



**KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

**BY THE**

**HON. TOM ALWEENDO**

**MINISTER OF MINES AND ENERGY,**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE**

**OFFICIAL INAUGURATION OF THE OHORONGO CEMENT 5MW  
SOLAR (PV) PLANT**

**07 SEPTEMBER 2018**

- Governor of the //Karas Region, Honourable Otto Iipinge,
- Constituency Councillor, Honourable Laina Nekundi
- Regional Councillors Present,
- Local Authority Councillors,
- SunEQ, Hungileni CC Management and Staff present
- Members of the business community
- Ohorongo Cement Staff
- Distinguished guests,
- Members of the Media,
- Ladies and Gentlemen,

### **A very good morning to you all!**

First of all, I want to thank our host and organizers, in particular, the Governor of the Otjozondjupa Region and the Ohorongo Cement board of directors for inviting me to be a part of this auspicious occasion, and for the warm welcome and hospitality extended to me and my team upon our arrival this morning.

I am honoured to be the keynote speaker at today's event, and to convey the Government and Ministry of Mines and Energy's support for this much-needed initiative spearheaded by the Ohorongo Cement, SunEQ Four and Hungileni Investment group.

Mitigating our collective environmental impact, and looking to more sustainable sources of power to ensure sufficient capacity and security of supply for the country, is a national imperative: we

simply must be resolute in exploring viable alternative sources of electricity generation.

In support of these objectives, the Ministry of Mines and Energy in 2017 finalized both the National Energy Policy and Renewable Energy Policy. In so doing, we hope to have given a clear signal that Government is committed to a sustainable energized future for its people.

Government not only remains committed to supporting renewable energy technologies but intent to actively introduce and proliferate the use of these technologies to complement conventional energy sources.

In supporting private sector investments, we are indeed cognizant of the fact that Government alone cannot shoulder the immense investment required for the development of the country's energy infrastructure. We need the private sector, and we explicitly welcome the active participation of organisations such as the Ohorongo Cement, SunEQ Four, and Hungileni Investment group, who have developed this power plant.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we are aware that, as a source of energy, the sun out-powers anything that human technology could ever produce. Already its contribution to human energy needs is substantial. In Namibia and Worldwide, solar electricity generation is a growing industry; as a long-term sustainable energy source, solar offers an attractive alternative — it is clean and it is transmitted

to the earth free of charge. In fact, in Namibia Solar electric generation has grown so exponentially since the inception of the REFIT programme in 2014 that its contribution to the grid has got Nampower and the ECB studying and considering if more PV generation can be accommodated on the grid without substantial damage to the grid.

This is testimony that exploiting the sun's power is also beset with challenges. Overcoming the barriers to widespread solar generation will require engineering and financial innovations.

The Ohorongo 5MW PV Solar plant being inaugurated today is thus one significant milestone and I am encouraging would be investors and developers to follow the example set by this project.

This project represents a classic win-win situation for all involved, the environmental impact from the PV plant is minimal, the plant will employ additional personnel to maintain it, the Ohorongo Cement Company gets clean energy at a competitive rate, the IPP, SunEQ Four and Hungileni Investment group secured an off-taker, given that the plant is not connected to the grid, the impact of intermittency on the grid are avoided.

These projects demonstrate that one solution can have multiple benefits and address the three pillars of sustainability. Solar power protects the environment. It creates development. And it promotes health and prosperity. More solar power means less pollution. And that will lead to cleaner air and healthier lives.

The right approach to energy can enhance progress on all three pillars of sustainable development: economic vitality, social progress, and environmental sustainability. To address extreme poverty we have to end energy poverty. And we cannot reduce the threat of climate change without embracing renewable energy.

In conclusion, Ladies and Gentlemen, solar projects such as this one is an excellent example of how the Private sector is making a significant contribution to energy security, economic growth and development and environmental sustainability.

We trust that this partnership will assist to contribute to alleviating poverty in the region, through stimulating the local economy and providing honest, decent sources of livelihood. In addition to adding to the energy mix, the project will continue to help ensure a renewable supply of power to the Ohorongo Cement Plant; and, perhaps most importantly, ensure future growth for the region, while also contributing to the growth of the country.

I would like to thank all the different parties and partners in this project, who worked tirelessly not only to complete the project, but also to prepare and participate in the celebrations today. You deserve a round of applause.

**I thank you!**

