



**ADDRESS BY MR. PATRICK P. SWARTZ, CHAIRPERSON OF THE
CENTRAL PROCUREMENT BOARD OF NAMIBIA AT THE MEDIA
CONFERENCE TO ADDRESS THE MEDIA ON THE ISSUES REGARDING
THE RECRUITMENT OF 14 NEW STAFF MEMBERS AT CPBN
29 MAY 2020**

**DIRECTOR OF CEREMONIES, MS. LISCHEN RAMAKHUTLA, DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON
OF THE CENTRAL PROCUREMENT BOARD OF NAMIBIA;**

**MS. JOHANNA KAMBALA, CPBN MARKETING AND STAKEHOLDERS
ENGAGEMENT SPECIALIST; AND**

DEAR ESTEEMED MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA.

Allow me to use this opportunity to welcome you once again to the Central Procurement Board of Namibia. As a Board, we appreciate the role the media plays in society in educating and disseminate information to the masses out there. Hence, your presence here today is valued as we clarify issues and address concerns raised by the public regarding a notice that was circulating welcoming new staff members at CPBN.

1. The Central Procurement Board of Namibia (CPBN) has taken note of the public criticism and outcry as a result of a notice welcoming new employees, which was published on 6 May on the CPBN Twitter account.
2. The Central Procurement Board of Namibia was established through an Act of parliament, the Public Procurement Act of 2015 (Act no. 15 of 2015) with the following objectives:
 - a) To conduct the bidding process on behalf of public entities for the award of contracts for procurement or disposal of assets that exceed the threshold prescribed for public entities;
 - b) To enter into contracts for procurement or disposal of assets on its own behalf or on behalf of public entities awarded by the Board as contemplated in paragraph (a); and

- c) To direct and supervise accounting officers in managing the implementation of procurement contracts awarded by the Board.
3. Since its inception in 2017, CPBN operated with employees on short term contracts. However, most of these contracts came to an end on 31 March 2019 and as a result, CPBN was faced with a shortage of staff. This situation negatively affected the organization in delivering its mandate fully, resulting in some Stakeholders criticizing CPBN for delaying procurement activities.
 4. In order to improve on our customer service and service delivery, the Board adopted an organisational structure in 2017 which was followed by a recruitment process which commenced in 2017 and continued through to 2019.
 5. All previous positions at CPBN including the 14 positions in question, were advertised in the local print media as well as on CPBN website as a standard practice, and the positions were open for every qualified Namibian to apply.
 6. The evaluation criteria include evaluating positions based on the requirements of each position, this is in terms of qualifications, skills, knowledge and work experience. Candidates who meet the requirements are short-listed and then taken through the interview process. Due to the nature of our work, candidates who succeed in the interview are required to undergo a security clearance process before they are appointed.
 7. It is indeed worthy to note that the recruitment process has not been an easy one for CPBN as many positions had to be re-advertised due to several reasons, amongst others, candidates not found suitable during the interviews or that CPBN could not match remuneration of successful candidates.
 8. CPBN wishes to clarify that the fourteen individuals on the welcoming notice are ordinary employees of CPBN appointed to support the Board in the performance of its administrative functions, in accordance with Section 19 (1) of the Public

Procurement Act (PPA) and not Board members as claimed by members of the public.

9. Furthermore, it is important to clarify that all bids received for procurement projects at CPBN are evaluated by independent evaluators as per Section 26 of the PPA, who are appointed by the Board in accordance with Section 9 (1) (i) and they report directly to the Board on evaluated bids. Hence, CPBN employees have no influence on the evaluation and award of bids as claimed by the public.

10. Regarding the question on gender representation raised by the public, CPBN wishes to avail the following statistics of the applications that were received and processed for the 14 positions in question:

Job Title	Applications			Shortlisted candidates		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
<i>Procurement Specialist: Goods and Services</i>	11	20	31	1	4	5
<i>Senior Procurement Officer</i>	13	24	37	2	6	8
<i>Procurement Officer</i>	24	56	80	4	10	14
<i>Manager: Finance and Administration</i>	14	15	29	0	5	5
<i>Manager: Internal Procurement</i>	5	11	16	1	5	6
<i>Bid Evaluation Committee Secretary</i>	15	86	101	3	19	22
<i>Senior Registry Officer</i>	29	66	95	1	4	5
<i>Registry Officer</i>	15	25	40	2	5	7
TOTAL	126	303	429	14	58	72

11. Summarising the above statistics, it is evident that the majority of the applicants were female, representing 71% of the applicants while male applicants were represented by a mere 29% of the applicants.

12. From the applications shortlisted, 81% of the candidates were women while 19% were male candidates.

13. Taking the above statistics into consideration, CPBN wished to reject the claims that there was no fairness in the recruitment process in terms of gender representation as the majority of candidates who applied were women, a situation that CPBN had no control of. Our focus was to attract and appoint qualified candidates who can contribute to the mission and vision of CPBN in executing its mandate.

14. Lastly, CPBN strongly condemns the allegations made by the public that the recruitment of the 14 staff members was done to favour a particular ethnic group. These allegations are unfounded as the outcome of the recruitment process was rather unintended and all Namibians were allowed to apply for the positions.

In conclusion, the Central Procurement Board of Namibia value the concerns raised by the public and wish to reassure the public that CPBN will continue to practice best recruitment practices and provide equal employment opportunities to all Namibians in line with the laws of the country.

Thank you once again for coming, I thank you.