



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

BY

HON. ERASTUS UTONI, MP

MINISTER OF URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

**AT THE OCCASION OF THE GROUND BREAKING OF HOUSING
CONSTRUCTION AT MATUTURA PROPER, SWAKOPMUND**

FRIDAY, 26 JULY 2024

Thank you Director of Ceremonies

- **Honourable Neville Andre Itope, Governor of Erongo Region;**
- **Honourable Benitha Imbamba, Chairperson of Erongo Regional Council and the Regional Councillor of Arandis Constituency;**
- **Her Worship Cllr. Dina Namubes, Mayor of Swakopmund;**
- **All other Regional and Local Authority Councillors present;**
- **Mr. Theo Uvanga, Managing Director of QTC;**
- **All Strategic Executives and senior officials of the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development, Municipal Council of Swakopmund, present;**
- **Distinguished Developmental Partners and Invited Guest;**
- **Members of the Media;**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen;**

A very Good morning to you all.

I am delighted to join you all this morning and having being invited to officiate at this important occasion that marks the official groundbreaking ceremony of new middle income extension here at Matutura Proper as a result of a joint venture agreement.

I am very excited because a week ago for those that followed, we gathered at Windhoek Country Club to officially launch the Revised National Housing Policy that provides an overarching framework for integrated human settlement development in the country by recognising and emphasizing the principles of inclusivity, partnerships and sustainability as critical requirements for achieving the ultimate Policy goal of broad-based access to *housing opportunities* and *adequate housing* to progressively improve living and socio-economic conditions for urban and rural residents.

Today, I stand before you in assurance that as we continue to strive for progress in the provision of adequate and affordable housing as our Governmental priority, our commitment remains clear that every Namibian deserves a safe, secure, and dignified place to call home.

Director of Ceremony

Our gathering this morning signifies smart partnership and a collective undertaking toward projects to revitalize an approach of the new housing policy. Thus, Collaborative efforts and partnerships is one of the key pillars and tools for realising the aspiring and interventions that are set out in the national Housing Policy.

I am thus encouraged and delighted to see that we are gathered here not only as representatives of Government and government agencies but as developmental partners of the financial, innovative construction, public and private sectors.

The challenges of rapid urbanization and rural-urban migration as well as their manifestations among others in the form of informal urban settlements and development which is characterised by a mismatch between demand and supply in terms of urban services and infrastructure and poor conditions, can only be addressed meaningfully and sustainably through collaborative effort and investment by the State and non-State role players and partners.

Indeed, the challenge of provision of and access to serviced land and housing is not becoming easier considering the fact that as per the 2023 Namibia Population and Housing Census, the population of our country is now three million twenty-two thousand four hundred and one (3,022,401). The Census indicates that between 2011 and 2023, urban population increased by sixty-five point five percent (65.5%) while the rural population increased by twenty-six point three percent (26.3%). The challenge which we have address here is both the needs associated with the increase on top of the already existing backlog.

Thus, the new policy guides that we focus on initiatives such as the Informal Settlement Upgrade Pilot Project which is an expansion of our efforts to provide affordable housing solutions for low- and middle-income families.

Through smart partnerships and innovative financing models, we aim to increase the availability of quality homes that not only improve living conditions, but also stimulate economic growth and social cohesion.

Distinguished Invited Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen;

This initiative is said to target the Middle income level and the Property measures 22.49 Hectares and is expected to deliver 233 erven of which 41% are residential erven. In that respect, and in pursuit of fast tracking the making available of affordable housing to the low to middle income residents of Swakopmund in line with its Land and Housing Action Plan adopted by its Council in 2018, the Municipality Swakopmund and QTC have agreed to enter into a mutually beneficial agreement as observe here today.

Further, I am informed that the project will immediately commenced with the construction 87 houses in phase 1 that will consist of 2 – 3 bedroom houses which structure are not less than N\$ 500 000 and not more than N\$ 800 000.

Having said that, I am to have been informed that QTC have secured and already used funds from the Development Bank of Namibia (DBN) as well as the Vortex Holdings Namibia Pty Ltd toward the development of Phase 1 and the developer in consultation with the project team have selected a team of professionals that is undertaking the project.

Director of our proceeding

In conclusions, allow me to appreciate the leadership management of Swakopmund as well as all our developmental partners especially QTC Pty Ltd, the Development Bank of Namibia and Vortex Holdings Namibia for assisting government in the provision of housing to our people. I therefore encourage Her Worship the Mayor and the leadership to continue to identify make more land available for the low to middle income earners of our society.

In that light, I wish to reiterate that Housing is more than just a basic need, it is a cornerstone of our national development. Therefore, as we continue to addressing the housing challenges we face, we are not only building homes, but also nurturing communities and fostering a sense of belonging and pride among our residents. Together, let us continue to work towards a Namibia where everyone has a place to call home.

Finally, while applauding you all for this wonderful initiative, I wish to assure you that the Government of Namibia through our Ministry of Urban and Rural Development is on the move and remains committed to the task of delivering affordable housing to as many Namibians as possible.

I now have the pleasure to officially declare Phase 1 of the Matutura Proper Extension Housing Development officially commissioned

With these few remarks, ladies, I thank you.