



**STATEMENT BY HONOURABLE OBETH KANDJOZE AT THE
COMMISSIONING OF THE B2GOLD MINE**

By

Hon. Obeth Kandjoze, MP
Minister of Mines and Energy

01 JUNE 2015

OTJOZONDJUPA REGION

Director of Ceremonies,

Your Excellency, President of the Republic of Namibia

Honorable Ministers Present here

Hon Kornelia Shilunga, Dep Minister of Mines & Energy,

Hon Otto Ipinge, Governor of Otjozondjupa Region

Hon Regional Councillors Present

Mr Kahijoro Kahuure, PS of MME

MD/CEO's of SOE's Present

B2Gold Namibia's Chairman, Dr Leake Hangala

B2Gold Vice President of Africa, Mr Bill Lytle

CEO of B2Gold, Clive Johnson

Managing Director, B2Gold, Mr Mark Dawe

Distinguished Business Personalities & Captains of Industry

Staff members of Ministry of Mines and Energy

Staff members of B2Gold

Ladies and Gentlemen

I wish to thank you for inviting me to be here with you at this remarkable event. It is indeed an astonishing occasion and I am both fortunate and delighted to be part of yet another mining milestone of our country. The commissioning of the second Gold Mine in Namibia is a milestone that could not have come at a better time, given the fact that the gold price has been stable for a while.

During December 2012, a mining licence was granted for the advancement of the exploration project to what is now today a fully fledged mining

operation. I am informed that it would usually take a decade to bring a new project on line and that only a tiny/small percentage of the exploration projects approved do advance to a mining stage in such a short time! It is indeed remarkable I applaud you and your dedicated team of professionals for fast tracking the project to meet the set timelines.

There is no doubt that the commissioning of this mine will increase Namibian Gold production and play a significant role in expanding Government revenues through contribution of taxes and royalties. There have been minor fluctuations in the price of gold but the favourable world market demand surely supports the economics of the project.

It is my strong believe that B2Gold Namibia's Management will demonstrate support for the Government's agenda on local value addition that will consider accommodating medium to long term Gold refining opportunity that embraces Government's Vision2030 and NDP4. Your support to supply jewellery manufacturers that need your gold will be highly valued. This will contribute to Governments overall industrialization and developmental agenda of employment creation, poverty reduction while adding to the creation of a strong local manufacturing base.

While international best practices and standards would be the order of the day here at the B2Gold mine let me as a matter of principle indulge your continued compliance and implementation of the statutory provisions of the Minerals (Prospecting and Mining) Act and all other relevant pieces of legislations from a social and environmental standpoint so you remain compliant and in so doing manage stakeholder expectations throughout the life time of project.

In a move recognizing the housing pressures our people are experiencing I want to thank B2Gold for addressing employee benefits through the provision of housing schemes and community welfare and contribution to the local economy. Safety and protection of employees still remains extremely important for the successful operation of any mining company and the key

focus remains the safeguarding and prevention of any loss of lives. I also urge you as a good corporate citizen to continue creating side stream activities that would benefit local communities.

In the scheme of the current regional power supply situation I must comment the mine's resolve to have invested in an own HFO POWER PLANT which today is a significant relief to the pressures the national grid is experiencing. This is a significant cost taking into account the commodity based price of the input feedstock. In the last few weeks the power supply situation has featured strongly in the news for all the wrong reasons despite the pressures the regional grids are experiencing. The Ministry of Mines and Energy wishes to reassure the mining fraternity that the situation is under control and all power supply arrangements both own and from partner utilities through import agreements from the region remain steady and are not under threat at all apart from a physical breakdown of a voltage transmission on one of the lines.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Before I step down from this podium allow me at this stage to now turn to the core of what I am here for with the following few words about the event's key note speaker. He is a man of outstanding tried and tested leadership qualities, unwavering and resolute courage, steadfastly visionary vigor and commitment. He is an icon who in all has unquenchable zest and tireless commitment to nation building.

Ours truly, Your Excellency, the President of the Republic of Namibia may I now kindly invite you to the podium for the key note speech.

I thank you all kindly.