

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY ANANIAS NIIZIMBA, CLLR OF THE CITY OF WINDHOEK, ON THE OCASSION OF THE NATIONAL ARBOR DAY CELEBRATIONS 2017.**

**VENUE: OPONGANDA CEMETERY EXT B**

**DATE: 10 NOVEMBER 2017**

**TIME: 11H00**

**Programme Director, Mr. Uaka Kazombiaze;**

**Hon Councillors present here;**

**Strategic Executives and other officials of the City of Windhoek;**

**Residents, Community Members Present**

**Members of the Media;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen;**

**Good Afternoon!**

I am pleased to be here this morning/afternoon; at the occasion where we are celebrating of the important days of the City Calendar: the International Arbor Day 2017, with the theme: **Trees are the Natures Powerhouse: Save Trees to Save Lives’’**

At the onset, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone present here today.

The initiative of celebrating the Arbor Day annually, which started in Nebraska in 1872, was a brainchild of Mr. Julius Sterling Morton. Mr. Morton’s motive was to educate people in knowing the importance of trees in their lives, and the benefits associated with planting and take good care of them. I am therefore happy that today, we join the rest of the world in celebrating the day of planting trees.

The celebration of Arbor Day gives every resident and community members an opportunity to learn about trees and take a positive action to make the world a better place. Due to changes in the climatic patterns around the world, temperatures here in the Capital City have increased drastically. The Khomas Region continues to experience temperatures which are much hotter than they used to be, which negatively affects exotic trees, as they are no longer able to adapt well to the environment. Therefore, the City has recognised the importance of planting indigenous trees, for they are durable in these drastic weather changes and consume less water.

**Director of the Programme, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

There are few reasons why Trees are so important in our daily lives. To mention but few:

* Trees provide shade to keep us and our homes cool on hot summer days.
* Trees gives off vital oxygen trough photosynthesis which human and animals need to breath
* Trees absorb harmful pollutants and small particles from the air which could cause damage to our lungs.
* Trees provide protection from wind
* Trees reduce noise pollution, and
* From trees, we produce the following products as well:
* Chewing gum
* Soap
* Shatterproof glass
* Suntan lotion
* Lifesaving drugs
* Writing paper
* Fire wood
* Building Materials and many more.

Looking at the list of benefits that I just alluded to, it therefore goes without saying, that the importance of caring for trees cannot be overemphasised.

It is worth noting that to contribute to climate change combating efforts; the City of Windhoek has committed itself to celebrate Arbor Day each year, with the aim of planting more trees, and by doing so, we horticulturally beautify the City. Through the Arbor Day Celebration, trees will be donated to Communities and also planted at National Institutions, Schools and many others.

Let me therefore implore upon all residents to celebrate this day by planting indigenous shade trees and fruit trees donated by the Council at their homes.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The process of planting flowers has started in the Independence Avenue and other areas, but I must register my disappointment, as these flowers and trees are being stolen. Let’s therefore refrain from removing planted trees and flowers around the City, as these acts hamper the Council’s efforts of trying beautifying the city, if the horticultural products are being illegally removed.

Today we are planting trees in the Cemetery of Oponganda, in Honour of our loved ones. Apart from beautifying the Cemetery, we put our loved ones in the much needed shades, so that they rest in a cool place. Let us therefore all be responsible and care for these trees, and not to see them being taken or stolen from these facilities.

I would like to conclude by thanking the Department of Economic Development and Community Services, for making sure that every year we plant trees, for the better of our City. In same vein, I would like to call on corporate giants to donate trees and even adopt certain facilities under their care. I am making this call because there is no way that the City can undertake such massive social investments without the support of corporate companies.

On this note, the City Council would like to extend word of appreciations to the Ministry of Agriculture for donating 40 trees for this event. It is our conviction that these donated trees will go a long way in assisting the City to achieve its objective of making and keeping Windhoek green.

With these remarks, Director of Ceremonies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

**I thank you!**