

**STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE DEPUTY MINISTER LIDWINA
SHAPWA, MP**

ON BEHALF OF THE ACTING MINISTER OF JUSTICE

OPENING OF THE JUSTICE CALENDAR YEAR

MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

14 FEBRUARY 2020

Good morning esteemed colleagues,

As you are aware, I have the pleasure of being the Acting Minister of Justice since 14 November 2019. During that time I have been introduced to some of you and most of the heads of directorate. This opening gives me an opportunity to meet with all the staff members that ensure that the Ministry of Justice operates well.

When I took over the position in November I encouraged those I met here to continue to work efficiently and with great pride despite what may have happened. Public servants cannot become attached to the political heads that lead their Ministries. You are the backbone of the Government and must strive to always deliver top quality service to the public.

In your execution of duties you are expected to uphold the relevant values of the Public Service in your conduct in your offices on such matters as diligence in your work, ethos of hard work and selflessness in your dedication to duty, trustworthiness and reliability in your ability to execute your functions.

You are expected as staff members to seriously reflect on whether you are doing enough in putting your time fully at the disposal of your employer, and I hope all of you have by now learned that His Excellency the President have declared this year as the year of introspection. Thus it, is important that each of us ask ourselves everyday whether we are doing enough or not.

My concern in this regard is prompted by the numerous requests from staff members to be allowed to perform remunerative work outside employment which is relevant to whether you really devote sufficient time to your work while you would also like to engage in private businesses. Even if one demonstrates in his/her submission that there will be no conflict between your devotion to duty and the private businesses engaged in, concerns remain whether one is not in fact conducting private businesses during official hours of attendance.

I urge those of you in management to take your responsibility seriously and to properly manage your staff members in matters such as adherence to official hours of attendance, management of leave of absence through submission of applications for leave to ensure that all absences are accounted for. I strongly discourage the practice of indulging absences without submission of applications. Poor management of the staff members' leave of absence can have huge financial implications for Government if correct records of absences are not kept.

With regard to integrity in the Public Service I expect you to live up to the high standards of ethical conduct in your relations at work. As loyal staff members of the Ministry of Justice, you are expected to ensure that unethical and corrupt activities are not tolerated in the Ministry of Justice. However, your responsibility in this regard is to report incidences of concern to your supervisors and management or if need be, to the relevant law enforcement agencies such as the ACC, for investigation.

I have noted that in the past year a number of alleged incidents of corruption were reported in the media based on information availed by staff members to media houses.

While it is right that wrong doing must be exposed and rooted out it is not acceptable that staff members allow themselves to be induced in breaking their obligations not to disclose information to unauthorized recipients. Wrongdoing should only be reported to agencies empowered to do something about such allegations.

Director of Ceremonies,

Management have the responsibility to inculcate a culture of discipline and to build teams at work through which you can motivate staff to deliver on the expectations of the public on service delivery. I, therefore urge you to ensure timely action on whatever is brought to your desks for action and fully own up to your responsibilities by familiarising yourself with the details of your respective mandates.

In this year 2020, I encourage you all to take up your work once more and act with integrity and professional pride. How many of you have heard of Stephen Covey? He wrote the world famous book called “The seven habits of highly effective people”. Today I want to share some of what I have learnt from that book and from further lectures by Dr Covey.

While completing his doctorate in the 1970’s he studied writings of people who have been successful for as many as 200 years back. He discovered that people who relied on their character to achieve success were more successful than those who relied on problem solving techniques or maintaining a positive attitude. People who relied on acting with integrity, courage, justice and patience had the most success. One’s character is what is most visible in long term success.

I have observed that you are all skilled at what you do and placed in departments that rely on your strengths. Now the key lies in harnessing your character and inherent positive qualities to be proactive and complete the tasks at hand.

Although the political terms are coming to an end, your year has just started. Make this a memorable start to the new decade by serving the Government and the people of Namibia with disciplined passion.

Thank you