



**REMARKS**

**BY**

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***RECTOR: POLYTECHNIC OF NAMIBIA***

**AT THE**

**SIGNING CEREMONY**

**OF AN AGREEMENT ON “FARM MANAGEMENT FOR SMALL-  
SCALE IRRIGATION PROJECT”**

**BETWEEN**

**THE POLYTECHNIC AND AGRIBANK**

**30 MARCH 2011**

**WINDHOEK**

*The Chief Executive Officer of Agribank, Ambassador Leonard  
Iipumbu*

Staff Members of Agribank

Mr. Bertus Kruger, *Project Coordinator: Farmers Support Project*

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

Media practitioners

In 2009, the Agribank and the Polytechnic signed a Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation which, *inter alia*, provides for cooperation in the conduct of research and training in agriculture and agricultural-related activities. The new undertaking today, the Farm Management for Small-scaled Irrigation under the Farmers Support Programme (FSP), is but one initiative under the said MOU.

The Farmers' Support Project (FSP) is a Government project supported by the German Government through the GIZ and implemented by the Agricultural Bank of Namibia, in partnership with the Namibia Agricultural Union (NAU), the Namibia Emerging Commercial Farmers' Union (NECFU) and the Namibia National Farmers' Union (NNFU). Therefore as a reliable partner of Agribank, and the business sector, we are more than willing to add value to this worthwhile scheme.

The following facts tell an imperative story about agriculture<sup>i</sup>, <sup>ii</sup>:

- About 40% of Namibia population lives off subsistence farming.
- Yet more than 90% of our foods stocks are imported.

- Namibia has an arid climate and only about 1% of the land is arable.
- Agriculture, excluding fishing, contributes around 5% to the GDP.
- Agriculture, forestry, crop farming and fish farming contribute around 10% to the GDP, of which 2.5% comes from crop and forestry farming.

These challenges are indeed enormous. Therefore, initiatives of this nature through the following means enhance the agricultural sector's contribution to the GDP:

- a) Transferring skills and knowledge to small-scale irrigation farmers;
- b) Distributing critical market information such as commodity prices;
- c) Contributing to the formulation of alternative marketing strategies; and
- d) Increasing the agricultural sector's production, profitability and export competitiveness.

The future of agriculture depends on education, technology and bio diversity. Thus, this FSP project through this agreement is testimony to the Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) commitment to small-scale farming. A sustainable agriculture.

As a matter of fact, cooperation between the Polytechnic and Agribank and the other stakeholders have been strengthened by Agribank's commitment to education and agriculture development and the Polytechnic's immense capacity to deliver a broad range of qualifications and services in natural resources management.

I therefore believe that this Agreement will take our two institutions and the broader Namibian community to a higher level of engagement and development in order to improve our national competitiveness.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Once again, let me assure you of our full commitment and dedication to making the agricultural sector vibrant and competitive through initiatives of this nature.

I thank you for your kind attention!

**- End.**

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<sup>i</sup> Land Reform Reproducing Poverty, IRI News, November 2007, as cited in [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org). (accessed on 30 March 2011).

<sup>ii</sup> [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com) (accessed on 30 March 2011)