



**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY
DR. SAM NUJOMA, FOUNDING PRESIDENT AND FATHER OF THE
NAMIBIAN NATION, ON THE OCCASION OF THE INAUGURATION
OF OMBURU SOLAR POWER PLANT**

**OMARURU
ERONGO REGION**

13 MAY 2015

*Check Against Delivery

Director of Ceremonies;
Honourable Obed Kandjoze, Minister of Mines and Energy;
Honourable Cleophas Mutjavikua, Governor of Erongo Region;
Your Excellency Madam Jacqueline Bassa-Mazzoni, Ambassador of the Republic of France in Namibia;
Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps;
Your Worship the Mayor of Omaruru Town Council;
Honourable Regional and Local Authority Councilors;
I recognise the Presence of Comrade Ben Amadhila, a Veteran and member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the SWAPO Party;
Distinguished Managing Director of NAMPOWER, Mr. Paulinus Shilamba;
Distinguished Chief Executive Officer of InnoSun, Mr Gregoire Verhaeghe;
Distinguished Honourable Traditional and Community Leaders;
Distinguished Members of the Business Community present;
Distinguished Invited Guests;
Members of the Media;
Ladies and Gentlemen;

Allow me first and foremost to express my heartfelt gratitude to the management of InnoSun Company and Omaruru Town Council for extending an invitation to me in order to officiate at this auspicious occasion of the inauguration of Omburu Solar Power Plant. I feel very much honoured to be at the launching of the Omburu Solar Power Plant which, without a doubt, is poised to put the Town of Omaruru on the world map.

Indeed, I have no reason to doubt that the magnitude of this investment will have a positive impact on the growth of the town of Omaruru as well as benefit Namibia as a whole as it will go a long way in ensuring that Omaruru and its immediate surroundings will get a fair share of investments by attracting both local and foreign investors to this town.

Similarly, this initiative will translate in enhanced Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) benefits for the region and the country at large.

I am particularly proud to know that the InnoSun Company has successfully managed to cement itself in the Namibian energy sector industry and intend to become a formidable force to be reckoned with.

As you are aware, economic development and growth is an essential need. Peace cannot be maintained if there is no development.

Giving people access to modern energy is part of development but it does not end there, people need to use this energy to their benefit and to develop themselves.

Energy is a basic need and all humans need to have access to all types of energy but currently, affordability in the energy sector is a problem as it is evidenced in the case of some SADC countries with off-grid solar voltaic electrification programmes requiring governments to subsidise the capital cost of equipments.

These have led to call for a more diversified renewable energy policy, one that emphasises solutions that catalyse income generation.

Indeed, we should adopt appropriate pricing and subsidies and ensure that the energy we provide to our citizens is not only ecologically sound but also affordable and easy to access.

In this regard, new technologies and mechanisms such as grid-tie inverter solar panels have made solar power effective and affordable in many countries which have far less hours of sunshine yearly than the countries in our SADC region.

The role of wind and wave power and solar photovoltaic (PV) arrays must also be seriously investigated. For example, reducing carbon emissions is expected to lead to the increased use of electrical vehicles, charged through photovoltaic (PV) arrays.

The majority of our citizens in rural areas cannot afford the cost of electricity, hence they opt to use the readily available biomass as is the case now in Namibia.

For this reason, if the current energy situation of the demand that exceeds the supply and use of fossil fuels and traditional biomass - continues then we will have more problems to solve.

It is against this background that I commend the initiative by the InnoSun Franco-Namibian Company, which is involved in renewable energy projects in Namibia since 2008, with Black Diamond Investment as a local shareholder.

Indeed, this plant will generate about thirteen million five hundred thousand (13,500, 000) kilowatts per hour of electricity per year.

This is one percent of the electricity generation for domestic consumption of twenty thousand (20,000) Namibians and will add to job creation as well as the subsequent alleviation of the rate of unemployment in the country.

In this regard, I am informed that sixty (60) Namibian workers have participated in the construction of Omburu Solar Power Plant while ten (10) permanent Namibian workers will take care of the operation and maintenance of the plant during the next twenty five (25) years.

Similarly, I am informed that national demand of electricity in Namibia in the year 2014, was more than five hundred (500) megawatts (MW) and Omburu Solar Power Plant, which cover an area of sixteen (16) hectares with more than thirty three thousand (33 000) panels, hundred (100) inverters and 67 tracker motors, was built in four months of effective work with a capacity of 4.5 megawatts.

Thus, the opening of this plant is a clear indication that our country is an oasis of peace for foreign direct investment in collaboration with local shareholders when they forge joint-ventures to compliment and assist each other on a win-win basis.

This venture is also a true reflection of what can be achieved through smart partnership that enhances economic performance to benefit society at large.

In conclusion, I encourage our government to invest in alternative energy sources such as solar energy, wind energy and biogas, especially with the aim to use these forms of energy in those parts of our country that cannot be economically connected to the national power grid.

This is in line with the SADC energy access strategy and action plan of March 2010 as well as the various SADC protocols and plans on energy to secure and expand the regional energy capacity as well as introduce alternative energy in the region.

With these few words, it is now my pleasure to extend my personal congratulations to those of you who are part and parcel of this great achievement. I wish you all the best in your future business endeavours.

I thank you!