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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BANK OF NAMIBIA TO HOST 22ND ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM: "NAMIBIA BEYOND COVID-19: DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION FOR SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT"

1. The Bank of Namibia will hold its 22nd Annual Symposium at the Safari Hotel and Conference Centre on November 4, 2021, under the theme "Namibia Beyond COVID-19: Digital Transformation for Sustainable Economic Development."
2. The Annual Symposium continues to be a prominent event that brings together distinguished speakers from local and international organisations, think tanks, academic institutions, and bodies to engage and make recommendations on various areas of national interest that are in line with the country's development agenda and aspirations.
3. The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic has led to a surge in digital platforms ranging from electronic commerce (e-commerce), digital payment methods and the provision of electronic services (e-services) from both the public and private sectors. Digital transformation ultimately leads to a digital economy whereby manual processes are improved or replaced by digital technology. The fundamentals under-pinning a digital economy are (i) telecommunication services, electricity and network infrastructure, (ii) public and private digital platforms, (iii) digital financial services, (iv) digital skills and (v) the regulatory and policy environment.
4. The Symposium's objective is to emphasise all aspects of the digital transformation journey, which brings new tools and chances to address development difficulties. It will

explore and recognise COVID-19 disruptions that spurred business and consumer behaviors, revolutionising production systems and value chains. As a result, economic sectors will be reorganised, resulting in smart goods and services and the introduction of new competitive conditions.

5. Experts will dissect the implications of this impact and examine how Namibia may position itself as a leader in the digital transformation agenda. This year's speakers include:

- Mrs. Florette Nakusera: Director of the Research and Financial Stability Department and Chief Economist of the Bank of Namibia. Mrs. Nakusera will provide an **overview of Digital transformation in Namibia** focusing on the current status of the country in terms of digital transformation, she will also focus on the regulatory environment and how it takes advantage of digital transformation in the finance space, increasing contribution towards inclusive sustainable development and highlight innovative finance needed for Namibia's private sector development.
- Prof. Kelvin Joseph Bwalya; a full professor of Business Information Systems and Knowledge Management at the School of Consumer Intelligence and Information Systems, University of Johannesburg. **Professor Bwalya will share avenues of improving Government service delivery through E-service.** Introducing e-government systems as a means of reducing costs, improving services, saving time, and increasing effectiveness and efficiency in the public sector.
- Dr. Bruno Lanvin; the co-Founder and Director of Portulans Institute. He is an INSEAD Distinguished Fellow, and President of the Smart City Observatory. Dr. Bruno will look at **gearing up a post-COVID Global Economy: Policy Options and Strategies for Namibia - An international perspective.** Evaluate the different strategies of building a digital economy, looking at the advantages and challenges from experiences from other countries as well as assess the most suitable policies for the Namibian economy.

6. The Bank will also co-host a public lecture in collaboration with the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) on the 3rd of November 2021 at NUST, Auditorium

1. The event will be hosted under the theme ***Information Systems Integration, Intelligence and Automation – Precursor to the Fourth Industrial Revolution.***

7. Over the years, the Bank of Namibia Annual Symposium has solidified its position as a vital platform that promotes policy dialogue in support of the countries socio-economic agenda. It is envisaged that the Symposium will provide a platform to understand digital transformation with reference to Namibia and to devise policies and strategies to help embrace the new era of digital sustainable economic development.

8. The event will be streamed live on the Bank of Namibia social media platform.

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