

# REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY  
HIFIKEPUNYE POHAMBWA, PRESIDENT  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA, ON  
THE OCCASION OF THE BOUNDLESS  
SOUTHERN AFRICA EVENT**

**19 AUGUST 2009**

**ORANJEMUND**

*\*Check Against Delivery*

**Director of Ceremonies**

**Your Excellency, Robert Gabriel Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe**

**Your Excellency, Ian Khama Seretse Khama, President of the Republic of Botswana**

**The Right Honourable Pakalitha Mosisili, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho**

**The Right Honourable Barnabas S. Dlamini, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Swaziland**

**Honourable Ministers**

**Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps**

**Distinguished Delegates**

**Members of the Media**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**It is a distinct honour for me to address you on this happy occasion of the Boundless Southern Africa Presidential Event. This event follows the SADC Council of Ministers' Decision in Grand Baie, Mauritius, which the Summit endorsed subsequently.**

**It resolved at that meeting that SADC should develop strategies to ensure that the region benefits from the hosting of the 2010 Soccer World Cup by South Africa.**

**Allow me to express my sincere gratitude to you, Your Excellencies, for accepting my invitation to join me today in celebrating the outstanding achievements that the SADC Region has recorded in the area of nature conservation, the preservation of culture and heritage as well as the promotion of community development through travel and tourism.**

**Your presence here today is a testimony to the genuine ties of friendship that exist among our nations. Namibia is indeed proud to host you today on this special occasion.**

**The time has come for Southern Africa to take and maintain its rightful place on the global map as a competitive tourism destination. Our region has distinguished itself as a region of excellence not only in environmental conservation, but also in the sustainable utilization of our natural resources, which is our common heritage. Our decisions to establish Transfrontier Conservation Parks were timely and signified**

**our commitment to jealously guard our natural heritage for the future generations.**

**Director of Ceremonies,  
Your Excellencies,**

**Our Government and people are humbled by your gesture to graciously afford us an opportunity to host this event, which marks the successful conclusion of the Boundless Southern Africa Expedition.**

**I strongly believe that, this day does not only underscore the importance of co-operation in this sector, but also demonstrates the benefits that we can bring to our region by working together.**

**Next year, our region will host major international soccer events, namely the FIFA World Cup and the Africa Cup of Nations. These events represent historic opportunities for this region and for Africa to shine. They will demonstrate the capacity of African countries in general and the SADC region in particular to host major international and regional competitions successfully. Yes, the events will be hosted by the Republic of South Africa and the Republic of Angola respectively, but they will significantly benefit the SADC region and the entire African continent.**

**It is pleasing that the region has adopted a proactive approach to seize and maximise opportunities generated by these regional events. Multiple benefits will flow from the hosting of these events.**

**One particular mechanism being put to test is the Boundless Southern Africa Brand, which has enormous potential to unite the entire SADC region as a single destination offering a wide array of breathtaking and memorable tourism products. It unites the region from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean, with its fitting slogan of “*Nature, Community and Culture*”.**

**These three components are inseparable and are just the perfect mix that will enable our region to offer world class experiences to tourists and all those who will visit our region for business or leisure during the**

**times ahead. Our Trans-frontier Conservation Areas are home to many of Africa's unique attractions of fauna and flora, beautiful landscapes, culture and history. For this reason, no effort should be spared to ensure that co-ordination and collaboration mechanisms are maximised and harnessed to take full advantage of the historic sporting events next year.**

**These Trans-frontier Conservation Areas lock in some of the most iconic sites of the region such as the Victoria Falls, the Okavango Delta and the Fish River Canyon.**

**Equally important, they are home to a rich cultural diversity and traditional practices and rituals which have stood the test of time. They are rich in natural resources and offer an astounding investment environment.**

**Director of Ceremonies,  
Your Excellencies,**

**By their very nature, Trans-frontier Conservation Areas transcend national borders. We share some of the most sensitive ecosystems which are habitats to and allow unrestricted movement of wildlife. This is particularly true, where rivers are the border lines between our Member States. Animals are not restricted by any fence. We can, therefore, not compromise on sound resource management and sustainable utilization practices.**

**Trans-frontier Conservation Areas are currently the most effective tool for cross border conservation.**

**They encourage the harmonization of national policies of participating Member States and create an indispensable platform for the constant flow of information and the sharing of best practices.**

**It is also evident that Trans-frontier Conservation Areas are a good mechanism for spreading the tourism benefits of hosting the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup in Africa through branding and marketing the region as a favorable tourism and investment destination.**

**Altogether, there are currently 51 packaged investment opportunities in the seven (7) Trans-frontier Conservation Areas which range from**

**small and medium lodge type developments to multi-million dollar developments projects.**

**I take this opportunity to commend Boundless Southern Africa for their noble objectives. These include the consolidation of marketing, infrastructure development and investment promotion. I wish to commend them for the noble efforts at enhancing existing trans-frontier initiatives as well as utilization of the Soccer World Cup of 2010 as a platform to initiate a long-term investment and marketing strategy for the Trans-Frontier Conservation Areas.**

**In so doing, it will enhance the tourism potential of Southern Africa. The Boundless Southern Africa Expedition and this Presidential Event should be seen as tools for the region to increase awareness about our Trans-frontier Conservation Areas as preferred destinations and to raise their profile as lucrative areas for investment.**

**As a region, we need to work tirelessly to make our Trans-frontier Conservation Areas ready for the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup by promoting all the identified investment opportunities. With less than a year to go, we need to work harder to ensure our readiness. I urge Boundless Southern Africa to organize another international investor conference, similar to that of 2008 which took place in Sandton, South Africa and introduce marketing campaigns to keep the momentum and sell these pre-packaged investments.**

**Director of Ceremonies,  
Your Excellencies,**

**We have just heard that the Boundless Southern Africa Expedition, led by the well-known modern day explorer, Kingsley Holgate, has spent three months trekking across the sub-continent from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean.**

**They explored the wonders of Africa and promoting a route, which, we hope, other adventurers will be frequenting. What this team has achieved is both commendable and remarkable. Certainly, the expedition has created an enormous amount of awareness about our Trans-frontier Conservation Areas, not only through media exposure but also through the involvement of the communities.**

**The efforts of the Expedition team have been particularly well-received by the communities. In all these areas, communities were assisted with the improvement of their soccer fields, donation of soccer equipment and learning materials. These deeds have had a positive impact on our communities and are highly appreciated.**

**Director of Ceremonies,  
Your Excellencies,**

**I am proud to say that our countries are making notable strides to be among the top ten fastest growing tourist destinations in the world in terms of price competitiveness and our investment into the sector.**

**In all our countries, the travel and tourism economy contributes substantially to the Gross Domestic Product. The sector also creates employment opportunities and generates valuable foreign exchange. It is these positive trends and attributes which give us the motivation to develop and promote tourism. We must continue to invest in the sector and promote this heritage at all appropriate fora.**

**I am, therefore, pleased to re-iterate our blessings to the Boundless Southern Africa Brand to promote Southern Africa as a vibrant and visitor-friendly destination. I call on the tourism industry to take full advantage of the momentum that has been created by the expedition as well as the brand that has now been established.**

**I am confident that our collective efforts to promote southern Africa will result in success. Our gathering here today demonstrates our support to the sister countries that will host the major sporting events next year, namely the Republic of Angola and the Republic of South Africa.**

**Let's join hands and walk towards successful international soccer tournaments next year and beyond.**

**I thank you.**