



OPENING SPEECH

BY THE

HON. TOM ALWEENDO

MINISTER OF MINES AND ENERGY

ON THE OCCASION OF THE

LAUNCH OF THE OMBEPO 5 MW WIND FARM

26 APRIL 2018

- Director of Ceremonies,
- Governor of Karas Region, Hon. Lucia Basson
- Constituency Councillor, Cllr. Jan Scholtz
- Deputy Minister of Environment & Tourism,
Hon. Bernadette Jagger
- Former Member of Parliament, Hon. Ben Amathila
- Her Worship the Mayor of Lüderitz, Madam Hilaria Mukapuli
- *Chief Executive Officer of Lüderitz Town Council,*
Mr. Otto Shipanga
- Board of Directors & Management of Nampower
present
- Chief Executive Officer of InnoVent,
Mr. Gregoire Verhaeghe
- Regional & Local Authority Councillors present,
- Directors and Staff of Innosun Energy Holdings,
- Members of the Business community,

- **Members of the Media,**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is with great pleasure that I attend the official opening of the Ombepo wind farm by Innosun Energy Holdings in partnership with the Luderitz Town Council, here at the site today. This is the first grid-connected wind farm and it will supply five megawatts of electricity to the national power grid. This is testimony that the enormous wind resources in this area can be harnessed to provide much needed power.

As you all know – Namibia is still heavily reliant on importing electricity from South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe, but the picture is changing – slowly but surely. Solar and wind electricity are the answer and a lot has been done over the past few years which will take us on a path of electricity independence.

I would briefly like to mention the Omburu solar park (4.5MW), Osona solar park(5MW), Aussenkehr solar park (5MW), all projects by InnoSun, as well as the Karibib solar plant, Arandis solar and the Grootfontein power plant – to

name but a few. Numerous big corporations and Government Ministries in Namibia, and especially in Windhoek - I can quickly recall the UN house, the Ministry of Environment & Tourism, NamPower, Namibia Breweries Limited, Woermann & Brock and Spar Namibia - have all taken to harnessing the sun's energy and solar panels can be seen on many roofs in Windhoek – all moving towards the use of sustainable, green and clean energy.

I would like to thank everyone who has thus far taken on this commitment, thereby enhancing Government's ambitious target of providing 70 percent of the country's energy mix from renewable resources by the year 2030.

As with many big projects in this country, we – as Government – cannot handle and achieve all commitments on our own and we are always seeking private partnerships to boost and develop our objectives.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As government – and especially from my Ministry – we have already approved a number of policies - including the National Renewable Energy Policy, the National Energy

Policy and in the process to finalize the Independent Power Producers (IPP) policy. These policies are all aimed at encouraging investment in Namibia's renewable energy sector and the development of clean, green Energy for our country.

In our Harambee Prosperity Plan energy infrastructure has deservedly been given a complete chapter as we are well aware of the fact that a shortage of electricity has numerous negative consequences on our people, industries, investment or economic growth. This may and will not happen.

We have thus committed to increasing the local electricity generating capacity from 400 to 600 MW. This includes providing electricity to all schools and health facilities by 2020 while increasing the rural electrification rate from 34% to 50% by 2020.

These are not over-ambitious targets if we all work together, and I am proud to say that these aims are well on their way to being achieved with the help and investment of partners such as InnoSun Energy Holdings.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In the most recent National Development Plan 5, the energy situation was revised, and an even more ambitious target has been set by Government – namely: *By 2022, Namibia has a sustainable mix of locally generated energy capacity of 755 MW to support household and industry development.*

While we are cognizant of a number of challenges – including distances in our country and the buying power of the majority of people - we are nevertheless confident that the set targets can be achieved through the strategies as detailed in the NDP 5:

1. Expanding the bulk transmission and distribution infrastructure
2. Harnessing indigenous resources for generating energy
3. Promoting the entry of Independent Power Producers and
4. Transforming the current power market structure.

Together with IPP's and private partnerships I believe these objectives are achievable.

We all agree that there is a need to ensure that all Namibians have access to affordable modern energy. We do not want our people to remain in the dark and to have to eat and learn by candlelight. This in itself presents a danger and unfortunately too often tragedy strikes when candles fall over.

Chopping wood for cooking and to keep warm is also not sustainable as our trees and their positive impact on our environment should never be underestimated. Trees contribute towards the environment by providing oxygen, improving air quality, climate enhancement, conserving water, preserving soil, and supporting wildlife.

Clean, green renewable energy – harvested from the plentiful sun and wind we have in Namibia – is thus the answer.

By opening the Ombepo Wind Farm, I would like to thank you once again Innosun for playing your part in harnessing natural resources to generate electricity. I call on the private sector to play an even greater role in assisting us to meet the

energy needs of our country. As Government we will ensure an environment in which sustainable socio-economic development can flourish.

I know that together we can do it.

Thank you.
