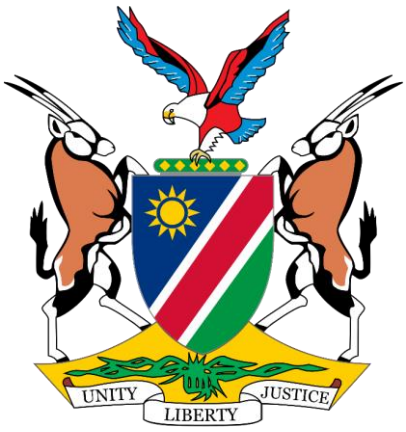

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

BY

HONOURABLE TOM ALWEENDO

MINISTER OF MINES AND ENERGY

AT THE OCCASION OF

STAKEHOLDER'S MEETING ON THE //KARAS REGION NEW DETAILED GEOLOGICAL MAPS AND ASSOCIATED PRODUCTS

AT AIS-AIS NATIONAL PARK

//KARAS REGION

22 AUGUST 2018

- **Director of Ceremonies**
- **Hon. Lucia Basson, Governor of the //Karas Region;**
- **Hon. Jan Scholtz, Chairperson of //Kharas Regional Council;**
- **Officials of the Local Authorities and Regional Council of the //Karas Region;**
- **Dr. Ngwangwama, Chief Officer, Strategy and Projects, Namibia Wildlife Resorts (NWR);**
- **Mr Fhatuwani Ramagwede, Technical Adviser to the CEO, Geoscience Council of South Africa;**
- **All Famers present;**
- **Small Scale Miners and Mines Officials and Employees operating within the //Karas Region;**
- **Officials of the Ministry of Mines and Energy;**
- **Officials of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry;**
- **Officials of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism;**
- **Officials of the Ministry of Work and Transport;**
- **The Geoscience Fraternity;**
- **Distinguished Invited Quests and All Stakeholders here present;**
- **Members of the Media;**
- **All protocol observed;**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning,

Allow me to use this opportunity to extend my sincere gratitude to all of you who made efforts to travel from near and far distances to brace this occasion with your presence. It is my pleasure to be here today, expressing and affirming the commitment of the Ministry of Mines and Energy towards the custodianship of the country's geological, mineral and energy resources, and ensuring that these resources contribute to Namibia's socio-economic development.

Since the //Karas Region is endowed with vast geological and mineral resources, I would like to emphasize our presence and significance to this region and the country as a whole in the perspective of our Strategic Plan. The Ministry's 5-year Strategic Plan for the period 2017/2018 to 2021/2022 stands on four pillars, namely:

- Socio-economic Progression; Environmental Sustainability; Stakeholder Relations and Cooperation; Good Governance. This tool serves as the blueprint in the implementation of our strategic objectives and programmes aligned with the Fifth National Development Plan (NDP5) and the Harambee Prosperity Plan HPP). Hosting this meeting we are having today simply demonstrates our commitment to our stakeholders' engagement strategy. As a matter of fact, this event highlights how our day-to-day activities fit within the framework of our strategic plan.

For example, this region is endowed with various mineral resources, some of which are yet to be discovered, while others, such as diamond, copper, lead, zinc, graphite, tantalite, dimension stones,

industrial minerals have been successfully developed into mine operations that are active today. Our effort of ensuring that the extraction of these commodities contributes significantly to our National GDP is part of our socio-economic progression targets.

It is a well-known fact that the development of mines leaves scars to the natural environment and this is unavoidable for an economy that relies heavily on the mining industry for its economic growth. To ensure sustainable development and that the mining activities are not detrimental to the habitats of this land, our Ministry works closely with the Ministry of Environment and Tourism to monitor the active mines and investigate the closed mines as part of our environmental sustainability objectives. Findings and recommendations arising from these environmental monitoring activities are shared with the relevant stakeholders and decision makers.

Since this is a stakeholder's meeting, I do not have to elaborate on our stakeholder relations and cooperation objectives. We have established sound relations with our stakeholders and use different modes of engagement to ensure our services and products are progressive.

As for the good governance aspect, I think I will leave that to you to evaluate by the end of this event and your respective interactions with our Ministry.

Distinguished Guests,

Allow me at this point to highlight a few projects that have been realised in the //Karas Region either directly by the Ministry of Mines and Energy or in collaboration with our various stakeholders.

The Ministry continues to support a slate processing facility in Noordoewer at which thirteen (13) workers are currently employed. This facility was established through the Small Scale Mining Project in an effort to improve the unemployment situation in this area.

The construction of a 10MW Solar Photovoltaic (PV) plant near Keetmanshoop is expected to feed electricity into the national grid, taking us a small step towards our goal of National self-reliant energy supply and sustainability. I am saying small step because we still have a lot of work to do as a Nation in this ambition.

Surely, there are many other significant projects undertaken in this region and I will not spend any more time listing them. Since my inception as Minister of Mines and Energy I have been to this region a few times and mostly my focus has been on energy and mines. Energy remains the number one key input for development in all economic sectors, but today I would like to clarify that our Ministry is not only about mines and energy. I am going to bring another aspect of our Ministry, which you are probably not familiar with.

Before I proceed, let me ask you this:

How many of you are familiar with the Geological Survey of Namibia and the services they offer?

I didn't expect to see too many hands!

Nonetheless, the Geological Survey of Namibia is a department within our Ministry that deals mainly with geoscientific investigations and mapping to enhance our knowledge and understanding of the subsurface and the environment we live in.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We need to take a moment to internalise that geology is key to sustainable development because it underlies everything and affects our everyday lives. Simply put, geology is the study of the Earth, the rocks, sediments and soils that make-up the land, the vastness of the oceans and how they form.

Comprehensive geological information and knowledge provide scientific support for land-use planning, resource and infrastructure development. Despite this, most citizens are unaware of the benefits derived from reliable and detailed geological information. Knowing where certain geological resources are and how geological processes work, is key to maximising the societal benefits of our resources and minimising the effects of geohazards.

We build our homes, shops and factories on this land often without knowledge and understanding of what lies beneath. We extract underground water from subsurface reservoirs for domestic, agricultural and industrial use probably without caring whether it is sustainable or not. We use the subsurface and geological materials to dispose our municipal and hazardous waste, probably without understanding how much pollution we are contributing to our environment. We talk about National industrialisation by 2030 and off

course to make giant strides towards the realisation of this goal we need to invest in the mapping and investigations of the raw materials that can be fed into our factories to avoid relying heavily on importing raw materials. If you are still wondering how geology affects you as an individual, think of the toothpaste you used this morning when you brushed your teeth. Do you have any idea of the processes involved in producing that toothpaste? I leave that to you to find out. The underlying factor is that access to raw materials is priority for any nation's economic growth and development.

Distinguished Guests,

I am not saying all this to cause concern for you regarding how much we do not know and understand our environment. Rather, I am only trying to bring to your attention that it is the Ministry of Mines and Energy's responsibility through the Department of Geological Survey, to fulfil society's need for up-to-date geological information and knowledge.

The Geological Survey is our national institution entrusted with our country's geological inventory, monitoring, knowledge and research to foster societal security, health and prosperity. This is achieved through country-wide geological mapping at various scales, minerals and groundwater resources investigations, country-wide geochemical mapping, geohazards and geophysical surveys, geoscientific data management and dissemination. However, to achieve this mammoth task the Geological Survey requires skilled individuals and technical tools. This is why it is essential to strengthen relations between our Geological Survey and the local and

international stakeholders. One such relation has led to us meeting here today.

Between 2013 and 2017, the Ministry through the Department of the Geological Survey, in collaboration with the Council for Geoscience of South Africa carried out detailed geological mapping in the //Karas Region. The Constituencies covered during this mapping program include Karasburg East and West, Berseba and Oranjemund. The geological mapping project included local and international researchers and stakeholders from the University of Namibia, University of Cape Town and Stellenbosch University, McGill University and Curtin University.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

To date the //Karas geological mapping project has produced:

- More than 30 detailed geological maps, covering an area of roughly 25 000 km^2 along the Orange River.
- Map of Cenozoic geology – geology younger than 65 million years,
- New information on the chemistry and relative ages of the various rocks,
- Updated 1:250 000 Map scale of the 2818-Warmbad (2016)

All these products are available both in digital and hardcopy format.

Furthermore, this particular mapping project has not only improved the regional geology knowledge and information but it has shed

more light on the likely mineral genesis of the area which was otherwise unknown before the detailed mapping.

One interesting by-product from this project is the Fish River Canyon hiking map. This map was produced in collaboration with Slingsby Maps and it highlights the simplified geology of the Fish River Canyon to the benefit of tourists or individuals visiting this world-class tourist destination. A significant number of copies were donated to the Namibia Wildlife Resorts as a sample to test the effectiveness of this product in the tourism sector. This hiking map of the Fish River Canyon has proved to be a highly sought after product by tourists, which demonstrates the application of geology in the tourism sector (Geotourism).

This is perhaps one component of possible cooperation between the Geological Survey of Namibia and Namibia Wildlife Resorts, to facilitate the creation of maps for Geo-tourism that feature various places of mutual geological and tourism interest in Namibia.

Distinguished Guests,

In addition to the field and analytical work, the geological mapping project has capacitated more than 10 young Geological Survey of Namibia geologists in modern field mapping and research skills. Two of these young geoscientists have successfully completed their Masters Degrees through the project.

Moreover, it was reported in the media recently that a feasibility study for the construction of the Noordoewer-Vioolsdrift Dam, which

started in September 2015 is expected to be completed in 2019. It is worth noting that three of the geologists trained through the //Karas mapping project were able to put their newly acquired skills to the test in 2016 by contributing to the feasibility study of the proposed Noordoewer-Vioolsdrift Dam. Highly satisfied with the assistance rendered by the Geologcal Survey team on the feasibility study, Mr Piet Heyns of Heyns International Water Consultancy contracted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Affairs, had this to say: "*The contribution of the Geological Survey in working together as Namibians with the AECOM/WCE JV* on such a project shows the resolve of your staff to participate with enthusiasm in understanding the resource base available for the development of Namibia and neighbouring South Africa in this joint, transboundary water project. It is probably the first of its kind and confirms that such cooperation bears good fruit*." *(****AECOM** *-stands for Architecture, Engineering, Consulting, Operations, and Maintenance and* ***WCE****-stands for Windhoek Consulting Engineers)*.

Therefore, the Ministry of Mines and Energy thank the Council for Geoscience of South Africa who carried out the intensive mapping training program to the benefit of the Namibian nation.

Furthermore, the worth of geological information is significantly enhanced when it is properly managed and easily accessible. Hence, the Ministry of Mines and Energy is amongst the institutions who have signed up for the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) of the National Statistics Agency (NSA). The NSDI has been created to address the need for accessible and readily available spatial data at national-level. More often, data generated to guide policies and decision makers is not available for the purpose it was created. However, with the existence of the NSDI, the interpretation

of a combination of these data together with other information available will enable a number prospects and decision-making tools.

The geoscientific data and information hosted at the Ministry of Mines and Energy can be utilised in many different way depending on the user's needs. I would therefore like to encourage you as our stakeholders to engage us in order to familiarise yourselves with what we offer and for you to reap the maximum benefit from the information and services we provide. I recognise that there is a line-up of presentations to be delivered this afternoon, which are meant to highlight the various uses of geological information and data. I will therefore leave the rest of the geological emphasis to them. Otherwise you might start thinking that I am geologist by profession.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Before I conclude, I would like to extend our appreciation to all stakeholders for their continued support, and especially to the farmers and park wardens in the //Karas Region, who assisted the geologists during their field mapping exercise. Furthermore, we urge exploration, mining and research institutions to continue sharing geological data and information with the Geological Survey of Namibia to enable us to produce products that are responsive to societal needs.

With this in mind, I invite all stakeholders to join the Ministry in promoting the application of geological information and knowledge for the benefit of society.

I thank you.