders, or philanthropists.

This is particularly the case with **Business Schools** where it is common practice, and thus the **Harold Pupkewitz Graduate School of Business**. After all, his contribution to the Namibian economy and thus his iconic status in business present convincing arguments for this occasion, and raise the GSB's public profile to encourage other corporate partners to associate with, and make their own investments directly in, the School, or in particular programs and activities in the GSB.

Allow me, therefore, to relate some of my personal experience with Mr. Pupkewitz and how we got here. In the years during our acquaintance and dialog, a few proposals worth millions of Namibian dollars to enhance business education at the Polytechnic went unanswered and it seemed all hopes were dashed.

Yet for some years on his birthday, he wrote a check in the name of the Polytechnic, which he personally signed. On his visit to this campus in 2004, he expressed his admiration for the growth and management of the institution which has taken over his old neighborhood.

On 13<sup>th</sup> April 2007, I organized a dinner with Mr. Pupkewitz and a distinguished group of Namibian business leaders and the famous Professor Yrjo Neuvo, the Senior Advisor to Nokia Corporation from Finland. There Mr. Pupkewitz retold his life story citing dates, incidents and personalities in particular detail, and I was convinced he must tell his story in a book. I am happy to learn that his biography is now work in progress.

At the TUCSIN dinner on Friday, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2008, Mr. Pupkewitz and I continued our dialogue on his legacy and giving to education, especially the new Graduate School of Business at the Polytechnic of Namibia, where his name will carry his long tradition and success in business as an inspiration for present and future generations. I even had the audacity to tell him that in his after-life, his corporations will change hands and names, but not a business school. Finally, he said, *"I'm listening, and I'm not saying 'no'"*. I took the hint and the following Wednesday I presented to him the details of the engagement. In the fifteen minutes I spent in his office, it took five minutes to agree the figure, and when done I could hardly believe it.

While in his office that afternoon, as on many occasions before and after that day, I had the unique opportunity of observing Mr. Pupkewitz in action. His attention to detail and business ethic, and personal control of his business made me fully understand why he is so successful. I was amazed by his performance and I will remember those moments as lessons in my personal and professional life.

Here, I must acknowledge and thank Mr. Mike Hill, our Council member since inception of the Polytechnic, past Chairperson and Member of the Management Committee for many years, for being my guarding principal in these endeavors throughout the years, for he fully appreciates the congruent roles of universities and business.

Against this background, the Council of the Polytechnic approved the naming of the new Graduate School of Business, which currently enrolls about 130 students and offers two programs – the Master of International Business (MIB), accredited by Europe's FIBAA (Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation), and the M.Sc. in Leadership and Change Management with Leeds Metropolitan University, thus accredited in the United Kingdom. New and relevant qualifications and programs critical to Namibia's present and future status in the global economy, will be offered in this school, which is fast becoming a fine executive environment for learning exploration and innovation.

Finally, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you can see, at only 15 years of age and with 11 500 students this year, this *technical university* is shaping the future of Namibia. The future of this country rests in its human capital, who will be more and more required to have university degrees in the knowledge economy. We thus must do more and better to shape the systems, thinking and the intellectual capacity of Namibia.

Today is indeed a historic and memorable day and I express our profound gratitude to Mr. Harold Pupkewitz, and his family and companies, for the generous donations over the years. Let us celebrate and I thank you for your kind attention. - **End.**

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## References

1. Philip Delves Broughton, *What they Teach You at Harvard Business School*,
  2. *The Global Competiveness Report 2009-2010*, World Economic Forum 2009.
  3. Peter Lorange, A. *Business School as a Learning Organization*, *The Learning Organization*, Volume 3, Number 5, 1996.
  4. *Ibid.*
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