

***City of many faces***

**OFFICIAL STATEMENT BY HIS WORSHIP CLLR MUESEE KAZAPUA, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF WINDHOEK, AT THE OCCASION OF THE MONTHLY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 31 AUGUST 2016, KHOMAS REGIONAL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**Dr Martin Nelumbu of the United Lutheran Theological Seminary, Alderpersons and Honourable Councillors,**

**Mrs Utete Karimbue-Mupaine, Acting Chief Executive Officer and Strategic Executives of the City of Windhoek,**

**Esteemed Windhoek residents,**

**Members of the media,**

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

**Good evening,**

It is once again my pleasure to welcome you all to our monthly Council meeting this evening. As a Council we believe in public participation and accountability. I am therefore happy to observe continuous attendance of our Council meetings by many of our communities and stakeholders.

**Honourable Councillors,**

I would like to start off my address of this evening by reiterating our governance stance, which is based on the principle that our democracy must bring material fruits to all, particularly the poor, the marginalised and the vulnerable. As local authority leaders we remain cognizant of the hardship faced by our people ranging from lack of access to basic municipal services, such as, housing, water and electricity. We continue on this path, as we pull together in the spirit of Harambee, in an effort to create prosperity for all our residents.

It was for this reason that already at the beginning of my term of office; I committed this Council to a 10-Point Mayoral Agenda focussing on priority issues. I further assigned councillors to Committees on each thematic point, with the purpose to ensure that Councillors provide leadership and influence the developmental agenda of the City. The Mayoral Agenda was approved by this August House on 31st March 2016.

At the centre of the Mayoral Agenda, is land delivery and housing, provision of basic services in informal areas, improvement of systems of operations and performance, economic development and job creation, public participation, food and nutrition security, just to mention, but a few.

I am happy to inform Windhoek residents that your Councillors that I have assigned to the Committees have been hard at work; providing me with reports on items that their respective committees are to bring to Council. This proved to be a working approach as officials and Councillors can now start off at the same page on each project.

**Hon Councillors, dear residents,**

This Council meeting is taking place a few days after Windhoek residents joined the rest of the country in commemorating the Heroes Day held in Walvis Bay last week Friday, 26 August. This was the day when several decades ago, brave Namibians made the choice to join the struggle for the liberation of our beloved country. It was the time when our forbearers were forced to make a choice, as to whether to submit to apartheid and segregation or to fight for the dignity of all Namibians, even if it means paying with their lives.

Through their sacrifices, we attained our hard won independence, which we were also reminded to jealously hold on to. They fought for a just society, where all citizens should enjoy equal opportunities and have access to basic services.

In this connection, we are called to duty, to ensure that our fallen heroes and heroines did not shed their blood in vein. As matter of fact, we can only do that through providing adequate municipal services to our people.

**Hon Councillors, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

On the external relations front, the City of Windhoek continues to enjoy fraternal relations with sister local authorities, both at national and international levels. At national level, these relations are forged in the spirit of nation building; through signed memorandum of cooperation, valid for a period of 5 years. This year many of the agreements came to an end.

As a result, last week I led a delegation to the sister towns of Okakarara, Otjiwarongo, Eenhana, Ondangwa, Ongwediva and Oshakati to renew the expired Cooperation Agreements. The renewal of these agreements took place at the time when Namibia has declared war on poverty eradication under the framework of the Harambee Properity Plan, where no Namibian should feel left out.

Surely, Local Authority Councils are levels of Government closest to the people; who on daily basis have to deal with issues of bread and butter- when it comes to the provision of water, sanitation electricity and housing. Proximity to the people therefore places local authorities at the frontline of eradicating poverty and enhancing the quality of life of all citizens.

In the same vein, Windhoek as a capital city and the biggest municipality in Namibia has a leading role to play, in terms of assisting its sister local authorities, through capacity building initiatives and experience sharing.

It is thus important that we maintain strong local authority relationships and networks; if we are to address rapid urbanisation in some municipalities and if we are to sustainably deliver on water, sanitation, electricity and housing; and achieve the objectives set out in the Harambee Prosperity Plan.

Finally, ladies and gentlemen, allow me to express our gratitude for having been enjoying your company at our Council meetings over the years; a picture indicative of your commitment to civic responsibilities and our resolve on public participation and consultative governance.

I thank you.