

## Media Release

### Namibia celebrates National Day at Expo 2020 Dubai with Presidential visit and cultural showcases

*Monday, 28 March 2022: Windhoek*

The Namibian Pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai concluded an eventful ‘Namibia Week’ with colourful National Day celebrations on Thursday, 24 March 2022. Namibia Week kicked off with lively Independence celebrations at the pavilion, followed by an Investment Conference hosted by His Excellency President Hage Geingob and facilitated by the Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board (NIPDB).

National and Honour Days at Expo 2020 Dubai are moments to celebrate each of the expo’s 200-plus International Participants, shining a light on their culture and achievements and showcasing their pavilions and programming.

Namibia’s National Day celebrations, held at the Al Wasl Plaza dome, were graced by the presence of His Excellency President Hage Geingob and First Lady Monica Geingos, and other guests including several cabinet Ministers, captains of industry and Namibians living in Dubai.

President Geingob, was welcomed by His Excellency Sheikh Nahayan Mabarak Al Nahayan, United Arab Emirates (UAE) Minister of Tolerance and Coexistence and Commissioner General of Expo 2020 Dubai who praised Namibia for a successful participation at the expo and highlighted the long-standing relationship between Namibia and the UAE.

His Excellency Sheikh Nahayan said: “Through its participation, Namibia showcases the wealth of opportunities that it has to offer to the world, from its rich culture and biodiversity, to its offerings in renewable energy, infrastructure, and the blue economy, among many others”.

“We share strong bilateral relations with Namibia, and look forward to exploring areas of mutual interest for enhanced partnership and cooperation, in order to achieve our goals for the development and prosperity of our nations.”

On his part, His Excellency President Geingob commended the UAE government for its progressive development-oriented foresight which he said is evident in the successful hosting of the Expo Dubai 2020, despite an ongoing world crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic.

He also spoke about key developments in Namibia's economic trajectory, highlighting the recent "game-changing" oil discoveries as catalysts to Namibia's industrial transformation. This is in addition to the development of the "Green Hydrogen" and ammonia industry, which has attracted investments of US\$6 billion to produce 2 million tons of Ammonia, and generate US\$800 million in revenue per annum. "Development of the green hydrogen and ammonia industry has placed us at the forefront of the international green energy discourse".

President Geingob went on to say that the expo provided a valuable platform "to showcase Namibia's potential and vast available investment opportunities to those who want to work with us in developing our economy for the benefit of all Namibians and the world".

"Our expectations in terms of the objectives set out for this Expo were exceeded, as over 300,000 people visited the pavilion. We conversed with potential business partners and development agencies who are keen to help us translate new opportunities into tangible investment projects". To date, the Namibian Pavilion has generated a total of 187 investment leads, which is well above the targeted 10 leads a month. The NIPDB has commenced the process of engaging with potential investors who expressed interest in investing in Namibia mainly in the green hydrogen, tourism and education industries.

The formal part of the ceremony ended with an official luncheon hosted in honour of Namibia by the UAE government. This gesture is accorded to all participating nations on their respective National and Honour Days.

### **National Day festivities**

National Day celebrations also provide a platform for participating nations to showcase their creative industries, local talent and rich cultural diversity. In this regard, and as part of the commitment to develop the creative and cultural industry, the Namibian Pavilion invited the Multi-cultural Troupe, Gazza, EES and DJ Alba to perform on various stages at the expo, with the full understating of what doors an opportunity like this can open. Athletics champions, Christine Mboma, Beatrice Masilingi, Coach Henk and Miss Supranational Chanique Rabe were also invited to lead and be part of Namibia's celebratory parade, which literally brought the expo to a standstill for 30 minutes.

The National Day culminated in the 'Namibia Braai in Dubai' - featuring show stopping performances by Gazza, EES and DJ Alba and a culinary experience prepared by Namibian Chef Jona Levi and highlighting Namibian cuisine including pap, vetkoek and beer. The braai served as a fitting way to formally close off the country's participation at the expo that will formally conclude on 31 March 2022.

The NIPDB as the facilitating agency of Namibia's participation at Expo 2020 Dubai has already started the process of consolidating information for a formal report detailing the Namibian Pavilion's performance over the six months versus the set targets. Once completed, the report will be presented to stakeholders at the appropriate time.

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**About NIPDB:**

The Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board (“NIPDB”) is a non-profit association incorporated under section 21 of the Companies Act, Act No. 28 of 2004 (“the Companies Act”). The Board was established as an autonomous entity in the Office of the President and is declared a Public Enterprise in accordance with section 2 of the Public Enterprise Governance Act, Act No 1 of 2019. The NIPDB is mandated to promote and facilitate investment by foreign and Namibian investors, and coordinate MSME activities across all levers of the economy, with the aim of contributing to economic development and job creation.

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