

The City of Many Faces

**Mayoral Statement by His Worship Cllr Muesee Kazapua, Mayor of the City of Windhoek, at the Occasion of the Mayoral Business Forum Breakfast 2016**

**Date: 14 August 2016**

**Time: 07h30**

**Venue: Safari Hotel**

**Directors of the Programme, Mr Fillemon Hambuda, Acting CEO of CoW and Mr Tarah Shaanika, CEO of NCCI,**

**Hon City Councillors Present here,**

**Mr. Sven Thieme, NCCI President,**

**Distinguished members of the Windhoek Business Community,**

**Management and Staff members**

**Members of the Media,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

**Good Morning!**

I am delighted to be amongst you this morning, as we gather here, at the occasion at which we are reviving the Mayoral Business Forum, after many years of being dormant.

I have no doubt that many of you have long been waiting for this day, a platform at which the Mayor and City leadership interacts with the business community on matters related to the economic and developmental agenda of our City.

Let me therefore applaud the Namibia Chamber of Commerce and Industry for agreeing to partner with us in reviving this platform and all of you present here, for committing time to come and exchange ideas with us on common concerns, and share means that would fast track the economic development of our City.

There is no doubt that our City boost a good reputation amongst other cities of the world, in terms of its cleanliness, availability of social services, the quality of infrastructure, and it remains the ideal location for business and investment.

However, with the persistent global economic downturn the macroeconomic environment in Namibia, particularly that of Windhoek would not be spared. As per recent economic reports, a combination of factors amongst others the slow growth and imbalances within the local economy, less foreign direct investment and the recurrent droughts, which resulted in shortage on water supply, has had negative impact on the Namibia economic rating.

Despite these challenges, the City has seen major developments during the past few years, which include the extension of Wernhil Park, the City Junction at the corner of John Meinert and Mandume Ndemufayo Streets, just to mention but few. Both the new FNB head office and Hilton Hotel and the mix development opposite the City Hall by Broll Namibia, have face-lifted our CBD area. These mixed developments in our CBD area is a clear testimony that our business community is positively responding to the City’s call to revitalise the CBD area, which goes almost motionless after 18h00 on weekdays. I am certain that when we look back we will see great achievements and if we look before us we will see a promising future.

We have also seen the development of the Grove Mall, which is the biggest mall in the country, the B1 City opposite Katutura Hospital, the extension of the Western Bypass and the Windhoek-Okahandja roads and many more.

Allow me therefore to use this opportunity to thank the business community for the continued confidence in the Windhoek economy.

While acknowledging the positivity from the business community to develop our City, Council has noted with concern the slow pace at which investors are taking up developmental opportunities to the western suburbs of the City. In other words, the developments are skewed and are positively inclined to some developmental directions only. I would therefore like to appeal to you to seriously consider investing into major projects in Katutura. Council stands ready to avail land, for developments that it deems will make positive impacts in the livelihoods of our people, particularly in the western suburbs of our city.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The sustained water availability challenge remains a serious concern, and therefore higher on the agenda Council. We are also cognisant of the negative impact that the water scarcity has had on industry.

However, as Council we are sparing no effort in our quest to keep water flowing in Windhoek, for both human consumption and economic activities.

Although the City’s efforts on making water available will be detailed out in the presentation that will follow soon, it is important to mention that Council is working together with central government on how to best mitigate the water shortage, in the central areas of the country.

**Program Directors, dear Business Community,**

Poverty continues to strike hard the less fortunate members of our society. This continues to be worsened by the ever-widening income inequality gap between the haves and the have-nots. As elected leaders, we are obliged to come up with ways to mitigate the situation. One of these initiatives is the Mayoral Relief Fund approved by Council, which main aim is to assist in the eradication of poverty.

To this end, ladies and gentlemen, Council in June this year approved the establishment of this very important Fund. The fund will be used to support social welfare cases and vulnerable members of our society. Of importance to mention is that the Fund will largely depend on the contribution by good Samaritans and development partners in the private sector like you.

The Office of the Mayor is busy organizing a launch and fundraising gala dinner, at which I will count on the contribution of the Windhoek’s corporate sector. If all go according to plan, the event, which is provisionally set for the end of October this year, will be graced by the presence of Madam Monica Geingos, First Lady of the Republic of Namibia. Invitations will be sent out in due course.

With these remarks ladies and gentlemen,

**Thank You!**