



KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY

**THE MAYOR OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
OF WINDHOEK**

COUNCIL MEMBER NDESHIHAFELA LARANDJA

ON THE OCCASION OF

ARBOR DAY 2025 – GREENERY DONATION EVENT

FRIDAY, 10 OCTOBER 2025
09:00 – 11:00
ONGUGO YEPONGO COMMUNITY CENTER

- **Director of Ceremony, Mr Uakazuvaka Kazombiaze, Manager: Parks;**
- **Honourable Christopher Likuwa, Regional Councillor for Tobias Hainyeko Constituency and other Regional Councillors present;**
- **Local Authority Councillors present;**
- **Mr Moses Matyayi, Chief Executive Officer of the City of Windhoek;**
- **Mr Nesda De Jongh, Head of Small and Medium Enterprise, First National Bank and other officials present;**
- **Strategic Executives and Officials of the City of Windhoek present;**
- **Residents of Tobias Hainyeko Constituency;**
- **Members of the Media;**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen;**

Good morning!

Today, we gather not just to plant trees, but to plant hope, nourishment, and resilience.

Arbor Day is more than a celebration of greenery. It is a powerful reminder of our deep-rooted connection to the land, the forests, and the food they provide. It is a moment for reflection — to pause and consider what nature gives so freely and what we must now give back with care and responsibility.

This year's theme, "**Forests and Food**," invites us to see trees not just as beautiful additions to our environment, but as vital sources of sustenance — for our bodies, our ecosystems, and our spirits.

Forests are nature's pantry. They provide fruits, nuts, herbs, and edible leaves. They shelter biodiversity and protect the delicate systems that support agriculture and life itself. To celebrate this relationship between forests and food, we turn today to one of our own — a tree deeply rooted in our region's identity and wisdom: the

Philenoptera violacea, or as many know it, the **Apple-leaf tree**.

Native to southern Africa, this graceful tree is more than a provider of shade. It is a symbol of abundance and adaptability. Its leaves and pods have long been used for both medicinal and nutritional purposes — a quiet guardian of rural life, and a testament to the richness of indigenous knowledge.

And it is here, at the **Onkugo Yepongo Community Center**, that we plant these trees — not just to green our surroundings, but to grow stronger communities. Each sapling placed into the earth is a promise: of cleaner air, richer soil, and a future where our forests continue to feed generations to come.

Now, I must take a moment to express our **deepest gratitude** to **First National Bank Namibia** for their

unwavering support of the **Greenery initiative** over the past three years.

Thanks to their generosity, our city streets have been transformed into vibrant, welcoming spaces filled with indigenous plants and colorful flower boxes. Their investment has gone far beyond beautification — it has enriched the environment, elevated public spaces, and shown what corporate and community collaboration can truly achieve.

Today marks the **final official recognition** of FNB Namibia's contribution to this project — but we sincerely hope it will not be the last. The seeds they have helped plant — literally and figuratively — will continue to grow, inspire, and serve as living symbols of what is possible when we come together for a greener, more sustainable future.

Let us remember: **every tree we plant is a living promise.** A promise of nourishment, healing, and environmental resilience. Let us nurture that promise — with love, with wisdom, and with the unshakable commitment to protect what nature so generously provides.

So, as we place these saplings into the soil, may we also plant within ourselves a renewed dedication — to conservation, to food security, and to the flourishing of life in all its forms.

Happy Arbor Day — and may the forest feed us all.

I thank you.

Ndeshihafela Larandja
Mayor