



SPEECH

BY

HON.TOM ALWEENDO,

MINISTER OF MINES AND ENERGY

AT THE

OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE MINING

EXPO & CONFERENCE,

WINDHOEK SHOWGROUNDS,

25 APRIL, 2018

- **Director of Ceremonies**
- **CEO of the Chamber of Mines, Mr. Veston Malango**
- **Hon. Kornelia Shilunga, Deputy Minister of Mines & Energy,**
- **Ministry of Mines and Energy Staff and other senior Government Officials present,**
- **Mr. Zebra Kasete,, President of the Chamber of Mines,**
- **Mr. Hilifa Mbako, 1st Vice President of the Chamber of Mines**
- **Captains of the industry**
- **Members of the Press,**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Good Morning,

This is the first Mining Expo & Conference I am officiating, having been appointed to the Ministry of Mines and Energy barely two months ago. I am delighted to see all these efforts in putting up such a world class event. I must add that being new to the sector, this is a great value add for me and I see it as part of my familiarization to the sector.

I wish to thank the Chamber of Mines for hosting such events and I equally thank all exhibitors for their tremendous support. The humble beginnings at safari hotel in 2010 where it all started appear to be paying off.

As we all know, mining is a long term investment, and looks this is also applicable to the annual Mining Expo and Conference. I must say that through this

annual event, the Chamber of Mines has successfully raised awareness about the industry.

I note that this year's Theme is "Maximising the Multiplier Effect from Namibia's Mining Sector", a very relevant theme I must say. Government concern is the export of natural resources without adding value and I have already expressed myself that I intend to take up this matter as priority number one.

I am fully aware of the industry's position on this matter that "Miners are not manufacturers and manufacturers are not miners". While this is true, I would like to believe that the mining industry has still a big role to play, to ensure true manufactures of intermediary and semi-finished products succeed. Mining should support such industries by making minerals from the mine gate available to such

manufacturing plants, and of course on commercial terms.

Government on the other hand, will ensure that the investment climate is conducive to attract such investors to come and further add value to our minerals beyond the mine gate. It is therefore a cooperation between the government and the private sector.

In light of what I have just said, it was a great pleasure for me to officiate at a new diamond cutting and polishing factory last week in Windhoek. This is the corporation spirit I am talking about.

I am also aware that the Chamber of Mines has made some valuable proposals to advance value addition. The proposal to establish a Joint Value addition Committee which was later enshrined in the NDP4 was a great idea from the Chamber. I

understand two independent study reports have been produced with recommendations on all minerals produced in Namibia and others under exploration stage.

I want to acknowledge the support that the Chamber has rendered to my Ministry as Chair of this Committee. Let me assure you that we are committed to conclude the Minerals Beneficiation Strategy as the final deliverable.

Due to government tight financial position, we have not been able to conduct the necessary field trips to a galvanizing plant in South Africa and a copper wire fabrication plant in Zambia. It is envisaged that experiences from these missions will greatly shape new policy proposals on how Namibia could attract similar investors. I look forward to work with the industry to conclude this priority matter, hopefully in the course of this year.

Similarly, I have taken note of the opportunities that lie in the upstream industries and the potential to create jobs with SMEs and other suppliers of goods and services. I am glad to learn that mining spends over 40% of total revenue on local suppliers.

This is commendable, especially with high unemployment levels in the country. The fight against poverty is about job creation and every job counts. I am looking forward to fruitful engagements with the Chamber on further avenues of job creation in line with the Expo Theme.

Let me take this opportunity to once again thank the Chamber of Mines for hosting these annual events. I am equally pleased to note that you have extended participation to the energy and electricity supply sectors.

I have noted the topics for discussions during the Mining Conference and wish I had an opportunity

to attend some of them. Unfortunately, I will miss them this year due to prior commitments but hope to make up at the next Conference. However, the consolation is that several of my staff members from the Ministry will be able to attend.

Director of Ceremonies, Ladies and Gentlemen, It is now my pleasure to declare the 2018 Mining Expo and Conference officially open and wish you a great success.

I thank you