

# Media Release

Windhoek, 28 July 2024  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **NIPDB responds to The Namibian newspaper article on visa applications**

The Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board (NIPDB) wishes to respond to the newspaper article titled “Rich foreigners eye Namibian farms” which was published in The Namibian newspaper on Friday, 26 July 2024.

### **Background**

The NIPDB is mandated to promote and facilitate investment by foreign and Namibian investors and coordinate MSME activities across all levers of the economy, to contribute to economic development and job creation. The NIPDB aims to position Namibia as a preferred investment destination, leveraging its natural resources, strategic location, and business-friendly policies.

As a key driver of Namibia’s diversification strategy and agency entrusted with coordinating the realisation of a private sector led and inclusive economic growth, the NIPDB actively promotes Namibia as a premier investment destination. Our efforts on economic diversification are focused in drawing investments into non-traditional sectors like global and business services, technology, and manufacturing in order to reduce heavy dependence on a few sectors such as mining, tourism and agriculture.

Additionally, the NIPDB's role in job creation and infrastructure development is crucial for fostering a business-friendly environment and improving living standards. Through policy advocacy, the NIPDB further collaborates with the government to maintain investor-friendly laws, regulations and processes, enhancing Namibia's competitiveness and ease of doing business.

It is worth noting that Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) remains one of the vital tools for measuring performance in this regard and provides a clear quantitative measure of how successful the NIPDB is in discharging its responsibility. Additionally, the number of FDI projects reflects the confidence and interest of foreign businesses in Namibia's economic environment thereby attracting further investments. However, we are cognizant of the fact that FDI needs to be attracted in a responsible and sustainable manner. In this regards, in our evaluation criteria for investors, we consider components such as value of investment (direct and possible multiplier effect), jobs to be created (direct, indirect and induced), expected revenue earnings with focus on revenue earned from export, expected contribution to treasury, total assets owned and prior experience, other possible opportunities that will be

offered by the investor to Namibia in terms of branding, market access, capacity building as well as direct/indirect support to Namibian MSMEs. It is unfortunate that The Namibian attributed to the NIPDB a misleading quote "... and they want permanent residency to buy Namibian retirement farms" was attributed to the NIPDB" in their articles of Friday 26 July 2024 entitled "Rich foreigners eye Namibian farms". The NIPDB has never advocated for a general application for a group of applicants to the MHAISS. The institution supports individual applications and usually sets out the specific contribution or potential contribution by such an investor to Namibia.

### **The Desert Visa Programme**

While investment projects are critical for success, equally important is attracting institutional investors and owners of capital who will provide access to funding required to drive this growth. One of the vehicles used is a Golden Visa Programme (GVP). GVPs have been instituted by various countries who through these types of programmes have not only attracted capital but have also attracted much needed skills to grow their economies. Major economies such as the UAE, Hong Kong, United States, Singapore, and Switzerland, have leveraged well-crafted Golden Visa Programmes and are a testament to the value of investment-based migration.

Golden Visas typically target high net worth and talented individuals who contribute to economic growth through direct investments, increased consumer spending, imparting their skills and knowledge as well as philanthropy. Their investments often lead to local job creation and increasing the tax base.

Given these global trends, the High Level Panel on the Namibian Economy (HLPNE) proposed for Namibia to develop its own Golden Visa Programme. As a result, the second Harambee Prosperity Plan (HPP II) under the Economic Advancement pillar, mandated the NIPDB to develop a Golden Visa Programme in conjunction with the MHAISS. This programme currently called the Desert Visa Programme (DVP) aims to incentivise and attract investors with skills, discretionary capital and ambitions to set up businesses and residency in Namibia. The underlying objective of this programme which was due for implementation in the second quarter of 2021/22 financial year is raising more than N\$50 billion in investments during the HPP II period. The full development and implementation of this programme is however yet to be finalised and approved by Cabinet. One of the key outstanding outputs that will amongst others enable the DVP is the Migration Control Bill which is currently under development by the MHAISS.

While the Desert Visa Programme is being finalised, the NIPDB continues to attract investors and seek relevant visas/permits from MHAISS. The requests for such visas are limited to those allowed by the current Immigration Control Act 7 of 1993 and are applied for in accordance with provisions made in that Act.

### **The NIPDB One Stop Centre (OSC)**

Since its inception, the NIPDB has made efforts to improve the ease of doing business in Namibia by facilitating a number of investment exploratory visits, assisting with special visa and permit applications, strengthening public-private trust and boosting productivity in identified key sectors.

Launched in October 2022 as part of the Business Facilitation Services offered by the NIPDB, the One Stop Centre (OSC) aims to improve service offering by the Public Sector to investors. These services include facilitating visa and permit applications for potential investors who meet our criteria. These services are designed to support and promote investment into Namibia while adhering to all legal and regulatory frameworks.

Nine Government Ministries and Agencies, namely Namibia Revenue Agency (Namra), Business Intellectual Property Authority (BIPA), Namibia Competition Commission (NaCC), Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security (MHAISS), City of Windhoek (CoW), Ministry of Mines and Energy (MME), Ministry of Environment Forestry and Tourism (MEFT), Ministry of Agriculture Water and Land Reform (MAWLR) and Namibia Industrial Development Agency (NIDA) have collaborated with NIPDB to deliver efficient service to investors and ensure improved investment facilitation services in the OSC.

## **Conclusion**

The NIPDB can confirm that we have approached the Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security (MHAISS), along with numerous other stakeholders, on numerous occasions to help facilitate potential investments into Namibia. The NIPDB remains committed to transparency and fairness in all its operations as it continues to uphold the highest standards of integrity in its processes. We will however not comment on specific details of investors' applications and/or privileged and confidential correspondence between the NIPDB and our stakeholders.

## **Issued by**

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