The Windhoek Observer annually publishes a list of Namibians of Merit, spanning various sectors of Namibian society. Initiated in April 2023, the list is meticulously curated by our editorial department, showcasing individuals who are newsmakers, trailblazers, and have significantly contributed to the nation in their respective fields of expertise. Here are the esteemed honorees for 2023/24:
POLITICS/ GOVERNANCE

President Nangolo Mbumba

Other Honorees

Vice President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah
Prime Minister Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila
McHenry Venaani
Panduleni Itula
HEALTH

Other Honorees

Dr. Helena Ndume

Dr. Flindje Shidhika

Jones Nhamwa

Dr Elago Mbadhi

Dr Richard Kamwi
FINANCE AND ECONOMY

Other Honorees

Sam Shitote
Iipumbu Shiimi
Johannes !Gawaxab
Beronice Hans
Martha Murorua
The Financial Intelligence Centre (FIC) is pleased to formally announce the appointment of its new Board members. These notable appointments have been executed in accordance with section 16A of the Financial Intelligence Act, 2012 (Act No. 13 of 2012), as amended, and are set for a fixed term of five years, effective from 15 March 2023. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to all the board members and look forward to their invaluable contributions and leadership.

**CHAIRPERSON**

Adv. Charmain Van Der Westhuizen

Adv. Charmain Van Der Westhuizen holds a LLB degree and an MBA (cum laude) from the University of Stellenbosch. She is an admitted legal practitioner with nineteen years’ experience in various fields of legal practice. She was a member of the Society of Advocates of Namibia from June 2007 to June 2020 and currently practices as an independent counsel. Adv. Van Der Westhuizen served on the Boards of the Bank of Namibia and Agra Ltd. Her vast experience includes areas such as corporate governance, risk, compliance, strategic intervention and corporate social responsibility.

**BOARD MEMBER**

Mrs. Hilya Herman

Mrs. Hilya Herman holds a LLB from Rhodes University, a LLM from University of the Witwatersrand (specializing in Company law, Mergers and Acquisition, Banking and Securities) and a specialized Masters of Philosophy in Development Finance from Stellenbosch University Business School. She is an admitted legal practitioner with over fifteen years’ experience, with specific expertise as a legal professional in financial services. She has experience in AML/CFT/CPF, legal and statutory compliance, and is currently employed as the Legal Director at Namibia Breweries Ltd.

**BOARD MEMBER**

Mr. Pendukeni Filippus

Mr. Pendukeni Filippus holds a BCom degree from the University of Namibia, a BCom Honours degree from the University of Cape Town and a Master of Philosophy in Internal Auditing from the University of Pretoria. He is a Certified Internal Auditor and registered member of the Institute of Internal Auditors and the Information Systems Audit and Control Association (ISACA). He has 19 years of professional experience, of which 14 years is in the internal audit and risk management field, while 5 years is in finance and administration of a non-governmental organisation. Mr. Filippus has a sound understanding of governance, risk management and compliance frameworks, and is currently the Chief Internal Auditor at the University of Namibia.

**BOARD MEMBER**

Ms. Hannelie Eksteen

Ms. Hannelie Eksteen holds a BCom Law Degree from UNISA, an Honors Degree in Business Management and Administration from the University of Stellenbosch Business School (USB) and a MBA also from USB. She has 30 years of experience in the financial sector, mainly the banking sector. Her banking career spanned over three countries namely: Botswana, Namibia and Zambia. She is currently employed as a Senior Consultant at NIPAM, providing training and consultancy in Strategic Management, Performance Management and Business Process Management. Ms. Eksteen brings along expertise in legal, compliance and governance.
BUSINESS/ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Sven Thieme

Knowledge Katti

Manni Goldbeck

Albertina Ndishishi

Miguel Hamutenya

65 namibians of merit
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ACADEMIC & RESEARCH

Other Honorees

Dr Erol Naomab
Prof Anicia Pieters
Prof Hans Justus Amukugo
Dr Victoria Erasmus
Dr. Elina Amadhila
EDUCATION

Other Honorees

David Namwandi

Prof Scholastika Iipinge

Harold Murangi

Sanet Steenkamp

Monika Pendukeni
CORPORATE LEADERSHIP

Bisey Uirab

Other Honorees

Ester Kali
Flukman Samuehl
Dr. Licky Erastus
Emilia Nghikembua
ENERGY

Margaret Mutschler

Other Honorees

Michelle Ngaujake  Maggy Shino  Iyaloo Ya Nangolo  Obed Kandjaze
LEGAL AND JUSTICE

Yvonne Dausab

Other Honorees

Kadhila Amwoomo
Benhard Tjatjara
Mbushandje Ntinda
Sisa Namandje
PHILANTHROPY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Other Honorees

Monica Geingos

Usko Nghaamwa

Meryl Barry

Tim Ekandjо

Ronell Pieters
YOUTH

Inna Hengari

Other Honorees

Dr. Julita Mbangula  Sylvester Wayiti  Emma Theofelus  Patience Masua
SPORT

Other Honorees

Desert Jewels National Netball Team

Paralympic Namibia

Brave Warriors

Eeshoke Football Club

Collin Benjamin
ART & ENTERTAINMENT

Other Honorees

Jameela Uiras

Lioness (Dr. LaToya Moombola)

Louis Munana

Perivi Katjavivi

Femi Kayode
Shakwa Nyambe: Spearheading Namibia’s International Energy Diplomacy

In the realm of international energy law and diplomacy, Shakwa Nyambe stands as a towering figure representing Namibia’s interests on the global stage. The Founder and Managing Partner of SNC Incorporated, a full-service law firm headquartered in Windhoek, Namibia, Nyambe has carved a path of excellence in the specialized fields of Energy, Natural Resources, and Commercial Law.

Nyambe is a specialized Energy, Natural Resource and Commercial lawyer. He is also skilled in drafting, reviewing, and negotiating contracts. Nyambe holds a Baccalaureus Juris degree and a Bachelor of Laws degree, both from the University of Namibia. In addition, he also holds a postgraduate degree of Master of Laws in Oil & Gas Law with Professional Skills (LLM) from the University of Aberdeen and in the United Kingdom and a Postgraduate Diploma in Drafting and Interpretation of Contracts from the University of Johannesburg. Nyambe also recently completed his Postgraduate Diploma in Global Business, with the Said Business School, the business school of the University of Oxford.

Nyambe has advised International Corporations, State-Owned Enterprises, Governments and individuals on Oil & Gas projects, Renewable Energy projects, Mining projects and Natural Resources, as well as render advisory services on general Commercial and Dispute Resolution matters. He has provided legal and business advisory services to foreign investors in various matters ranging from mergers and acquisitions, commercial transactions, corporate governance, and project financing. His clients include some of the oil and gas companies, renewable energy companies, mining companies, construction and infrastructure companies, State-Owned Enterprises, Governments, and corporate entities. His career spans a series of roles and achievements, each enhancing his legacy further and contributing to the growth of Namibia’s profile in the global energy industry. Foundation Work in the World’s Newest and Hottest Oil and Gas Hunting Grounds Prior to establishing SNC Incorporated, Nyambe worked as the Chief Legal Officer at the Ministry of Justice in Namibia and as a State Advocate of the High Court of Namibia, before joining the National Petroleum Corporation of Namibia (NAMCOR) where he served as Legal Counsel.

As Counsel at NAMCOR, Nyambe drafted, reviewed and negotiated various complex agreements in the energy sectors such as Joint Operating Agreements, Purchase and Sale Agreements, Farm Out Agreements and Drilling Contracts with various international oil companies. Notably, this included leading the NAMCOR team in drafting and negotiating various Joint Operating Agreements (JOAs) between NAMCOR and Total and Impact Oil & Gas respect of a petroleum block offshore Namibia (Orange Basin); between NAMCOR and Total in respect of another petroleum block offshore Namibia (Orange Basin); between NAMCOR and Rhino Resources in respect of a petroleum block offshore Namibia (Wabvis Basin); and between NAMCOR, Galp, Custos Energy and Exxon Mobil in respect of a petroleum block offshore Namibia (Orange Basin). Nyambe led the Government Negotiating Team of Namibia in drafting and negotiating various Petroleum Agreement with notable international oil companies. Notably, he also served as Lead Counsel for NAMCOR in negotiating the commercial terms for the sale of NAMCOR’s interests in a petroleum license in the Namibe Basin to Exxon Mobil, as well as in drafting and negotiating the subsequent Farm Out Agreement between NAMCOR and Exxon Mobil for the sale of interests in a Namibe Basin petroleum block. Nyambe led the Government Negotiating Team of Namibia in drafting and negotiating various Petroleum Agreement with various IOC’s notably Exxon Mobil, Shell and Total Energies and he played a role in the proposed amendments to the upstream legal framework.

Most of the agreements and transactions which Nyambe was involved in facilitated and fast-tracked the exploration activities, especially in the Orange Basin. In his role as legal counsel for NAMCOR, he has played a key role in facilitating these agreements which are the catalyst for the current discoveries made in the Namibian oil & gas sector and ensuring NAMCOR’s interest.

Leading the Legal and Business Advisory Frontier with SNC Incorporated As Managing Partner of SNC Incorporated, a leading law firm in energy, mining, oil and gas, natural resources, commercial and dispute resolutions in Africa, Shakwa Nyambe has played a pivotal role in drafting and negotiating Joint Operating Agreements, Asset Purchase and Sale Agreements, Farm-Out Agreements, Data Exchange Agreements, Confidentiality Agreements, International Dispute Resolution Agreements, Offshore drilling contracts and Service Agreements as well as other various complex commercial agreements for notable companies in petroleum exploration companies and upstream services companies. Moreover, Nyambe has provided valuable counsel to both international and Namibian oil and gas companies as well as service companies on asset acquisitions, disposals, contract negotiations, and joint ventures. Nyambe has also played a key role in facilitating the legal and commercial framework for the growth of Namibia’s petroleum sector and ensuring NAMCOR’s interest.

He also served as Lead Counsel for NAMCOR in negotiating the commercial terms for the sale of NAMCOR’s interests in a petroleum license in the Namibe Basin to Exxon Mobil, as well as in drafting and negotiating the subsequent Farm Out Agreement between NAMCOR and Exxon Mobil for the sale of interests in a Namibe Basin petroleum block. Nyambe led the Government Negotiating Team of Namibia in drafting and negotiating various Petroleum Agreement with various IOC’s notably Exxon Mobil, Shell and Total Energies and he played a role in the proposed amendments to the upstream legal framework.
drafting and interpretation, acquisition of petroleum exploration licenses and obtaining relevant regulatory approvals and permits.

In addition, Nyambe has been instrumental in drafting and negotiating Petroleum Agreements between the Government of Namibia and various international oil companies. Through these endeavours, Nyambe has contributed significantly to facilitating partnerships, protecting interests, enhancing stakeholder engagement in the energy sector and advancing the exploration and development of Namibia’s oil and gas sector.

Global Energy Advocacy and Leadership

Beyond his professional endeavours, Nyambe’s commitment to advancing the energy sector transcends Namibia’s borders. During the 2018 – 2019 period, Nyambe worked with the New Petroleum Producers Group where they assisted with the Preparation of an Integrated Oil & Gas Strategy for Lebanon, provided peer to peer workshops and training sessions on sovereign wealth funds, local content and capacity building with government officials from Lebanon, Ghana and Uganda and reviewed the legislative, regulatory and contractual framework for upstream petroleum sector operations for Ghana, Lebanon and Uganda.

From January 2019 to April 2020 Nyambe served as the Acting and later Alternate Director; Africa Chapter for the Association of International Energy Negotiators (AIEN) is an independent, not-for-profit organisation that supports international energy negotiators around the world, enhancing their effectiveness and professionalism in the international community. Headquartered in Texas, USA, AIEN produces model contracts that are widely used in the international energy industry. Between January 2019 – 2020, Nyambe played a pivotal role in promoting model contracts in Africa, which model contracts are mostly used in the purchase and sale of assets and interest in various petroleum licences. Under Nyambe’s leadership, the African Regional Chapter of AIEN experienced substantial growth and became a key platform for dialogue and engagement. He played an active role in organising AIEN Africa Chapter and promoting the energy sector by organising various events. He also organised various webinars in Africa covering various on-demand sessions on fiscal, technical, contractual, and social topics.

From May 2020, Nyambe was appointed as the Director, African Chapter. In this role, he further evolved to organising taught events and promoting the use of model contracts for companies operating in Africa. He also played a pivotal role in involving professionals across the spectrum of the energy sector from different African Countries to form part of the various committees responsible for drafting and producing model contracts, which contracts are now widely used across Africa.

Nyambe serves on the drafting committees for the AIEN JOA Committee, LNG, SPA Committee, Asset Sale and Purchase Agreement Committee, and the Drilling Contract Committee. These committees are responsible for drafting and producing various model contracts that are widely accepted and used in Africa as well as the international energy industry. Additionally, he also serves on the Hydrogen Task Force, where he is involved in the discussion and preparation of the types of model contracts that could become significant in the context of the production and use of Hydrogen.

In June 2023 Nyambe was appointed as Vice President for Communication. In his role as Vice President for Communication, Nyambe has demonstrated exemplary leadership and strategic vision. Serving as a member of the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors he provides actionable solutions and insights tailored specifically to the global needs of the energy industry. His dedication to addressing the challenges and opportunities within the African energy landscape has been instrumental in AIEN’s mission of promoting sustainable energy development in Africa and equitable negotiations globally across the energy sector.

Nyambe has also been a key player in the initiation and growth of the African Regional Chapter and has served on the drafting committees for the AIEN JOA, LNG, SPA and Asset Sale and Purchase Agreement Committees. In addition, he has been involved in the preparation of model contracts for the various committees responsible for drafting and producing model contracts for companies operating in Africa.

Nyambe is also a member of the Hydrogen Task Force, where he has been involved in the discussion and preparation of the types of model contracts that could become significant in the context of the production and use of Hydrogen.

In his role as Vice President for Communication, Nyambe has contributed to the growth and development of the African Regional Chapter and has played a pivotal role in advancing the energy sector in Africa.

Nyambe’s contributions to the energy sector have been instrumental in advancing the energy landscape in Africa and have contributed to the growth and development of the energy sector across the continent. His leadership and expertise have been essential in promoting sustainable energy development and equitable negotiations globally across the energy sector.