



**STATEMENT BY HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR,  
CLLR TREVINO FORBES,  
AT THE ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING,  
23 FEBRUARY 2021, 18:00  
CIVIC CENTRE COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
WALVIS BAY**

Councillor Saara Mutondoka, Deputy Mayor of Walvis Bay,

Honorable Regional Councillors

Fellow Honorable Councillors

Mr. Frans !Gonteb, *Acting* Chief Executive Officer of the Municipality of Walvis Bay

Members of Management and staff of the Municipality of Walvis Bay

Distinguished Invited Guests

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

The first few months in office has been a journey of familiarizing ourselves to enrich the direction that Council wants to steer the institution for the betterment of our people and nation at large. The national induction by government for Council will be taking place from 15 to 19 March 2021 and I am certain we will be well versed in our full responsibilities as Councillors to better serve the community of Walvis Bay.

I would like to clarify the following in today's meeting. Firstly, I want to speak about the land grabbing that has been taking place periodically in the past in Walvis Bay and has reared its ugly head again in recent weeks. I want to make it clear that the act of grabbing land is illegal and Council, in no way is going to endorse such lawless behavior. A strategic meeting with stakeholders was held to discuss the approach, and the police force received assurance that they have Council's support to remove any illegal structure placed on municipal land hereon forth.

If we eventually want to resolve the land issue we can not sit by and entertain these kinds of activities. Those who are promoting such activities should be treated as offenders as such acts can destabilize the peace the town and country has been enjoying thus far.

Ladies and gentlemen

The second point that I want to bring up is the housing list being promoted under the “Janet Martin Foundation”. A press statement in this regard has been issued and I would like to re-integrate that the said Foundation and its activities is not linked to Council. An article in a daily newspaper stated that the former deputy mayor of Walvis Bay had called on residents born and raised in Walvis Bay to register themselves through the ‘Janet Martin Foundation’ to determine how many people need housing.

Residents are advised that this exercise has not been endorsed by council, nor was council informed of the exercise. Those registering themselves are doing so at their own risk and the municipality will not be held liable for any activities undertaken by the said foundation. Council conducts its own surveys and any such announcements are to be made through our formal communication channels.

Before concluding I would like to talk about the Twaloloka/Otweya Housing Project. There has been a lot of talks regarding this project which insinuate that Council is giving houses to the fire victims of Twaloloka/Otweya for free. Council would like to clarify the following: The houses being built for the Otweya fire victims are being built by the government through the Office of the Prime Minister. The project is funded by the government and Council's role is only to facilitate and ensure that the construction taking place is in accordance to Municipal standards.

With this said, please be assured that Council is looking into several housing projects to see which one will best suit our environment and our people. Council is also aware of the need to engage and keep the community informed and in order to accomplish this, Council is resuming public meetings, taking into account all COVID-19 regulations.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the community for their patience and urge everyone to work together to move in the right direction.

I thank you.