



**STATEMENT BY H.W. THE MAYOR, ALDERMAN  
IMMANUEL WILFRIED, AT THE ORDINARY COUNCIL  
MEETING HELD ON 3 MARCH 2020, 18:00  
KUISEBMOND COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALVIS BAY**

FELLOW COUNCILLORS

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, MANAGEMENT AND  
OFFICIALS

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE MEDIA

Later this month Namibians will be celebrating the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our country's independence. It comes at a time when taking stock of our journey since 1990 requires deep introspection at many different levels. Namibians are asking more and more questions and expect honest answers that should ideally provide them with a sense of hope for the future.

His Excellency, President Hage Geingob has duly called for us to adopt an attitude of introspection. It is essential for all of us to go through this process in order to arrive at a point where we are better prepared and equipped to deal with our challenges. I firmly believe that it can only be to everyone's advantage.

Some of the problems in Namibia are of our own making, while others which are beyond our control seem to inflate these difficulties. Such factors can put additional strain on our resources and impact our ability to grow the economy. While certain realities cannot be wished away, we still need to ensure that we sustain an environment that attracts investment.

We are in the fortunate situation that our financial administration is sound, and we can pay all our creditors. Although some of our debtors find the going tough at times, our income levels remain adequate. We are therefore able to maintain our infrastructure well enough. These are major factors that influence the decision-making of investors and we can confidently say that Walvis Bay is still very much a sought-after investment option.

To demonstrate my point, in February alone I was proud to celebrate the inauguration of new projects which injected well over N\$ 120 million into the local economy. Walvis Bay Salt Holdings invested more than N\$93 million in a new wash plant, while Welwitschia Hospital opened a new Intensive Care Unit worth over N\$ 30 million. Also, within the Walvis Bay district, Government opened a new clinic of about N\$15.8 million at Utuseb, bringing much-needed health services right to the doorstep of our rural community.

I was also honoured to carry out official duties at the ground-breaking ceremony of PowerCom's new tower development, which is only the start of similar infrastructure projects within Walvis Bay worth millions. These are just a few examples of companies which have demonstrated that they have enough confidence in our local economy and will continue to invest in various projects to benefit the local, regional and national economy.

There are several projects by the private sector on the horizon, but I think it would be more appropriate for those companies to make public announcements to this effect when they are ready. What I can say is that we can look forward to some exciting times ahead. I am also looking forward to the growth of our tourism sector, especially now that we have the new Walvis Bay Tourism Forum up and running. It will surely fill a gap which had existed for far too long.

Councillors, Ladies and Gentlemen.

During the past few months it has come to the attention of Council that there are some individuals who have claimed custody over Farm 37. They have been making various promises to the community that can only lead to confusion. I need to emphasise that the Municipality of Walvis Bay, as directed by the Municipal Council, is the only entity that has full ownership of Farm 37, and thus the only body to make public announcements as far as developments there are concerned.

We will therefore endeavour to keep our residents abreast of all the happenings at Farm 37 as and when required.

I referred earlier to situations that are sometimes beyond our control and can negatively impact our lives. A subject dominating many a conversation around the world today is the new Corona virus. Although Namibia has not registered any confirmed cases of coronavirus disease yet, it certainly doesn't mean that we are not preparing for the worst possible scenario. Our Health Section, together with the Ministry of Health and Social Services and other stakeholders, are working very hard behind the scenes to create a state of readiness should we have to face the eventuality of an outbreak in Namibia. The joint committee on Hepatitis E has now also added the issue of COVID-19 to its list of responsibilities. The committee is in the process of training health workers in this regard and has also started with an educational campaign to inform the citizens of their responsibilities.

The committee is also structuring all activities in coordination with the national health authorities. While the world is on edge, we should also guard against a situation when absolute fear and anxiety take over. The experts are telling us that more than 80% of people will only show mild symptoms of the disease or may not even develop it at all when exposed to the virus. There is hardly any reason to panic. However, we always need to be alert and practise good hygiene.

Fellow Councillors, Ladies & Gentlemen.

It is not often that we witness or hear about acts of true bravery. Heroes are normally confined to movies or history books. Just over two weeks ago an act of true heroism took place when the fishing trawler, the Resplendent, sunk off our coast. Everyone but the captain, Carlo Gordon of Walvis Bay, could be brought to safety.

Although Mr. Gordon has not been found yet we are all hopeful of the best possible outcome for all his family and friends. Mr. Gordon displayed true bravery when he made sure that all his crew members were safe by choosing to be the last one on the ship. He thus followed the principles of seamanship, which means taking responsibility for the safety of others on board before his own. We salute him and pray for the wellbeing of the family and for them to find closure to this tragedy.

On that note, thank you for your attention.