



The Gateway to Endless Opportunities

**STATEMENT BY THE MAYOR OF WINDHOEK, DR. JOB SHIPULULO
AMUPANDA, ON THE DEMOLITION OF HOMES AND THE WAY
FORWARD**

THURSDAY, 22 JULY 2021

12H00

Deputy Mayor

Chairperson of the Management Committee

Honourable Councillors

ACEO & Executives

Residents of Windhoek

Members of the media

Good afternoon,

The horrifying events and scenes of yesterday whereby homes were demolished, is an embodiment of collective failure to address the housing situation in our city. These events represent what has gone wrong with our moral fibre and is characterised by the lack of imagination, the impossibility of co-presence and the paradigm of difference.

To be clear, these events occurred without my knowledge, as Mayor. The Deputy Mayor and the Chairperson of Management Committee were also accordingly unaware. As such, what occurred yesterday, was not sanctioned by the political leadership of the Municipal Council of Windhoek.

To an extent that individual Councillors may have been aware (as some suspect), of the intended events: such events were not sanctioned by Council. Although I was not aware, I take responsibility of the pain and suffering caused to the residents in the name of Council and on behalf of Council, I, apologise to the residents for the recklessness and irresponsible events that took place yesterday.

This morning, I convened a consultative meeting attended by the Deputy Mayor, Chairperson of the Management Committee and Members of Management Committee, the Acting Chief Executive Officer, the Corporate Legal Advisor, the Head of City Police, and the Strategic Executive for Housing. At the said meeting, we discussed yesterday's demolition of homes and related matters.

The critical issue that emanates from the consultative meeting is that, large scale demolition of homes will no longer occur without Council's knowledge. Although this consensus was reached, formal written communication to this effect, will be provided to

the Acting Chief Executive Officer and the Head of City Police in writing today.

That the unfortunate events were celebrated by others, is indicative of the dynamics at play at the municipal Council of Windhoek. The residents are thus urged to analyse the events beyond what appears to the naked eye. It is evident that there are specific politicians whose plan and preoccupation, is to isolate and individualise.

With a small cabal of associates, they seek to make the issue of landlessness about “Amupanda” as if Amupanda has executive powers to make unilateral policy decisions. It is thus no surprise that one repeatedly reads “Honeymoon is over for Amupanda” and “Pressure mounts for Amupanda.” It is thus clear that the objective is not necessarily to address the issues facing our residents but, to isolate Amupanda, and project that ‘celebrity’ politicians are somehow not part of what is transpiring. Indeed, the objective is to frustrate and defocus this imaginary “Amupanda” in hollow minds.

Let me be very clear: the idea that land occupation and underhand tactics are to target Amupanda is foolishness. Such thoughtless and feeble minds are concerned with politics, rather than to address the concerns of our residents.

The residents are thus informed that with four months left before the elections of Mayors, the jostling for positions has started. The theatrics we now witness by some members of Council have nothing to do with the needs of our people. These antics are about the positioning and projection of oneself as better than others. I have always been clear that for what I stand, I am prepared to be an ordinary Councillor and will never succumb to somehow be placed in a position of begging for positions. I came to this Council as Councillor and not as a Mayor.

It further goes without saying that all is not well at the Municipal council of Windhoek. One of the key issues is resistance to change and administrative instabilities. The greater portion of our employees are still loyal to the old regime and continue to retreat to dark corners to organise with those who lost power. Those who lost power are not happy and are nostalgic for the power they once had. Those who are subjected to disciplinary and

accountability processes, are fighting back, collaborating with those who lost power and those who seek power. Instead of submitting proposals to solve the problems of the residents, their preoccupation is to sabotage and block initiatives that address the challenges our people face. The same political celebrities masquerading on the side of the poor, are the ones who voted down the Mayoral Plan that had a programme to organise communities to better address their problems. There is no single idea brought by these celebrity politicians, thirsty for the return to power, in our Council, apart from mobilising others to vote down ideas brought by the leadership.

Specific Interventions

Although we are aware of these occurrences and political tactics, we cannot use these as excuses. We must address the issues at hand during our time. Therefore, in Line with the Local Authority Act and its subsequent rules and regulations, it is hereby announced that a **Special Council on Land and Housing** is slated for 5 August 2021. At this Special Council, the matters

will be tabled for discussion and approval. These are, just to mention a few:

1. The Relocation Centre to Decongest the Informal Settlements;
2. The Controlled entry into the Informal Settlements;
3. City Owned Township development;
4. Affordable Housing Policy;
5. The Municipality Waiting List;
6. The Municipality Satellite Offices in Informal Settlements and many others
7. Rollout plan for informal settlements upgrading;
8. Housing Indaba in August 2021.

Residents are called to closely monitor the discussions at this Special Council and see what happens to proposals meant to solve challenges beyond theatrics. This Special Council will be live-streamed and I will explore possibilities to have this meeting broadcasted on radio.

Despite these interventions, I have no doubt that those opposed to our activities and programmes will continue with their

underhand tactics. I must thus make it clear that should the measures to solve the residents' problems be approved by the Special Council and similar incidences continue, we will no longer respond to what the authorities do.

These events are a clarion call to those forming a Coalition at the City to urgently convene and reorganise at the highest level, given the recent shenanigans. Although it is projected to be "pressure on Amupanda", the target is to delegitimise each political party and association forming part of Coalition. DO not think, for a moment, when a Mayor from your Political Party takes office these theatrics will stop. It is either we organise or continue to respond to the theatrics of the political thirsty. We are committed to addressing the issues at hand in an organised manner and will not entertain sinister tactics aimed at out-manoeuving Council's efforts. Therefore, let me make it categorically clear that: a thorough investigation into Councillors' conduct pertaining to any attempt to undermine Council's efforts to render effective and efficient service delivery, will face the full wrath of the provisions, as stated in the Code of Conduct:

“Regulation 2 (2) (a) A member may not use confidential information obtained in the course of his/her duties for his/her own personal gain or for the gain of any other person and she/he must respect the confidentiality of documents and information relating to Council).

Regulation 3 (a): A member must place the interest of Council before his/her own interest and avoid private undertakings that interfere with the optimum delivery of the business of Council and must, if he/she is with regard to a particular matter, not able to do that, abstain from participating in the matter in his/her capacity as member.

3 (g) A member must at all times, strive to enhance the image of Council.”

As Chairperson of Council, I will in future, ensure that members of Council are required to strictly adhere to the provisions of the Code of Conduct. In addition, any conduct that is perceived to compromise any laws or policies of Council will not be tolerated.

As Chairperson, I will use all legal means available to my disposal that such recalcitrant members are held accountable!!!!

The residents, those who are genuinely concerned, must hereby rest assured that we will attend to your issues. To those part of the deceitful tactics: think of what ultimate result will be for you. To the power thirsty political celebrities, you will fail. To the Friends of Windhoek, our housing problem remains and we again call upon your to help, to jointly solve the problems of our people.

I thank you.