

Launch of the Ministry of Justice: Customer Service Charter

Sakeus E.T. Shanghala, MP^φ

Good morning,

Honourable invited Ministers;

Honourable Deputy Minister of Justice, Mrs Lidwina Shapwa;

Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director: Justice;

Executive Directors and Deputy Executive Directors of invited Ministries;

All Heads of Directorates of the Ministry of Justice;

Distinguished guests and Stakeholders;

Members of the Media;

Ladies and gentlemen,

and welcome to the Launch of the Public Service Charter of the Ministry of Justice.

I am honoured to be part of this important milestone in service delivery. The Customer Service Charter (CSC) Committee has been working tirelessly to bring this project to fruition and I thank them wholeheartedly for their dedication.

The importance of a Customer Service Charter cannot be overemphasized. While setting guidelines for staff members, it also provides a platform for clients to demand excellence from the Ministry and benefit from the services provided by the Directorates. I am happy to note that the Ministry of Justice, as a customer-centred institution, is working hard to continuously improve the quality of services available to the public in line with Namibia's Public Service vision. The Ministry's vision is to be a model provider of legal services and justice for all, and we are settling for nothing short of the best.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Adherence to quality service provision is no longer an option but a requirement for Government entities, as customers (the Namibian general public and other stakeholders) are becoming more informed and empowered by the day.

^φ Keynote Address by the Honourable Minister of Justice at the launch of the Public Service Charter in Khomas Region, NIPAM, Windhoek on Wednesday, March 20, 2019.

It is important to note that the launch of this Customer Service Charter is but the beginning of a process of implementation. The Office of The Prime Minister, through her portfolio memorandum dated **12 October 2018** directed all Offices/Ministries/Agencies and Regional Councils to establish teams dedicated to Customer Service Charters which would be conceived as a practical way of ensuring the operationalization of the Customer Service Charters Framework of the Namibian Public Service. According to this plan, the institutionalization of Customer Service Charters in public service entities presupposes an institutional infrastructure to buttress the cascade of the concept to the operational levels of Offices/Ministries/Agencies and Regional Councils charged with the responsibility to ensure that public entities formulate, implement, and reinforce adherence with Customer Service Charters dictates in their respective institutions and work- stations. So the Customer Service Charter acts as a compass-of-morals (or set of indicators) which are the key measures of the provision of excellent public service to the people. The beauty of this system is that the implementation of the Public Service Charter does not dwindle after the official launch. This launch merely represents a public undertaking to continue to put our shoulders to the wheel.

In 2009 Cabinet directed that Customer Service Charters be developed for the public service of the Republic of Namibia which should speak to the norms and beliefs contained in the African Charter on Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration. Thus, its provisions were prioritized by the Namibian Public Service Charter, and in 2011 Cabinet further advised that the Customer Service Charter be incorporated into the Performance Management regime rollout.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The ultimate goal is to deliver quality legal services and justice for all to the nation and its citizenry. A new mindset and way of doing business resulted from the process of establishing performance standards. A mind set of putting into practice the Ministry's vision of delighting customers. The Ministry hereby undertakes to ensure that customer satisfaction forms the basis of every undertaking. Before any decision is taken or action is carried out, the first question will be, "what impact will this have on customers and stakeholders?"

Last year, my office spent large volumes of time and energy on incorporating public participation in the law-making process. This year we turn our focus to public-oriented service delivery.

The Ministry's Strategic Plan, which has been in operation since 2017, is available online and goes hand in hand with the Customer Service Charter launched here today.

Before I conclude I would like to note that in order for this Customer Service Charter to be a success, all stakeholders must play their part: The Ministry of Justice must meet the defined service levels and the customers and other stakeholders must carry out their obligations. Success will only be achieved if everyone plays their part; this is the same not just here but in everything we do in the in this nation; achieving Vision 2030 requires a collective effort.

I call upon you all here today to support the Ministry of Justice in implementing this Charter. Hold us accountable and we will dedicate ourselves to making speedy access to justice a reality. Let us all commit to supporting this noble effort, let every comment, suggestion or question be constructive, not destructive.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, it is now my honour to declare the Ministry of Justice Customer Service Charter officially launched.

I thank you