**Remarks by HE Mrs Marianne Young, British High Commissioner to Namibia**

**on the occasion of the exhibition opening in Windhoek: “Changing History. World War I & Namibia”**

**30 July 2015, 18h30, NWG, Windhoek**

* Director of Ceremonies, Dr. Gordon McGregor,
* Amb. Lineekla Mboti, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation
* Your Excellencies, dear colleagues
* *Especially* Charge d’Affaires Ulrich Kinne from the German Embassy
* Dr. Aaron Nambadi, Chairperson of the Museums Association of Namibia (MAN)
* Dr. Martha Akawa, Head of the Department of History, Geography and Environmental Studies, UNAM,
* Students from the University of Namibia
* Ladies and gentlemen
* Members of the media,

**I am delighted to be with you all today and pleased to be part of tonight’s exhibition opening in Windhoek.**

**3 weeks ago, on the 9 July 2015, exactly 100 years after Germany and South Africa signed the surrender agreement on 09 July 1915, the Museums Association and the British High Commission launched the main parts of the exhibition near the historic site of the German surrender, in Otavi.**

**Tonight, it is great to witness so many people coming together from various backgrounds and representing many countries including Germany, the United States of America, France, Russia, and countries from the Commonwealth India, Namibia and South Africa. Some of these countries weren’t born at the time, but many endured 4 terrible years of conflict between 1914 and 1918.**

**World War One was the bloodiest conflict the world had known. More than 17m soldiers and civilians were killed, including 750,000 British and Commonwealth troops. I would like to pay tribute to all who died to give us our freedom and enable us to entrench democracy, the rule of law, and promote our shared values around the globe.**

**Throughout 2015, the First World War Centenary is being commemorated globally. Namibia’s own history warrants inclusion in the worldwide WWI centenary commemorations, as one of the countries outside Europe that was drawn into the conflict through regional development in southern Africa, and its own German occupation.**

**I am therefore pleased that the British High Commission, as part of the UK’s First World War Centenary Commemoration activities, was able to support the Museums Association of Namibia’s work to highlight the centenary locally and educate young Namibians, in particular, on the impact of these events on Namibia’s history. Let me also thank the NWG and the German Embassy who contributed to the exhibition and making tonight’s event possible.**

**I am particularly pleased that the exhibition will be available to museums and schools around Namibia, and that a mobile natured art exhibition will help provide the foundations on which to build an enduring cultural and educational legacy. By putting young people at the centre of our commemoration, it will help ensure that the sacrifice and service of a hundred years ago is still remembered in a hundred years’ time.**

**Thank you.**