



**STATEMENT BY HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR,  
CLLR TREVINO FORBES,  
AT THE ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING,  
30 MARCH 2021, 18:00  
KUISEBMOND 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

This evening I want to talk about a topic that has our beautiful town buzzing at the moment. As we are all aware, 2 weeks ago a notice was issued to the public regarding the Municipality's debt collection strategy and the public was given the option of paying or making suitable payment arrangements to avoid their services being disconnected.

Provision of water services during the State of Emergency due to COVID-19 adversely affected Council financially as more water resources were being used and less payments were received, in some cases relating to job losses and means of income during this time.

Council is not here to punish anyone, but we must be honest with ourselves that we can also not allow certain practices to go unnoticed as the long-term consequences in the end affect the whole town of Walvis Bay.

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am aware there are households severely affected beyond human comprehension, those who deserve to be pardoned but we do find the chance takers, those who are able to fulfil their financial obligation but because they identify a loophole, they refuse to make payments toward their municipal accounts. Such behavior brings division, instigation and in most cases accusations of tribalism within the community. I therefore encourage the residents to make the necessary payment arrangements with our credit control section to avoid the inconvenience of having water services disconnected.

I will try to provide some perspective regarding the ongoing exercise of water services:

- The credit control section took all accounts in areas which indicated to be more than N\$10,000.00 per account.

- Based on this, they isolated those who have people living in that house that are currently employed.
- From that list they started cutting the water if the residents in the said household did not try to pay or make payment arrangement.
- The current outstanding debt for utility services in areas is **N\$416.5 million**, made up as follows:
  - Narraville = N\$21 million
  - Kuisebmond = N\$76 million
  - Walvis Bay = N\$261 million
  - Dolphin Beach = N\$32 million
  - Lang Strand = N\$13.2 million
  - Meersig = N\$13.3 million

- With these figures, Walvis Bay remains one of the few municipalities that does not owe NAMWATER. Even when our revenue declined by 24% from water sales, we still ensured that Council pays its bills to our service providers.

I think it is only fair for the public to also grant Council the same courtesy by ensuring that they make payments or make the necessary arrangements to settle their accounts.

Council receives backlash from the public regarding service delivery, road maintenance and unemployment but we, as customers, also forget that it is our civil duty to pay our rates and taxes for all these services to take place. How will Council improve service delivery if Council is unable to employ more human capital? Where do the funds come from for all Council activities to take place? From clients paying their utility services.

Ladies and gentlemen

I chose Public Service because I wanted to be an integral part of the growth, change and prosperity of this town. I want to be the change we hunger for. And I am starting this by identifying, pointing out and not hiding the deficiency we have been living with as a town for so long. To assist in this, in my capacity as the Mayor of Walvis Bay, I will be introducing a Mayoral suggestion box to be place in the council chambers as from the next council meeting. The public will be urged to make use of this to make suggests on how to improve the town or post questions they would like answers from Council. Questions and Suggestion placed in the Mayoral Suggestion box will be answered in the following council meeting.

The time for change is now even if that means doing things differently. I thus stand here and ask you the

question that **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once asked. - “What are you doing for others?”**

The time is now to be an agent of change. Let's work, not just for ourselves but for the good of the community and our town.

I thank you.