



MEDIA RELEASE

CLARITY ON THE STATEMENT BY HON TOM ALWEENDO, MINISTER OF MINES AND ENERGY, DELIVERED AT THE PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT WORKSHOP ON MAXIMIZING THE POTENTIAL OF THE MINING & ENERGY SECTORS IN NAMIBIA

The Ministry of Mines and Energy has noted with disappointment, the wrong perceptions based on the remarks made by Hon Tom Alweendo during the workshop on maximizing the potential of the mining and energy sectors in Namibia held at Swakopmund, Namibia on 29 May 2023. These wrong perceptions are circulating via reports on various media platforms.

The report(s) alleges that the *“Namibian Government considers taking stakes in mining and petroleum companies”*. It is against this background, that the Ministry would like to clarify the misconceptions circulating in the media.

In terms of Article 100 of the Namibian Constitution, *“Land, water, and natural resources below and above the surface of the land and in the continental shelf and within the territorial waters and the exclusive economic zone of Namibia shall belong to the State if they are not otherwise lawfully owned.”*

Despite this Constitutional provision, the Government has no intention to seize any stake from existing mineral or petroleum licence holders and remain committed to uphold the sanctity of contract(s). However, the reality remains that Namibians are and remain disadvantaged because they may not have the financial and other means to exercise their rights in relation to natural resources, as such the State as supreme owner of these natural resources may demand a certain minimum stake through public enterprises such as EPANGELO Mining or NAMCOR in any mineral or petroleum licences that may be issued in future.

The Ministry would however like to inform our stakeholders that the Namibian people have a legitimate expectation of having a share of ownership in the exploration and mining of our countries' natural resources. Cognizant of the fact that many Namibians might not have individual capacity or the requisite resources to realize these rights or expectations in their individual capacities, it would be just that the Government acquire these rights on their behalf.

The Government will exercise these rights in a balanced way considering the interests of both investors and the Namibian nation.

In conclusion, the Ministry would like to reiterate that this is a normal practise in Namibia especially in the petroleum and mining sectors and we should maintain such practise in the interest of all our stakeholders. Having said that, the Ministry would also like to assure current and potential investors that Namibia is a country governed by the principles of democracy and a rule of law as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia, and which is enforced by an independent judiciary. Our government has proven many times that we respect and stand guided by those laws.

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