

**The City of Many Faces**

**STATEMENT BY HIS WORSHIP CLLR MUESEE KAZAPUA, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF WINDHOEK, AT THE OCCASION OF THE 1st ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON JANUARY 26, 2017, COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**18H00**

**Your Worship Cllr Fransina Ndateelela Kahungu, Deputy Mayor of the City of Windhoek,**

**Hon Alderpersons and Councillors,**

**Mr Fillemon Nangolo Hambuda, the Acting Chief Executive Officer,**

**Bishop Ndozi Henry Okia of Model Prayer Ministries International**

**Management and Officials of the City of Windhoek,**

**Esteemed Windhoek residents,**

**Members of the media,**

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

**Good evening.**

It gives me a great pleasure to sit before you this evening to extend a warm welcome to you at our first monthly Council meeting for the 2017 calendar year. I believe you have rested adequately, and have come back rejuvenated, to face the challenges head-on, in order to provide the much needed services to our esteemed residents. So please welcome back!

The term of as Councillors is a short period of time – 5 years, now only 4 years left which does pass quickly, where as individuals and as a group we can achieve many lasting things for the residents of Windhoek. Many of these achievements will go unnoticed but that does not reduce their importance, nor the satisfaction that comes from being part of these accomplishments.

The role also requires us to make hard decisions and this is when our leadership qualities come to the fore.

As I stated in my acceptance speech of December last year when I was re-elected as Mayor, we need to increase our efforts to create a sustainable environment in a period when lack of housing, lack of basic services in the informal settlements, unemployment and poverty, continue to derail our aspirations for social progression and prosperity.

It is therefore important to stress that, as Council, we must re-double our efforts around those focal areas if we are to make a positive impact on our commitment to the ideals of the Harambee Prosperity Plan.

In the same vein, I also implored that we should stay the course and continue with the program that we have set ourselves since taking office in December 2015. It is also important to reiterate that the progress made by the Mayoral Agenda Committees and Standing Council Advisory Committees last year, by providing direction and guiding the development agenda of Council is commendable. We have seen that some sectors of our operations have drastically improved, which is a sign that the Committees strategy could just be the right strategy to get things done.

In this spirit, Honourable Councillors, dear Management, I still stand by my intention not to change the focal Priority Agenda that was approved by Council in March 2016, as there is a lot of work to be done. The Mayoral Agenda 2017 therefore remains on the following critical areas:

* **Provision of basic services in underserviced areas**
* **Land delivery and affordable housing**
* **Improvement of the systems of operations and performance**
* **Promotion economic development and job creation**
* **Clean City initiative and environmental management**
* **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)**
* **Public participation and consultative governance**
* **Food and nutrition security programme**
* **Sustainable Urban Transport-MOVE Windhoek Project, and**
* **HIV/Aids and other life threatening diseases**

We intend to strengthen the Committees’ structures, particularly the Secretariats, because it is my strong conviction that these committees will only sufficiently carry out their mandates, if they are adequately administered.

**Esteemed residents, ladies and gentlemen,**

In September of last year, Council embarked upon strategic planning, with the aim to craft a 2016 – 2021 Strategic Plan, replacing the 2011-2016 Integrated Business Plan (IBP), which came to an end in June 2016. The Strategic Plan, which will be the Council’s road map for the next five years, will be finalised in due course.

Evidently, the City of Windhoek faces many internal and external challenges, with burning ones being bureaucracy, slow service delivery, lack of funding, serious water shortage, increasing population, expanding informal settlements and unbending demand for affordable land.

As Council, we will need to brace ourselves for tough times ahead and do things differently if we hope for different results. In my view, effective governance will have to become a central theme that cuts across everything that we do going forward. This will require the involvement and commitment of both public and private entities, as well as the community at large to pull together and shape Windhoek into a vibrant, exciting city that anyone in the world would want to live, work and play in.

I would therefore like to request management to expedite the finalisation of the final Strategic Plan, in order for us to set the ball rolling, as we intend to implement it to the letter and spirit, for the benefit of our people.

**Honourable Councillors, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is important to emphasise that it will be useless to have a beautiful, well-worded and colourful Strategic Plan in place, if it is not translated into tangible results that make a difference into the lives of the residents of Windhoek. We will therefore need a concerted effort and dedication from all members of our team, in order to realise the dreams that will be set out in the 2016 – 2021 Strategic Plan.

Speaking about the team, ladies and gentlemen, I am pleased to inform you that we have a new addition to our team. This new member is no one else but Mr Robert Nandaa Kahimise, our recently appointed Chief Executive Officer. Mr Kahimise, may you please rise for the residents to see their new chief administrator! (Omake)

Thank you very much, you may be seated.

Although the formal introduction is scheduled for tomorrow at 10h00 AM at a media briefing, I deemed it necessary to invite him to come observe the proceedings of the Council Meeting, because as of 01 February 2017, he will be responsible the Council Meeting Agenda.

We are happy to have you in our midst, and are looking forward to working together, to assist us to search for lasting solutions to the socio-economic challenges affecting our residents.

Now as we look ahead, there are a range of challenges on the horizon for the City of Windhoek like all other growing cities. In fact, we are growing at the largest and fastest rate in our history. Our municipality is visibly changing; we know that our citizens are relying on us over the coming year to make sure the City is ready for the future.

In a growing city, we know our citizens are concerned about the amount of development, and want us to ensure high quality standards are put in place. Our role in guiding development and advocating to our government has never been more important than it is right now. In the past, we have worked hard to come up with a balanced approach to managing development. As a Council, we recommit ourselves to pursuing good quality in development decisions and advocating to continued improvement service delivery initiatives.

In a growing city, we know our citizens want good transport alternatives, thus we must continue, to improve public transport services and other active transport modes in our city.

In a growing city, we know our citizens want us to make sure we are planning for future open space and recreational needs. This year, in partnership with our stakeholders, we will embark on the river work initiative. This Council term will also be the first where we start to actively plan for and take steps to acquire open space on a proactive basis with our future population in mind.

In a growing city, affordable housing will remain a high priority for us and our citizens. This year, Council will increase its efforts to provide better opportunities for the City residents to find serviced land and build houses. Council will be testing what has been set up the previous year, through the exploration of a demonstration housing project. At the same time, we know the local government sector is going through a cycle of reform which also poses challenges to us during the coming term.

**Dear Residents,**

The continuous none-payment for Municipality services by our residents will mean significantly less revenue for Council over the coming years. This poses serious challenges to Council, as we try to deliver the many projects and services. This new financial environment means the choices we make about where to spend money in the community become more important than ever.

When I look around at my colleagues tonight, I can’t help but be excited about this year and the enthusiasm the Councillors are showing. We are a diverse group of Councillors, from all parts of the political spectrum. This means that we bring different ideas and views to the table. It may also mean that we won’t always agree unanimously on every issue. But it does not have to stop us from working as a team. It doesn’t have to stop us from being unified in our purpose to serve our community, and I call on all Councillors to let our diversity - strengthen us.

In conclusion, I would like to once again welcome you back, and to wish you a productive year ahead. We should rededicate ourselves to service of our people, so that we help them to live a prosperous and happy life.

**I thank you.**