



**WELCOMING REMARKS BY THE DEPUTY
AUDITOR-GENERAL, MR. GOMS MENETTE
ON THE OCCASION OF THE THE ANNUAL
PLAN RREVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT
WORKSHOP –**

06-08 MARCH 2024, OAG HEADQUARTERS

WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA

Program Director,
Strategic Steering Committee Chairperson and team
Staff from the Office of the Auditor-General,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to join the Program Director in welcoming you all this morning, to this **ANNUAL PLAN RREVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP.**

Charles Kettering, an American inventor and engineer, emphasizes the correlation between high expectations and high achievement when he says “**High achievement always takes place in the framework of high expectation.**”

Stepping over from the year of “Revival” in 2023 where we were able to restore a lot of processes and systems, we therefore look forward to high expectations in the new financial year. I would like to extend a word of gratitude to the management and staff of the OAG who worked so hard to bring about revival in most of our processes.

As we review 2023, we have much to be proud of. Our office completed a record number of audits for both central and local government, upholding our duty to provide oversight and ensure accountability of public funds. We could not have achieved this without our executive restructuring decision regarding moving

Compliance Audits to the Performance Audit Directorate and handing over Village Councils to Cash-Based Audit Directorate in an attempt of equal work-load distribution with an expectation of a higher output achievement. Through this decision, the Office has made significant strides in its **Audit of Extractive Industries**.

Mid 2023 the OAG signed a Capacity Building MoU agreement with SAI Norway to increase collaboration and support on the audit of extractive industries. Through this support, our audit teams have managed to start with our first every Audit of Extractive Industries on the Gold Mineral. What is even more exciting is that this audit will be a jointed audit between extractive industries, compliance, performance, financial and information systems audit, giving citizens a holistic view of how public funds are utilized on the Gold Mineral.

In addition, the Office has been invited to do an inception presentation on the audit of extractive industries during the upcoming SADC PAC conference as we have been identified as leading on this audit stream in the region. I would therefore like to extend a word of thanks to Ms Liezl van Wyk and her entire audit directorate for all their hard work to ensure that this Office is leading in the region.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The year 2023 also marked a significant growth in stakeholder engagement and relations with especially our Auditees in an attempt to improve audit findings, outcomes and in general understanding the role and function of the Auditor-General's reports. Throughout the past nine (9) years the Communication and Public Relations sub division together with the Accrual Audit Directorate have managed to reach our auditees in all 14 regions spreading awareness and improving stakeholder knowledge and understanding of the role and function of the Office. Later this year, the Office will host local authorities and regional councils of the respective 14 regions for the 10th year stakeholder engagement briefing session where we will unpack the impact of our 9 year engagement. To that I would like to thank Mr Blessing Nyandoro and the accrual directorate as well as the Public Relations Officers for their hard work in achieving this milestone.

I would also like to congratulate Ms Ridley van Wyk and her Customer Service Charter Implementation Committee for winning the overall Public Service Customer Service Excellence Award during the 2023 Public Service day celebrations in Katima Mulilo. You have really set the bar very high, I am proud of you.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Taking all these wonderful highlights and achievements into consideration, we also faced challenges, including staff shortages and budget limitations. We have seen a significant amount of professionalized auditors exit our Office due to limitations on our current public service structure setting that is not able to accommodate professional auditors, financially. We are hopeful that our competent Professionalisation Committee, headed by Ms Erica Dien will be able to close this challenging gap in 2024.

Colleagues,

Moving into the new financial year, the year of expectations, we have set ambitious targets across all our key performance indicators. I am sure Mr Benz and his team will elaborate on that during this three day workshop. We expect to increase the number of audits conducted, reduce the backlog of outstanding audits, and decrease the time taken per audit. Critical to achieving these goals will be hiring and training new staff, as well as updating our systems and auditing processes.

Additionally, we aim to expand advisory and consultative services to government entities. Mr Shali Kapepo and Mr Elias Tuairé and the rest of the PAC Technical Advisory team are doing an excellent job

at advising our PAC members. In all my years of leading this institution, the current PAC is by far the most knowledgeable of our audit process as opposed to previous committee members. And this is evident in the type of questions they can ask during public hearings, all thanks to the technical advisory team. I hope this year in 2024 we will strengthen the PAC to put mechanisms in place to implore auditees to implement the Auditor-General's audit recommendations.

Colleagues,

By providing guidance on financial reporting and controls, we hope to prevent issues from arising rather than detecting them after the fact. We believe this will improve compliance and performance over the long term.

In closing ladies and gentlemen,

There is no doubt there will be obstacles ahead, but the expectations we have set reflect our confidence in what we can accomplish. Our talented and committed workforce gives me assurance that the Office will continue serving the public interest with excellence. We all have high hopes for 2024 to be a "Year of Achievements" through expectations.

Therefore, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I close off by saying that I encourage frank discussions over the next three days about learnings from 2023 and our priorities going forward. Together, let us start the new financial year with renewed dedication to our duties in auditing and safeguarding public resources.

With these remarks, it is now my pleasure to declare this ANNUAL PLAN RREVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP open for deliberations and planning.

I thank you.