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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STATEMENT ON THE TRADE IMPACT OF THE FMD OUTBREAK AND THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE

1. Foot-and-mouth disease was confirmed in the Karasburg district on Wednesday 23 September, inside the free zone on which every Namibian export certificate rests. From that moment this became a trade emergency, and a trade emergency is fought in embassies and veterinary agencies abroad. The Ministry of International Relations and Trade has so far said, through its Executive Director, that Government is engaging with trading partners and working towards a notification to the World Trade Organisation, and that it will not comment on the position of individual partners while consultations continue. **A farmer at Warmbad, a worker on the Meatco line and an exporter with beef on the water need more than that.**
2. They are not getting it. At Government's last briefing on this outbreak journalists were not permitted to ask questions. The two Ministers whose portfolios this is, Agriculture and Trade, have said nothing in their own names on the largest threat to Namibian exports in a generation, and both are at the United Nations in New York while the country they represent there is left to read foreign websites for news of its own beef. **Silence from a Minister abroad is still silence at home.** So here is what is known, what is not, and what is likely to follow.
3. What we know, on Thursday, **24 September 2026,** the United Kingdom's Animal and Plant Health Agency instructed its veterinary surgeons to hold

every consignment of fresh Namibian beef, mutton and goat meat. On Friday 25 September 2026, it withdrew the certificates for territory NA-1, which is the whole FMD-free zone, not the Karasburg district alone. **Britain has shut its door to our fresh beef until further notice.** Heat-treated products are exempt and may still move. Namibia's notification to the World Organisation for Animal Health is listed, with the serotype pending, and on Saturday the Directorate eased the internal restrictions north of the veterinary cordon fence while the south stays locked down.

4. What we do not know, and the Ministry should say so plainly is, First, whether the beef already shipped before 23 September will be stopped. These measures normally carry a cut-off date set some weeks before the first detection: product from animals slaughtered before that date is usually cleared, product after it is not, and treated product moves regardless. Britain has not yet published its date, Meatco says it is too early to know, and Savanna Beef has consignments en route and in ports awaiting directives.

5. **The Ministry should ask London for that date today and tell every exporter what it is.** Second, **the serotype**, without which no partner can draw a smaller map. Third, the position of every other market, because **no European, Norwegian, South African, Botswana or Chinese measure has been published**, and silence from a partner is not the same as an open door.

6. What is likely to follow. The European Union decides by regionalisation, on the paper Windhoek sends it, and Norway follows the European decision. South Africa and Botswana have their own outbreaks and inspectors, and a reciprocal ban on Namibian animals and products is the ordinary next step; Namibia banned South African meat and live animals in September 2025 for exactly this reason.

7. **More doors are likely to close before any reopens, and Namibians should hear that from their Government, not discover it on a foreign website.** We are watching the trade front very closely, market by market, and we will publish what we find.

8. The money is real. Simonis Storm estimates that **about 60 per cent of beef export earnings, roughly N$3.3 billion a year, come from the European, British and Norwegian markets**, about N$9 million a day, and its base case is twelve to twenty-four months to regain full access, some N$1.8 billion in cost over 2026 and 2027 and 12,000 jobs exposed. Savanna Beef, certified for Europe only in April, has told the stock exchange that its operations are **"materially disrupted"**.

9. Government says it will divide the free zone into smaller areas and take about six months to put that to the World Organisation for Animal Health; **six months to draw the map is six months of closed doors** unless our missions are asking now for this to be treated as a Karasburg problem and not a Namibian one.

10. The Ministry's record on a single closed border does not reassure. On 21 October 2025, I asked, in Question 255, what it had done when South Africa suspended Namibian agricultural exports. **That question has waited 342 days without an answer.** A Ministry that could not account for one neighbour's ban in eleven months is now asked to manage five markets at once.

11. Government knew the price of this moment. On 12 July 2026 the Minister of Agriculture announced a **N$1.5 billion** fencing plan for the Orange River and warned that **"any introduction of FMD into Namibia would have severe economic ramifications, including the immediate imposition of trade restrictions."** The fence is now a court file rather than a fence. The restrictions she foresaw are here, and they belong to the Minister of Trade.

12. The people carrying this are not in the Ministry. A commercial farmer outside Karasburg has cattle he cannot move and a bank that still expects the instalment. A deboning-line worker at Meatco in Windhoek is watching the export line that pays her wage go quiet. A kapana seller at Single Quarters cannot buy a carcass because no abattoir may slaughter one.
13. What the Ministry must do today is reassure Namibians with facts, not adjectives. Publish a market-by-market bulletin, updated every 48 hours, of which markets are closed, for which products, from which date, and what each partner requires before it reopens, starting with the British notice that already exists.
14. Namibians can handle bad news; what they cannot handle is **two Ministers in New York, a briefing that took no questions, and a foreign government's website that tells them more about their own beef than their own Government does**. Britain has shut its door, more are likely to follow.

Namibia is all we have

Namibia is not for sale

We must and can save it!

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