



CENTRAL PROCUREMENT BOARD OF NAMIBA (CPBN)

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Media Briefing by Ms Lischen Ramakhutla,
Deputy Administrative Head of the CPBN

**Media Briefing by Ms Lischen Ramakhutla, Deputy Chairperson of the Central
Procurement Board of Namibia (CPBN)**

Members of the media present here today

Members of the Board of CPBN

Management Team of CPBN

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning,

1. I am honoured by your presence at this important engagement between the Central Procurement Board of Namibia (CPBN) and the media. Let me take this opportunity to greet and welcome you all.
2. We recognise that communication is a critical tool to keep the nation informed about the progress that we are making in pursuing its strategic and sustained agenda. As members of the media you have a critical role to play in helping us communicate these messages and in promoting dialogues and discussions to our Stakeholders.
3. On 14 February this year, we created a platform with the Editors where we indicated our aim to strengthen our relationship and where we also made a commitment to continuously update you with our progress and challenges, hence the platform of today to engage you with our activities.
4. The purpose of the briefing today is to inform you about the progress we are making, the challenges we are facing and the interventions required to close the gaps in implementing our mandate.

Ladies and gentlemen,

5. The Public Procurement Act 15 of 2015 created and established the central Procurement Board of Namibia, with the aim of improving the public procurement system and restoring public confidence in public procurement.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Please allow me to highlight a few statistics to create a better understanding of our operations as it pertains to public procurement.

6. During the period April 2018 to December 2018, the CBPN received thirty-five (35) Individual Procurement Plans (IPP's) to the value of N\$ 8 billion, forty-three (43) Standard Bidding Documents (SBD's), forty (40) bids were reviewed and evaluated. A total of forty-one (41) extension requests were received and twelve (to the value of N\$128 million) 12 direct procurements were awarded to the value of N\$154 million as from July to September 2018.
7. During the period under review, the Administration observed that two hundred and sixty-four (264) bid documents were sold to the public, but on average, only one hundred and ninety (190) were submitted.
8. We are currently busy with the statistical analysis on the above summaries that will culminate into a detailed report that will be shared with you before the end of next week on our website.

Ladies and gentlemen,

9. The latest quarterly progress reports on the outcomes paints a mixed bag of both successes and challenges. We have of recent managed to come up with a 5-year strategic plan which we intent to implement in order for us to ensure compliance through corporate governance.

10. I must admit that since the inception of the institution on 1 April 2017 we have been faced with challenges which allowed us to recognise opportunities through them. We are making steady progress in implementing our strategic plan despite the tough economic conditions we are in that has affected economic growth in our country. As for the challenges of CPBN I am sharing with you the intended strategies to curb and resolve the barriers of our functionality at hand, to mention but a few :
 - 10.1 Public Entities obtain funding from foreign sources which attached conditions to it, which cannot easily be accommodated given the tight deadlines under the Act. Several meetings with Procurement Policy Unit (PPU) and the funders resulted in an exemption issued by the Minister of Finance to address the short-term needs. However, further consultations are needed with all the stakeholders to incorporate the requirements of the Public Procurements Act, Act 15 of 2015, during negotiation stages

 - 10.2 Procurement processes and bidding documents should focus or incorporate SME, Women and Youth, and also address the government employment and industrialization policies – PPU workshopped preferences and are drafting preference policies and directives. We are of the view that the SBDs should be revised to incorporate these directives as a matter of urgency.

 - 10.3 **Operational Efficiency** - CPBN Experienced an increase in submissions and a reduction of staff due to the stringent employment requirements – CPBN engaged the line ministry and embarked on a number of interventions in an attempt to ease the pressure over the short term such as the request for secondments, advertising short term contracts and the appointment of short-term employees. In the

meantime, the organization allocated resources to expedite the recruitment process as this could address the challenges which the organization face over the long term.

- 10.4 **Legal Compliance** – Various risks of legal compliance are flagged such as the appointment of auditors which are affected by this shortage of staff, non-responsiveness of bidders, human errors and monitoring. Tracking sheets are implemented, monthly written reports are completed, and weekly status meetings concluded. Challenges are now identified and monitored on a weekly basis by Executives.
- 10.5 **Governance** – Due to the frequency of Procurement Adjudication meetings, several governance related matters were dealt with during the period under review during these meetings. These matters refer mostly to the operational challenges and Human Resources matters – with the appointment of a legal advisor, governance practitioner and Bid Evaluation Committee secretaries, more structure in this unit is expected and several outstanding governance issues will be flagged and address during the next quarter. A Board work plan as well as Board subcommittee work plans will be developed, discussed and agreed upon during the next 2 quarters.
- 10.6 **Legal cases** – one legal matter was concluded in favour of the CPBN.
- 10.7 **Standard Bidding Documents (SBD)** – Not revised as requested, notwithstanding the number of issues highlighted by the Board. There are also SBDs outstanding which is required for bids in the near future – PPU is busy with reviewing of the SBD with an aim to amend the SBDs and to compile new SBDs where required.
- 10.9 **Media Reports** – We have observed with several media reports on the awards of bids which in our view stems from inadequate information. To address this, the

CPBN is planning an annual journalist training program to be communicated in due course.

Ladies and gentlemen,

11. As part of CPBN objectives, we aim to work together with the public entities and engage with other stakeholders to co-ordinate and facilitate workshops on the PPA training, by means of educating the public and the SME businesses who may have an interest in applying for future bids through the Public Management Unit (PMU).

Conclusion

Since the CPBN has committed itself to keep its stakeholders abreast of their achievements, we look forward to seeing you again soon, when we shall reconvene to give you more updates.

In conclusion, we are pleased about the progress we have made so far, however, we are mindful that the road ahead will be challenging.

We now give you an opportunity to raise questions, preferably 2 questions per media house.

I thank you.