

**Statement at the Opening of the Namibian Competition Commission
Peer Review Dissemination Workshop**

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Mr. Minister, experts, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great honour for me to participate in this event, on behalf of UNCTAD. We are of course here to present the results of the Namibian voluntary peer review on competition law and policy, whose presentation took place at the 14th Intergovernmental Group of Experts meeting in Geneva in July 2014.

The characteristics of the Namibian economy revolve around the exports of natural resources that are produced here and the equipment and machinery from Europe and the United States that are imported. It is, therefore, a very active market from a business perspective and as such subject to risks from the existence of restrictive practices competition.

Namibia has had its competition law in place since 2003 and 10 years after its entry into force, the Namibian competition authority has undergone the peer review before the rest of the international competition community. This is a clear demonstration of the will of the authorities to improve the competition system and promote competition, by using such an efficient instrument that UNCTAD has developed since the review's inception in 2005.

Indeed, since 2005, over 20 countries have undergone this exercise, which involves both self-assessment and analysis by an independent expert to further expose the competition environment to the gaze of the entire international community. Somehow this exercise may be like a form of undressing in public; to show not only the strengths but also weaknesses of the competition system.

Indeed this exercise allows both the reviewed country and UNCTAD to gain detailed knowledge of the system's status, strengths, weaknesses, needs, possibilities of correcting any defects and strengthening the competition system through the peer review's recommendations.

This first phase of the process, which we present to you today, is important because it highlights the aspects of the competition system that may attract attention. It is essential not to forget that this is only the beginning of an ongoing process, which includes this dissemination event and the subsequent implementation phase of the recommendations, for which UNCTAD will play an essential role.

Indeed UNCTAD will follow up the recommendations made to help the authorities to put them into practice. This performance monitoring report is essential for reaching the most important objective: improving the system of competition in Namibia.

The implementation involves many different types of activities: amending the law, regulatory development, publication of guidelines, program implementation, staff training and capacity building.

In the case of Namibia, we can say that the 2003 Act is a good law, which provides interesting instruments to implement a sound competition policy. However there is scope for improvement and in that sense the report highlights areas that can and should be improved upon with the participation of different actors and stakeholders in both the public and private sectors.

UNCTAD would like to support this process of change, talking to all the institutions involved, providing technical assistance and organizing capacity building activities necessary to facilitate the implementation of the recommendations.

Finally I would like to thank all the institutions and individuals who have collaborated in the preparation of this peer review, to which UNCTAD is fully committed. We reiterate our willingness to assist in all activities necessary for Namibia to have an exemplary competition environment.

thank you very much