



POLYTECHNIC OF NAMIBIA

WELCOME REMARKS

BY

PROF TJAMA TJIVIKUA

RECTOR: POLYTECHNIC OF NAMIBIA

ON THE OCCASION OF
THE SIGNING OF A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN THE POLYTECHNIC OF NAMIBIA AND THE NATIONAL
DISABILITY COUNCIL OF NAMIBIA

15 MAY 2012

**POLYTECHNIC OF NAMIBIA (HOTEL SCHOOL)
WINDHOEK**

Director of Ceremonies

Honourable Member of Parliament, Ms Manombe-Ncube

Director of Social Welfare Services, Mrs Batseba Katjuongua

Director of the National Disability Council of Namibia, Mr Martin Limbo

Distinguished Permanent Secretaries

Development partners

Business community

Polytechnic staff

All esteemed invited guests

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

I would like to warmly welcome you to this important occasion of the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Polytechnic of Namibia and the National Disability Council of Namibia. This is a particularly important partnership because it provides one of the many strategies needed for addressing the plight and aspirations of people living with disability, but it is also a key step towards our country meeting the obligations of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disability.

In this partnership the Polytechnic through its Centre for Entrepreneurship Development (CED) will provide capacity building initiatives in the following areas:

- a) Disability Mainstreaming Programme;

- b) Various capacity and skills trainings ;
- c) Governance, NGO management and leadership development;
- d) Basic Entrepreneurship Training;
- e) Computer Literacy; and
- f) Disability Law Programme specific to Magistrates, Police Officers, Prison Officers, Defence Force Officials, Lawyers, Legal Drafters, Law Reform Commissioners, etc.

Of great significance is that this programme not only targets empowering those people living with disability, but it also seeks to create an enabling and friendly environment for the disabled through the training of officials in government and non-governmental agencies that provide services and support the disabled.

It gives me great pride that Polytechnic is involved in this initiative. As an institution of higher education in Namibia we need to be responsive to the needs of the country and its economy as well as to its various communities. More importantly, this programme is about mainstreaming disability. It is about reaffirming the quality of the rights and dignities of people with disabilities. It is also about ensuring that socioeconomic needs of people with disabilities are met and above all, enabling them to play a meaningful role in society.

The population census report estimates that Namibia has just under 90 000 people living with disability, which makes about 5% of the total population. While the distribution on gender basis is more or less equal between males and females, however, disability is much higher in rural areas, people are

normally poor and therefore the disabled are most vulnerable. It is essential that the programme we will be offering should also include those who are in rural areas. Further breakdown of the disabilities in our country indicates that about 40% of the disabled have ligament impairment, 25% are blind 21% are deaf, 11% have speech impairment and 6% have mental disabilities. It is important that as we design our programmes such that we address all the types of disabilities occurring in our communities.

In the spirit of ensuring that we mainstream disability in our country I would like to invite all, be it public sector, private sector developmental partners, NGOs and the general public – let's all form "Team Namibia" in our endeavour to mainstream disability.

I thank you,