

# Gathemann to be preserved

THE letter 'Call to resist Sanlam's plans' published in The Namibian of September 23 contains factual mistakes and misperceptions. Kindly allow us to clarify the matter.

1. There is no question whatsoever that the Gathemann and Kroonprinz buildings in Independence Avenue will be 'destroyed'. To the contrary, these two historical buildings will be retained in full, and not only the facades. Instructions to this effect have been given to the architects. Because the design poses a tremendous challenge to the architects, we were not in a position to supply The Namibian with final architectural drawings at the time of its report on the 21st which

would have prevented the unfortunate assertion "that the plan seemingly violates historical monuments legislation".

2. We agree wholeheartedly that these two buildings are "not useless artifacts but working buildings". That is why they will be retained in full. Insofar as it is necessary, the buildings will be renovated, repaired and maintained to remain 'working buildings' and simultaneously be a valuable tourist attraction and an aesthetical asset to the

city. Sanlam has a proud track record of its developments being sensitive to historical, aesthetical and ecological factors.

3. Thirdly, we would like to clarify the assertion that Sanlam is a 'foreign developer'. The development is an investment of Namibian funds on behalf of the thousands of policy-owners, pension fund, medical aid, unit trust and other financial service clients of the company in Namibia. As a mutual company, Sanlam has no shareholders: all

its assets belong to its clients. Apart from our obligation to earn optimal returns for our clients, it is our policy to support these clients and communities by means of projects and investments that would benefit that particular community. We evaluate possible investment projects on an on-going basis, and would like to support our clients in other centres in Namibia as well.

4. Also in the wider context, the city and the country as a whole stand

to benefit in terms of the employment created and by way of taxes paid to the city and the state. As far as possible we make use of local labour, local material and local contractors. Apart from this important contribution to the economy, our primary duty as property investors is the creation of commercial accomodation. There is a lack of A-grade offices in Windhoek, as is borne out by the fact that the Sanlam centre in Independence Avenue has been fully let since it was officially opened by Dr Libertine Amathila on October 12 1990.

KOKKIE RALL  
REGIONAL MAN-  
AGER: INVESTMENT  
SANLAM PROPER-  
TIES LTD

*Letters to the  
Editor*

