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MEDIA RELEASE

15 November 2023

RESPONSE TO NAMIBIAN SUN NEWSPAPER ARTICLE ON ECB'S CENTRAL RED ESTABLISHMENT

The City of Windhoek would like to respond to an article published in the Namibian Sun newspaper on 15 November 2023, titled "ECB to create Central RED despite City pushback." The article discusses the Electricity Control Board's (ECB) plans to establish a central regional electricity distributor (RED), despite the City's objections.

The City of Windhoek is disappointed and concerned about the ECB's decision to act outside of its role as a neutral regulator of the electricity sector. The ECB's position appears to support an agenda that does not align with the interests of local authorities, who are the legal distributors of electricity and constitutionally established local governments under Chapter 12, Article 111 of the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia.

The City of Windhoek also disagrees with the ECB's assessment of its future ability to provide electricity effectively, as it is based on unfounded assumptions and projections that the City has not been formally informed about or discussed. The City of Windhoek considers this approach to be regrettable, misleading, and unprofessional, and expects more respect and courtesy from the ECB as a regulator.

The City of Windhoek affirms its position as the largest and most efficient Electricity Distributor in the country, with a proven track record of managing its electricity resources without owing any debt to NamPower. The City also acknowledges the difficulties faced by smaller local authorities in providing electricity and supports initiatives that aim to improve their capacity and sustainability while preserving their autonomy and sovereignty. The City understands the ECB's intention to create a Central RED using the City's expertise and resources to assist these entities, but this should not come at the expense of the City and its residents. The City of Windhoek looks forward to seeing the revised strategy at the Electricity Distribution Industry (EDI) Summit scheduled for 16-17 November 2023 and will express our views as a City and Local Authority Sector.

The City of Windhoek supports a participatory and consensual approach to the EDI seeking a win-win solution that stresses the importance of a gradual transformation of the sector, warning against forceful measures that may jeopardize the continuous, reliable, and efficient delivery of electricity to the city dwellers.

In conclusion, the City of Windhoek urges the ECB to reconsider its position and engage in a cooperative, consultative approach that respects the constitutional and legal framework governing local authorities.

For more information about this statement, please contact our Corporate Communication Section at Tel.: 061 290 3797 /2044, or email: cowcommunication@windhoekcc.org.na

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