

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



THE PRESIDENCY

STATEMENT BY

HIS EXCELLENCY DR. HAGE G. GEINGOB

**ON THE OCCASSION OF THE 39th COVID-19 PUBLIC BRIEFING ON
THE NATIONAL RESPONSE MEASURES**

13 January 2022

WINDHOEK

Check Against Delivery

Good Morning,

Allow me to begin by wishing you once again, fellow Namibians in all the 14 regions, a healthy, productive and prosperous New Year 2022 - The Year of Reimaging. Every new year presents a fresh start, a new beginning, to work, not only harder but smarter, guided by lessons from the previous year. To refocus our vision in order to achieve the goals we have set ourselves for as a nation.

In light of what we have been through over the past two years, this is our opportunity to form a new and optimistic mental picture for the future we hope to embrace. This moment presents yet another chance to pursue our dreams with renewed vigour and focus, to achieve success against all odds. I am confident that in this year of reimaging, we can become a better version of ourselves and our country.

Following a very deadly Third Wave of COVID-19 mid-last year, we are all evermore grateful for good health and the invaluable gift of life. Many of our compatriots did not make it to this day, and we will continue to cherish them in our memories. But we must forge ahead relentlessly into 2022 to make the Namibian House a truly inclusive and prosperous home for all her citizens.

The Fourth Wave, which was spurred by the outbreak of the OMICRON variant of COVID-19 in Namibia, in November 2021, was characterized by a

very high transmission rate with moderate hospitalisations. We must therefore proceed with caution, because the invisible enemy remains in our midst. We will not be safe, as a nation and as the global community, until all citizens are safe. Combatting this virus is a huge undertaking that will require every human effort, diligence and compliance, to overcome it.

Fellow Namibians,

As we embark upon a new year, we also need a critical re-evaluation of our hearts, minds and actions, to rid ourselves of behaviour that may be undermining our efforts of defeating COVID-19. Let us continue to maintain a regimented personal discipline of social and physical distancing, hand hygiene and wearing of face masks in public areas, in line with the health protocols. Let us also desist from spreading harmful and unscientific disinformation, which undermines the Government's efforts to protect lives and livelihoods.

Notably, vaccine hesitancy persists and as of 11 January 2022, the coverage of fully vaccinated populations remains low in primarily the following five (5) regions - Zambezi at 6 percent, Ohangwena, Omusati and Oshikoto at 9 percent and Oshana at 10 percent. The regions with the highest fully vaccinated population coverage are Hardap at 23 percent, Kavango West and Omaheke at 19 percent, and Kunene and //Kharas regions at 18 percent each. The capital Khomas region records a fully vaccinated population coverage of only 17 percent.

COVID-19 vaccines are an effective measure to mitigate severe illness and death from infection and I, therefore, urge all eligible members of the public to go and get vaccinated or get your booster shot as a means of bolstering your immunities. This is a personal medical decision that should be considered in the greater interest of protecting the collective. Vaccination is our best chance to kick-starting our economy.

The hour is now for us to rebuild our economy and our communities that have been devastated by COVID-19. Without a doubt, it will be a long road ahead. However, with the resilience and ingenuity, we have demonstrated over the past two years, I am confident that by holding hands and by standing together as One Namibia, One Nation, we have it within us to reimagine our country for better and in the interests of current and future generations.

Fellow Namibians,

The current Regulations are due to expire at midnight on 15 January 2022, and I will allow the Minister of Health to elaborate on the new measures for the period 16 January to 16 February 2022. I now call upon the Minister of Health and Social Services to provide a further update on changes in the Regulations.

I thank you.