

SSC, Unam to collaborate

■ **Alvine Kapitako**

WINDHOEK – The Social Security Commission (SSC) and the University of Namibia (Unam) on Wednesday signed a five-year memorandum of understanding (MoU) that will make collaboration in areas of mutual cooperation in academic, technical, social, cultural, economic and environmental fields.

The objective of the MoU between the two institutions is to strengthen their relationship to foster cooperation in various fields to provide sustainable solutions to socio-economic problems in Namibia.

The MoU will also explore collaboration in research, capacity building and related activities, the establishment of opportunities for internships for university students, cooperation in the exchange of human expertise and resources in identified areas of collaboration.

Further collaborations include hosting of joint seminars and conference.

The Unam Vice-Chancellor, Professor Kenneth Matengu said there are over 79 million unemployed university graduates worldwide.

The MoU is to respond to that by engaging partners such as the SSC, said Matengu. The university has eight faculties.

These are the faculty of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Science, Health Sciences, Economics and Management, Education, Law and Humanities and Social Sciences.

“These fields are all important for the development of this country,” added Matengu. Through the collaboration between the two entities, means will be established on how to use knowledge to support identified projects, food security, consideration of local knowledge and “de-colonising education”.

This includes documenting practices and knowledge that exist in local communities as well as preparing study materials that are specific to the Namibian context.

The SSC Executive Officer, Milka Mungunda said a joint technical committee consisting of representatives from both institutions will be established to oversee the implementation of the stipulations of the MoU.

The committee will comprise of eight members, four each from the two institutions. Both Matengu and Mungunda will



Two hands better than one... Professor Kenneth Matengu, the Vice-Chancellor of Unam (left) and Milka Mungunda, the SSC Executive Officer, signing the agreement.

appoint the committee members, said Mungunda.

Through the Social Security's Development Fund, the commission is mandated to address the challenges posed by poverty, unemployment and skills shortages in Namibia.

“I believe we have found an excellent partner (Unam), in

our quest to fulfil our mandate of social protection and also to contribute towards the attainment of the National Development Plan 5 goals for economic progress and social transformation,” said Mungunda.

The SSC administers funds which includes Maternity Leave, Sick Leave, Death Benefit Fund, a

Development Fund and National Medical Benefit Fund, a National Pension Fund and Employees' Compensation Fund.

“We serve our members from 13 different towns in Namibia and mainly derive our funds from membership contributions through compulsory payroll deductions,” said Mungunda.