



A NAMIBIA DE BEERS PARTNERSHIP

SPEECH BY MR. OTTO N. SHIKONGO CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF DEBMARINE NAMIBIA

During the Debmarine Namibia Social Responsibility Fund sponsorship handover to University of Namibia – School of Marine Engineering and Maritime Studies and the Centre for Mining and Metallurgical Research and Training, UNAM Department of Biological Sciences, UNAM Sam Nujoma Campus: Faculty of Agriculture and Natural Resources

4 April 2018

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Director of Ceremony

Mr Ueritjiua Kauaria: Deputy PS - Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources

Prof. Frednard Gideon: Pro-Vice Chancellor - Academic Affairs, UNAM

Prof. Osmund Mwandemele: Coordinating Director - Center for Mining Research and Training, UNAM

Mrs. Lorna Mwale: Director - UNAM Foundation

Dr. Romanus Shivoro: Coordinator - External Relations, UNAM

Debmarine Namibia Executive Committee Members

Members of the Debmarine Namibia Social Responsibility Committee

Our Friends from the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you here today.

The Debmarine Namibia is a marine diamond prospecting and mining Company owned in equal shares by the Government of the Republic of Namibia and De Beers. Our core business is to mine marine diamonds in a sustainable manner. The Company has a workforce of around 1000 employees and contributes positively to economic development and is one of the largest single entity contributors to the National Treasury.

As a responsible corporate citizen, our initiatives focus on community development programmes, capacity & skills development, donations, emergency relief, infrastructure development. These are complemented by employees volunteering through the 'Show We Care' value.

Today, through the Debmarine Namibia SRF, we are honoring our commitment to education, capacity & skills development through

the sponsorship of **N\$250 000** to UNAM - towards the establishment of the **School of Marine Engineering & Maritime Studies** as well as towards the **Centre for Mining & Metallurgical Research & Training** that will be in the Erongo Region.

Namibia currently has no institution that provides dedicated education and training in maritime fields at bachelor or postgraduate degree level. Aspiring Namibian youth that are interested in pursuing maritime careers often go to other countries to obtain their qualifications. As a one of the main players in this industry, we are faced with challenges of a shortage of qualified and competent skills in this area. We rely heavily on developing our own talent resource pool, through our trainee and long-term trainee programmes in which we invest significantly. For example, we currently own, manage and maintain a fleet of six diamond mining vessels. Each of these vessels are manned by Captains, working in two shifts of 28 days on – 28 days off. However, despite the challenges, we are proud to have developed **seven** home-grown Namibian Captains that have passed through our training programme. It takes approximately ten (10) years to develop one Captain.

We applaud UNAM supported by the Sam Nujoma Foundation for the noble initiative to establish this much needed institution, which we believe will grow the Namibian maritime talent pool. This will allow Namibia to compete on a global scale with other countries.

We challenge UNAM to remain dedicated and focused in delivering on this dream, by developing curriculum and training facility of international standards and accreditation – which we can be proud of – and which the private sector can rely on.

As a Company operating offshore, our immediate communities are the landlords of the Atlantic Ocean.

Our mining process entails the removal of diamondiferous gravel from the ocean floor at depths of up to 140metres, of which we 80% is returned to the seabed. Our operations are certified to ISO 14001 international standard. This standard specifies requirements for an environmental management system to support environmental protection and prevention of pollution in line with legal requirements and socio-economic needs in close consultation with key stakeholders.

Debmarine Namibia works closely with the Benguela Current Commission, a multinational cross-sectoral initiative by Angola, Namibia and South Africa. We also initiated long-term joint research and monitoring projects with the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) to address issues of concern adequately. The mutually beneficial relationship between Debmarine Namibia and MFMR has highlighted the value and importance of partnerships between industry and academic and research institutions in Southern Africa. We benefit by ensuring that our environmental

impact research is innovative and scientifically rigorous, while our partners benefit by the provision of opportunities for researchers and students to work on projects to enhance the understanding of the marine environment.

In 2012, Debmarine Namibia initiated the establishment of the Marine Scientific Advisory Committee (MSAC). The Committee comprises external international scientists and other key stakeholders to review the results of the Benthic Monitoring Programme and its effectiveness

Debmarine Namibia's benthic monitoring programme assesses the effect of mining operations on the benthic communities of Atlantic 1 Mining Licence Area, and monitors the time of recovery after mining.

On an annual basis during the period October to December, benthic samples are collected from designated control, impact and natural variability sites, across the mining licence area.

We invest significantly in the benthic macrofaunal samples collection, analyses and review process. The samples to be handed over today are those taken over a 3-year period: 2013 – 2015 – which cost an estimated N\$9.9m.

Debmarine Namibia has identified three institutions to be the beneficiary of our annual surplus samples, as follows:

- **The Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources** – National Marine Information & Research Centre (NatMIRC) based in Swakopmund
- **UNAM – Sam Nujoma Campus** – Faculty of Agriculture and Natural Resources in Henties Bay
- **UNAM – Main Campus** – Department of Biological Sciences in Windhoek

These samples can be used to build up a reference collection or used as teaching aids. Debmarine Namibia additionally commits to transporting these surplus samples on an annual basis to the relevant offices at our cost.

As a responsible environment steward, our investment in environmental initiatives is in support of Government's drive towards conservation and sustainable development, such as education of young Namibians in coastal biodiversity, environmental conservation and wildlife protection – such as the N\$1.5m sponsorship to the Save-The-Rhino Trust in 2017. Internally, we set the example by desalinating our own water for domestic usage on board each of our six vessels.

In conclusion, Ladies and Gentlemen, Debmarine Namibia remains accountable to every dollar we spend. Therefore, we entrust you, the

beneficiaries, with this investment and to turn diamond dreams into reality for the benefit of all Namibians.

I thank you.