

- **Her Excellency Ndemupelila Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, President of the Republic of Namibia**
- **Hon. Natangwe Ithete, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Industries, Mines and Energy, Republic of Namibia**
- **H.E Eng Mohamed Hamel, Secretary General, Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF)**
- **Engr Felix Omatsola Ogbe, Executive Secretary, Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board, Federal Republic of Nigeria**
- **Kornelia Shilunga, Special Advisor and Head of the Upstream Petroleum Unit, Office of the President of Namibia**
- **Mr. Carlo McLeod, Deputy Head of the Upstream Petroleum Unit to the President of Namibia**
- **Dr Nangula Nelula Uaandja, Chief Executive Officer, Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board (NIPDB)**
- **Victoria Sibeya, Acting Managing Director, The National Petroleum Corporation of Namibia (NAMCOR)**
- **Travis Smithard, CEO, Rhino Resources Namibia**

- **Shakwa Nyambe, Managing Partner, SNC Incorporated and President of Association of International Energy Negotiators**
- **Dr. Clemens von Doderer, Resident Representative, Hanns Seidel Foundation**
- **Governors of regions**
- **Your Worship Mayors of local authorities**
- **Members of Parliament**
- **Members of the Diplomatic Corps**
- **Distinguished speakers, panellists and presenters**
- **Sponsors**
- **Exhibitors**
- **Delegates both local and international**
- **Members of the Media**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I'm happy to see so many familiar faces and so many new faces today, just by quick show of hands how many of you are attending the NOGC for the 1<sup>st</sup> time?

And all together weather it's your 1<sup>st</sup> time or not how many of you have travelled from outside the Namibian borders?

You are very welcome, our mission at NOGC 2025 will be to make sure that you feel right at home.

When traveling abroad to similar industry conferences I often feel the sense of stiffness; apart from the speeches, small talk, exchange of business cards, it sometimes doesn't feel that welcoming. And I'm sure you'll agree that people do more business with people they trust and feel conformable with.

Hence, there is power in hosting, therefore before I get into the crux of my speech, I'm already looking forward to welcoming you to this evening's Namibian style braai (barbeque), to give you a sense of Namibian hospitality.

But before we get to that, we first need to get through an exciting and insightful full day programme, including this brief welcoming speech.

My inclination is often to tap into the wisdom of nature's metaphors, now in this room we diverse experiences, and I take it that a good number of you are very familiar with the bamboo tree. I promise not to bore you, bear with me. And for those that are not aware of it, listen closely.

Once the seed of the bamboo tree is planted beneath the soil, for 4 years there is no visible sign of growth above ground, in year 5 something miraculous happens. The bamboo shoots break through the soil and begins to grow with extreme speed - the bamboo shoots grows to approximately 27 meters (90 feet) in less than 8 weeks!

In those four years under ground, **its really doing the following:**

- **Developing an extensive root system** a network of roots to provide the stability and nourishment - future rapid growth
- **Undertaking preparation and patience** to achieve rapid advancement when right conditions are met.
- **Its building resilience and strength:** through a strong root system in order to be incredibly resilient, able to withstand strong winds and other environmental challenges.

It is my firm conviction that Namibia is building a foundation and although at times, it may seem that the country is dragging its feet in concluding key policy, regulatory, incentive and infrastructure requirements for the oil & gas industry, what Namibia is doing, is building the roots that will establish a solid foundation for the eventual accelerated but SUSTAINBLE AND INCLUSIVE growth of this industry. The proof is in the track record, meaning despite Namibia being one of the last countries on the African continent to gain its independence in 1990, it has become amongst the top sustained stable democracies on the continent. And that is because the roots that have been formed during the liberation struggle, created the preparation, the values for peace and stability, thus creating the right conditions to thrive. We are that bamboo tree.

[applause]

On a personal note my purpose is to “Transform from scarcity to abundance the socio-economic landscape of Africa”. And for that we need to build the strong roots, the strong network of roots, for a resilient Namibia that grows beyond expectations. Therefore, at times, I’m amazed when asked: are we not having too many conferences? what makes this conference different from another? The answer is straight forward: we are

complimentary roots, building a network roots, that together establish a strong foundation for Namibia and its people to thrive, it's that simple ladies and gentlemen. We are learning from the bamboo tree.

The Mission of the Economic Association of Namibia bears some key words and phrases: **drive economic development; thought leadership; public policy engagement; and inclusive economic growth.**

Post the conceptualizing and planning of a Namibia Oil and Gas Conference, the EAN watered the roots to naturally grow and through that we cemented partnerships with the Namibia Investment Development and Promotional Board, NAMCOR; the Hans Seidel Foundation and SNC Inc. We can co-organise on 1 condition that we maintain the values of: **broad access; local empowerment; and industry development.** We are pleased that this has culminated in a NOGC 2025 seeing:

- From 885 delegates in 2024, to 1161 registered delegates 2025 (31% incr.);
- From 39 exhibitors in 2024, to 73 exhibitors in 2025 (87% incr.);
- From 27 sponsors in 2024 to 36 in 2025 (33% incr.).

To make this all possible we are honored to have a distinguished list of local, continental and international industry leaders as speakers, presenters and moderators, that will impart knowledge, insights and lessons of experience over the next few 3 days.

We are also extremely honored to have the support of key policy decision makers from the highest levels of the Namibian Government, H.E President of the Republic Namibia Netumbo Nandi Ndaitwah; Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Mines and Energy Hon. Natangwe Ithete; our right honorable Prime Minister, Hon Elijah Ngurare - who will do the closing session on the last day of the Conference; Kornelia Shilunga, Special Advisor and Head of the Upstream Petroleum Unit, Office of the President of Namibia, and the Deputy Head Mr. Mcleod.

– your leadership is commendable, forward looking and supportive of this industry's growth.

In conclusion: **What's \*New for NOGC 2025 \*** is a dedicated exhibition marque tent to allow for more exhibitors from both international business/organization and our local SME and large corporates, enabling business's and organization to showcase what they can offer the value chain. This exhibition area is free

to the public: **access, local empowerment, industry development.**

Another new feature this year, thanks to the NIPDB, is a dedicated business matching platform taking place through the next 3 days with the last day the 15<sup>th</sup> August being entirely dedicated to business match making at the exhibition floor from 09h00-13h00. The business match making will facilitate a business-to-business service to bridge connections between investors and companies interested in engaging with Namibia's oil and gas industry: **access, local empowerment, industry development.**

With those few, but not so few words. Ladies and Gentlemen, distinguished guests, sponsors, speakers, the leadership of the Republic of Namibia, welcome to Namibia Oil & Gas Conference 2025. I thank you.