



The Gateway to Endless Opportunities

**REMARKS BY HIS WORSHIP, CLLR. JOSEPH
UAPINGENE, MAYOR OF WINDHOEK, ON THE
OCCASION OF THE COMMEMORATION OF
WINDHOEK'S CAR FREE-DAY**

Friday, 29 September 2023

08H00

City of Windhoek

Director of Ceremonies, Mr Moses Matyayi, Chief Executive Officer

Your Worship, Cllr. Magdalena Lombardt, Deputy Mayor

Cllr. Shafiishuna Sam Nujoma, Chairperson of the Management Committee

All Councillors, present

All Strategic Executives, present

Participating Corporates

Our Sponsors

Officials of the City of Windhoek, present

All Participants

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning,

Today, we gather here, for the second time in the history of our beloved city, to commemorate Car-Free Day. This event is very important, as it symbolises our commitment to a sustainable and green future. I am honoured to stand

before you today to address the significance of this event, which revolves around the theme: *"Reduce Our Carbon Footprint."*

This year's theme is not merely a slogan, it is a call to action, a responsibility we owe to our planet and future generations. It challenges us to reflect on our daily choices, especially in the context of transportation. It requires us to explore alternatives to traditional modes of transport which are detrimental to the environment. By reducing our carbon footprint, we are taking steps towards cleaner air, a healthier environment, and a sustainable future.

The global impact of carbon emissions is staggering. Every year, our planet bears the burden of billions of tons of CO₂ emissions, leading to climate change and

subsequent extreme weather events such as rising sea levels and prolonged droughts.

It is estimated that worldwide, transportation contributes nearly one-quarter of all greenhouse gas emissions. These emissions not only affect our environment but, also the livelihoods and the health of communities around the world. The health effects range from mild, such as allergy-like symptoms, to respiratory diseases and, in severe cases, the central nervous system or major organs are affected by prolonged exposure to air pollutants.

Closer to home, the impact of emissions on our beautiful city, Windhoek, is real. Air pollution caused by traffic congestion, construction works, and the depletion of natural resources, are daily challenges we face. As we continue to grow and develop, the need to address these issues becomes even more urgent. Our city deserves

clean air, sustainable transportation, and a healthier environment for all its residents.

Therefore, Car-Free Day is more than just a symbolic event. It is a testament to our dedication to change. It encourages us to envision a city with less traffic, cleaner air, and more sustainable transportation options. It is a day for us to take a break from our carbon-emitting vehicles and explore eco-friendly alternatives such as cycling, walking, and public transportation. Through collective action, we can make a significant impact on reducing our carbon footprint.

Leading up to today's event, we witnessed a remarkable build-up to this event in the form of a spirited debate competition between esteemed tertiary institutions. The Namibia University of Science and Technology emerged

victorious, debating motions centred around carbon emissions, caused by fossil fuels versus renewables and green hydrogen projects. This competition not only showcased our youth's commitment to addressing environmental issues but, also ignited valuable discussions on the way forward.

The individuals who chose to walk, cycle, jog, or use public transport today are the real heroes of this event. Your decision to join us today for this awareness raising and embrace sustainable modes of transportation, sends a powerful message. Each step, each pedal, each effort you made today contributes to reduction of emissions and making Windhoek a greener city.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before the presentation of the trophies to the best represented corporates and departments, let us

remember that our actions today, shape the future of our city, our country, and our planet. **Let us continue to strive for a Windhoek that is vibrant, sustainable, and free from the shackles of excessive carbon emissions.** As we depart from this event, let us carry with us the inspiration to make sustainable choices every day and in the words of renowned anthropologist, Margaret Mead: *“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.”*

Together, we can reduce our carbon footprint, one step at a time. Thank you and let us continue our journey towards a greener and more sustainable Windhoek.

I THANK YOU!!!