

# **REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**



**REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY PRESIDENT HAGE G.  
GEINGOB, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA,  
AT THE OPENING OF THE CHAMBER OF MINES MINING  
EXPO AND CONFERENCE**

***THEME: NAMIBIA'S ROLE IN THE SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY  
OF MINERALS TO SUPPORT THE GLOBAL ENERGY  
TRANSITION***

**30<sup>TH</sup> - 31<sup>ST</sup> August 2023 at the Windhoek Showgrounds**

- **Hon. Tom Alweendo, Minister of Mines & Energy,**
- **Mr. Zebra Kasete, President of Chamber of Mines of Namibia,**
- **Your Excellency, Ambassador Randy W. Berry, Ambassador of the United States of America to Namibia,**
- **Your Excellency, Ambassador Leena Viljanen, Embassy of Finland to Namibia**
- **Her Excellency Ms. Gosia Lachut, Deputy Head of Mission, European Union in Namibia,**
- **Your Excellencies, High Commissioners and Ambassadors present,**
- **Hon. Tjekero Tweya, Chairperson, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Natural Resources and other Members of Parliament present,**
- **Mr. Bryan Eiseb, Executive Director, Ministry of Mines and Energy,**
- **Mr. Veston Malango, CEO, Chamber of Mines of Namibia,**
- **Council Members of the Chamber of Mines of Namibia,**
- **Captains of the industry,**
- **Exhibitors & Visitors,**
- **Distinguished invited guests,**

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

1. **It gives me pleasure to join you on this significant occasion to officiate at the 2023 Mining Expo and Conference. A gathering of this nature, provides a platform for stakeholders from different backgrounds to interact and share experiences, lessons and competencies, to foster professional and technical excellence in the mining industry in the best interest of our country and its citizens. I therefore applaud the Chamber of Mines for having organised this noteworthy event.**
2. **Exploration and Mining are the most significant contributors to our economy and for that reason, we must always strive to exploit our natural resources in the best interest and wellbeing of our citizens. It is important at this juncture to remind you all that under the Harambee Prosperity Plan 2, in line with the Economic Advancement Pillar, the first goal is to optimize the stewardship of our natural resources. This is crucial as it will prove**

**catalytic in advancing our national developmental ambitions.**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

- 3. Minerals resources are an integral part of our livelihoods as they are essential in most of the industries required by many nations to ensure the survival of their societies and for global economic prosperity, peace and stability. In this context, a wide variety of minerals are used by different industries to manufacture consumer goods that are used in everyday life. Presently, the topical issue is global Energy Transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy to combat climate change, which can only be achieved through access to and utilization of vast quantities of appropriate minerals.**

**Africa, which is home to approximately one third of mineral reserves globally, can and will play a very important role in this process. However, this time around, Africa has an opportunity to change the current narrative of possessing abundant mineral**

**wealth yet reeling from the effects of abject poverty amongst its citizens. As Africans, and thereby, the owners of mineral wealth, it is within our will and means to address the scourge of poverty plaguing our people.**

- 4. Therefore, it is pertinent that we utilize this sector effectively as a means of advancing our national and continental development agenda to mainstream our citizens into the mining value chains and thereby empowering them economically.**
- 5. The global energy sector is quickly moving from fossil-based systems to clean energy sources such as solar, wind, hydroelectric, geothermal, green hydrogen etc. The trend towards greener and decarbonized value chains and net-zero emissions by 2050, have triggered a global interest in exploration, mining, and processing of critical minerals such as Lithium and other rare earth minerals.**

**These minerals have applications in a wide range of high-tech devices for personal and commercial use such as wind turbines, solar panels, electric vehicles, smartphones and tablets, and other green energy technologies.**

- 6. Consequently, as the world is struggling to meet demand for the supply of these critical minerals, developed countries, notably members of the European Union (EU), the United States of America and Japan, have signed Memorandums of Cooperation with Namibia, planning to secure sufficient supply of these critical minerals for their economies.**

**However, we have made it clear to these interested parties and potential others that Namibia will only do business with stakeholders who share its vision of local value addition to our minerals to produce finished products for export. We have learnt valuable lessons from history that nations which export their products in unprocessed forms at cheaper prices and buy back finished products at higher prices are not able to develop their**

**economies to the extent required for shared wealth and development among their citizens. To give head to this call, Cabinet in addition to the Minerals Beneficiation Strategy which was launched in 2021, recently imposed a ban on the export of unprocessed crushed lithium ore, cobalt, manganese, graphite, and rare earth minerals in order to ensure local beneficiation.**

- 7. This development is expected to spur investment in establishment of local processing facilities by private entities or private-public partnerships. In this connection, Namibia can benefit from experiences and lessons from other SADC and African countries by exploiting regional and continental synergies in value-added production and enhancing export competitiveness. It is for this reason that the Namibian Government continue to seek strategic partnerships towards the realization of this initiative.**
- 8. Therefore, we say yes, Namibia is open for business, as can be seen in our progressive policies, regulatory frameworks, developed infrastructure**

**and political stability, for investors to come and invest in our mineral sector. However, such investments must take place on our terms of local value addition.**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

- 9. While new and exciting opportunities such as Green Hydrogen and the discovery of huge hydrocarbons are in the offing, Government has taken note of the public calls for a greater participation in the ownership of these ventures and work is underway to amend Namibian laws to allow for a certain percentage of mandatory government ownership in all mineral licences.**
- 10. The Green hydrogen projects promise to revitalize the long-held ambitions of Namibia's local mineral beneficiation and value addition agenda as the country stands to secure the much-needed energy for sustainable economic and social development. The country aims to position itself to offer clean, affordable energy to the world economy through the production of Green Hydrogen.**



- 11. Similarly, the discovery of large oil reserves in the Orange basin and development of the gas sector as transitional energy forms are set to drastically change the Namibian economic landscape as well as the socio-economic conditions of Namibian citizens. However, we need to work faster on the implementation modalities to accelerate the realisation of these opportunities. This will ensure that our citizens, most notably our youth, can have their hopes for jobs and personal actualisation realised during their lifetime. In this regard, I call on and encourage the responsible Government Ministries and Departments, the mining industry, private sector, Development Banks, and partners to get the processes rolling as soon as possible and as fast as possible.**
- 12. It has been said that, “great moments are born from great opportunities.” It is safe to say that at present, great opportunities are abound in Namibia’s mining sector, therefore it is pertinent that we come together, to pull in one direction,**

**towards achieving great moments for Namibia, the region and the African continent at large.**

- 13. With these words, I wish you a successful Mining Expo and Conference for the next two days.**