Republic of Namibia

STATEMENT BY

SOPHIA SHANINGWA, MP

MINISTER OF URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

ON OCCASION OF THE

OFFICIAL HANDOVER OF GROOT AUB TO THE CITY OF WINDHOEK

WINDHOEK RURAL CONSTITUENCY OFFICE, GROOT AUB

FRIDAY, 8TH SEPTEMBER 2017
• Director of Ceremonies;

• Honourable Utoni Nujoma, the Minister of Land Reform;

• Honourable John Mutorwa, the Minister of Agriculture, Water and Forestry;

• Honourable Laura McLeod-Katjirua, Governor of the Khomas Region;

• Honourable Rachel Jacob, Chairperson of the Khomas Regional Council;

• His Worship Muesee Kazapua, Mayor of the City of Windhoek;

• Honourable Matheus Amadhila, Chairperson of the Management Committee of the City of Windhoek;

• Honourable Councillors from the Khomas Regional Council and the City of Windhoek;

• Advocate John Walters, the Ombudsman of the Republic of Namibia;

• Mr Nghidinua Daniel, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development and your team;

• Mr Clement Mafwila, Chief Regional Officer of Khomas Regional Council and your team;

• Mr Robert Kahimise, Chief Executive Officer, of the City of Windhoek and your Team;
The Regional Commander of the Namibian Police; 
Mr. E. C. K. Kuhanga
The Registrar of Deeds; 
The Esteemed Traditional Authorities 
cde. Shapuy.
Members of the Media;
Distinguished invited guests;
Residency of Groot Aub.
Members of the media;
The Ladies and Gentlemen

Thank the Government for having gone back to the history of Groot Aub.

We are gathered here in Groot Aub to witness an important milestone in our noble quest to bring law and order and the desired basic services to the residents of Groot Aub. Equally I want to thank you the residents of Groot Aub, for coming in big numbers.

On 30 September 2011, the Government, through a Government Gazette Notice (Notice 184) and in terms of the relevant provisions of the Local Authorities Act (Act No. 23 of 1992 as amended) took a well-intended decision to alter the boundaries of the Windhoek Municipality making Groot Aub part of Windhoek as a local authority.

As a result of the alteration of the municipal boundary of Windhoek, the area of jurisdiction of the Windhoek Municipality increased and included areas such as Groot Aub, Omeya, Finkenstein, Herbothsblick, and Sungate.
which were previously outside the municipal boundary of Windhoek.

In the case of Groot Aub, the decision of Government was informed and made on the basis of the following observed realities that we were facing in Groot Aub:

Due to population growth and movement of people, Groot Aub was experiencing the following serious challenges that were negatively impacting the wellbeing of the residents and the growth potential of the area:

- Water shortages, which were reaching crisis point and was exacerbated by illegal connections;
- Land grabbing or illegal allocation and occupation of land and erection of structures;
- Lack of proper solid and liquid waste disposal and management system; and
- Illegal mining and other economic activities.

The Government has received numerous complaints and a cry for help from the residents of Groot Aub for the Government to urgently intervene to arrest the situation. In response, the Government, following the law, took a decision to incorporate Groot Aub into the boundaries of
the Windhoek Municipality. This resulted in a change of administrative status of Groot Aub from being a Settlement under the administration of the Khomas Regional Council to being a township under the jurisdiction and administration of the Windhoek Municipality as provided for by the Local Authorities Act, 1992.

Director of proceedings;
Ladies and gentlemen;

The last time when I was here in Groot Aub in May this year, I promised that I was going to lead efforts from the Government side to sort out the mess and bring order and pave way for the orderly administration and development of Groot Aub. Since our visit and meeting with the community of Groot Aub, my team consisting of officials from the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development, the Khomas Regional Council and the City of Windhoek, with the support of other Offices and Ministries such the Ministry of Land Reform and Agriculture, Water and Forestry went to work and came up with a Plan of Action outlining the various problems that needed to be
addressed, the interventions required, the timeframe involved and the responsible parties.

The collaborative efforts of these institutions saw a Plan of Action and actual action being taken to address all the various challenges facing Groot Aub.

As you may recall, the last time I was here on the 20th May 2017, I placed a moratorium on all construction activities and a zero tolerance on land invasion to last until such time when the City of Windhoek takes over the running of affairs at Groot Aub.

On its part, the City of Windhoek, under the leadership of His Worship the Mayor Councillor Kazapua has been preparing itself and is ready to assume its administrative role over Groot Aub, with a special focus on bringing services (water, sewer and solid waste management) to the residents. In this regard, the City with the support of the Ministry and the Khomas Regional Council, has over the past months carried out various assessments of the situation in Groot Aub especially the state of the infrastructures.
On its part, the Government through the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development and the Khomas Regional Council, with the assistance of the Ministries of Land Reform and Justice, also worked tirelessly in finalising the formalities for the official assumption of duty by the City of Windhoek in administering the affairs of Groot as a township of the City.

As a symbol of the official transfer of the power of administration of Groot Aub to the City Windhoek, I will be handing over to His Worship the Mayor and the Windhoek Municipal Council the two original Land Titles of Groot Aub. In this connection, I wish to invite His Worship the Mayor and the Chairperson of the Management Committee to come and receive the Titles.

Director of proceedings, Ladies and gentlemen, especially the residents of Groot Aub.

Now that the land titles of Groot Aub have been handed over to the City of Windhoek, I wish to make the following announcements:
1. The moratorium that I issued on 20th May 2017 in respect of construction activities in Groot Aub is hereby lifted and that from now on, the responsibility of managing and regulating all such activities in Groot Aub falls on the City of Windhoek and will be done in accordance with the applicable by-laws;

2. The zero-tolerance on land invasion remain in force until such time that the City of Windhoek, Namibian Police and the City Police have contained the situation.

I wish to appeal to the residents of Groot Aub and the general public to render their full co-operation to the City and Namibia Police in the performance of duties. These agencies of the State and the Government in general have no other interests than to serve you, the community, and to enhance your welfare as the current and future residents of Groot Aub.

It is my understanding that the City of Windhoek will arrange and hold consultations with the residents to inform them of its approach and plans. This is important especially in view of some fears or concerns that have
been expressed by some sections of the community and more so for the City to inform the community of its plans and the services that are available to the community at the Groot Aub office and at the headquarters.

Director of ceremonies;
Ladies and gentlemen;

In conclusion, I wish to express my profound gratitude and appreciation to everyone who was involved in the process which culminated in the achievement of the milestone that we are witnessing here today.

To the City, I renew to you the continued support of your line Ministry and the Central Government in general as you embark on the journey towards establishing the requisite administrative and infrastructural systems for the proper administration and development of Groot Aub. I must also indicate that I shall time to time visit Groot Aub to monitor the progress. We are as a team are committed to With these remarks, I thank you.