

16 February 2016

Anne Saloranta
Ambassador
Embassy of Finland
Windhoek

check against delivery

Honorable Chief Ankama, Deputy Minister of Fisheries and Marine Resources,

Esteemed representatives of the two main partner institutions of higher learning; Namibia University of Science and Technology headed by Vice Chancellor Dr. Tjivikua and Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, represented by Project Manager Dr. Minna Keinänen-Toivola and Captain Heikki Koivisto,

The University of Oulu, Professor Rauno Heikkilä from the Faculty of Technology,

The Finnish Environmental Institute, HRD Manager Mr. Jorma Rytönen,

The Technical Research Center of Finland, Research Scientist Mr. Heikki Mantsinen,

Senior Government Officials,

Representatives of private sector,

Members of the media,

All distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a particular pleasure for the Finnish Embassy, my colleagues, my husband and for me personally to welcome you all at the Finland Residence this morning.

Today we celebrate the official launch of the NAMHUB project, a new innovative initiative combining research, product and service development and business partnerships. The aim is to assess the potential for building an ecosystem of local needs for capacity building, products and services in the field of transport and logistics. The building of the



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ecosystem includes benchmarking and bringing in Finnish expertise to offer green, safe and smart infrastructure and solutions to the growing need of Namibia as a regional transportation and logistics hub. This new concept builds on the NAMURBAN project that was launched in October last year. It has its roots in the fruitful partnership between the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources, the Namibia University of Science and Technology and the Satakunta University of Applied Sciences in Rauma, Finland. Cooperation started in the maritime sector between the Finnish and the Namibian counterparts dating back to the Namibian Government's decision to procure a marine research vessel from Finland and the successful training program that was attached to the purchase.

Through the experience and contacts established in the course of the project partnerships for several years, research experts of the Satakunta University of Applied Sciences and MUST created a concept and a project idea with a focus on urban resource efficiency. The concept has now been developed further to focus on the formation of a transport and logistics ecosystem. The project that is still at its initial phase, has received funding from the newly-established *Business with Impact* program, in short BEAM, funded by the Government of Finland. BEAM falls under a larger public funding network of Team Finland, and one of its components called TEKES. TEKES offers innovation funding and services to Finnish research institutions and private sector providing Finnish companies with new business opportunities. It is against this background that a number of Finnish Cleantec companies are keenly looking forward to business partnerships and opportunities after the preparatory phase of the project to offer their expertise and know-how in logistics and transportation field, with an overall aim of promoting local manufacturing of products and local Namibian-owned services.

The concept of Cleantech deserves further elaboration. Actually, cleantech consists of two words (= clean + technology). It refers to technology, services, solutions, process innovations or products that help reduce the environmental load caused by human activity, to save energy and natural resources and to improve the living environment. Cleantech businesses can contribute positively to economic, ecologic and social challenges by creating high technology jobs and by enhancing employment.



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The Embassy of Finland here in Namibia currently focuses on private sector development where we would like to see business opportunities opening up in Namibia for Finnish businesses, and likewise in Finland for Namibian business interests. We are keen to offer our assistance to enhance trade and commercial contacts between our two countries. It is with that aim in mind that the Embassy is currently supporting and has supported in the past few years the Walvis Bay Corridor Group with a project for Improved Service Delivery towards a Regional Logistics and Distribution Hub in Namibia for SADC.

This project program is implemented at two levels; both organizational level by supporting the association of Namibian Transporters and at enterprise level by targeted support to selected SMEs in the logistics sector. We hope to see synergies between this program and the Walvis Bay Corridor Group in general and the NAMHUB project.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and the Finnish Embassy here in Namibia are proud to be partners in this new project endeavor. Focus on a key sector for Namibia's economic empowerment is very much in accordance with Finland's development policy and its key focus on the reduction of inequality and eradication of extreme poverty. It also corresponds to Namibia's National Development Plan NDP4 and the war on poverty.

I wish to commend the successes achieved so far in the partnerships and the commitment shown by all the project partners and all parties concerned.

Ladies and gentlemen, let me conclude by wishing you all the best of success with the new NAMHUB project and the continued fruitful co-operation.

Thank you.



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