



REMARKS BY

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SPEAKER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

ON THE OCCASION OF THE

NAMCOL

2ND REGIONAL MODEL SYMPOSIUM

WEDNESDAY, 04 OCTOBER 2023

**NAMCOL AUDITORIUM
WINDHOEK
KHOMAS REGION**

Check Against Delivery

**Director of Ceremonies,
Dr. Herold Murangi, NAMCOL Director,
Distinguished Members of the education fraternity,
Distinguished Invited Guests,
Members of the Media,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

It is a great pleasure to address you today at this important event that unites educators and scholars to explore open distance and e-Learning. Namibia is honoured to host the 2nd Regional Model Symposium, centered on the theme: ***"Leveraging Technology for Enhanced Higher Education: Insights into Student Support, Teaching, Learning, and Assessment."***

This gathering symbolizes commitment to knowledge, discovery, and collaboration, marking a crucial milestone in fostering partnerships among higher education institutions in the SADC region and beyond.

Namibia recognizes the vital role of open learning in expanding educational access. Institutions like the Botswana Open University, University of South Africa, and our very own Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL) play a pivotal role in providing access to those underserved by conventional education. We must ensure that our education systems remain open, flexible, accessible, and

inclusive in order for us to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4: *"Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all."*

Open universities are essential in providing accessible, high-quality education and fostering innovation.

Director of Ceremonies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Global tertiary education enrolments are predicted to surge from 250 million in 2020 to 600 million in 2040. To accommodate this influx, institutions must be resilient and responsive to unforeseen challenges, exemplified during the COVID-19 pandemic. This calls for adaptive leadership and innovation. Over the next two days, you will explore into thematic areas like leveraging digital technologies for student success, rethinking online assessments, adapting to *AI* in professional development, and technology-mediated teaching for employability. These discussions hold the potential to unravel challenges and brighten the path to a brighter future.

Director of Ceremonies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Collaboration and partnerships are crucial; particularly as open learning often faces resource constraints. By sharing research

facilities, online platforms, and digital learning resources, we can reduce costs and expand access to quality education. Namibia's commitment to collaboration gave rise to the Namibian Open Network Trust (NOLNeT), a model that eliminates unnecessary competition and duplication of efforts. As representatives of your respective countries, you understand the pivotal role higher learning institutions play in shaping our nations' destination. It is therefore your and my responsibility collectively to address challenges, seek solutions, and uphold democratic principles.

Before I conclude, I extend my gratitude to NAMCOL for hosting this important symposium. NAMCOL's contribution in transforming lives, especially of our youth and the marginalized, communities deserve applause and recognition. Let us dream together, as a roadmap in considering transforming this noble institution, the NAMCOL into a public open university in the near future.

Finally, I urge you to keep open minds, embrace new ideas, and commit to collaboration in education sector. May the discussions and interactions over the next two days inspire you, challenge your perspectives, and fuel your passion for meaningful impact in education.

With this, I officially declare the 2nd Model Symposium open.

Thank you.