



JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

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To: All Members of the Media

EU invests 36 million Namibian Dollars in Solid Waste Management Project

WINDHOEK – On Monday, 31 January 2022 in a virtual ceremony, Mayor Sade Gawanas signed an agreement with her counterpart from the City of Bremen, Mayor Dr. Andreas Bovenschulte to implement an EU-funded project to improve solid waste management in the City of Windhoek. The European Union – Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development (DEVCO) funds this four-year project to the tune of 2.125 million Euros or 36.8 million Namibian Dollars at today's exchange rate.

Recent studies indicate that the City of Windhoek population has been growing rapidly over the last decade due to urbanisation and increased economic activity. However, many new residents are living in informal neighborhoods without inadequate water supply and sanitation facilities. These unsanitary living conditions contribute to the spread of disease, affecting already disadvantaged and marginalized groups of the population. The City of Windhoek has set the goal for itself for improving living conditions in these neighborhoods.

The main objective of the project is to reduce waste volumes and harmful environmental impacts, and thus to expand the share of recycled waste along with creating jobs through innovative start-ups in the circular economy in Windhoek. Overall, in the coming months, there will be several exchanges ("job sharing") between waste management experts of the City of Bremen and Windhoek. Moreover, workshops and educational measures for school children will be arranged in Windhoek and recycling stations will be established. As a further measure, an incubator for startups in the circular economy sector will be set up in Windhoek, therein enabling young people to test new and innovative business ideas and to fulfill their dream of establishing a company.

Mayor Sade Gawanas was full of praise following the signing of the agreement that will facilitate the achievement of Windhoek's ambitious targets on recycling, packaging waste, landfill and solid waste management. She said, "On behalf of the City, we are grateful for this partnership with the City of Bremen that will improve the quality of lives of our citizens while creating the much needed job opportunities. We are confident that this project will promote the shift towards a more sustainable model known as the circular economy for Windhoek and Namibia as a whole."

Dr. Andreas Bovenschulte expressed his delight at this project to his counterpart in Windhoek, Mayor Sade Gawanas. "Bremen is committed to the development goals of the United Nations. This project is contributing towards the implementation of these goals and directly benefits the people in our twin city." H.E. Sinikka Antila, the head of the EU delegation in Windhoek, was also present during the ceremony.

Ambassador Antila congratulated the two cities represented by their mayors for signing the solid waste management agreement. She said that the provision of high-quality solid waste management is in line with the EU's sector policy objectives and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to safeguard public health and the protection of the environment. "We are proud to be funding this programme as it directly addresses some of the most pressing needs of Windhoek residents. The real work starts now to make this programme a resounding success."

Background

The Free Hanseatic City of Bremen has been on friendly terms with Namibia, and in particular with the capital Windhoek, for over forty years. In 2000, representatives of the two cities signed an agreement to jointly implement Local Agenda 21. In partnership with the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), joint projects have since then been carried out on the topics of vocational training, sustainable mobility and wastewater disposal. Since October 2017, Windhoek and Bremen have been working together on a climate partnership, supported by the BMZ. As part of this program, exchanges of municipal experts from both cities have taken place several times on topics such as waste management, wastewater management, sustainable tourism and environmental education.

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