



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

STATEMENT

BY

**THE RIGHT HONOURABLE TJITUNGA ELIJAH NGURARE
PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
ON THE
OCCASION OF THE INAUGURATION
OF THE
GAIDIP OASIS AGRICULTURAL PROJECT**

**//KHARAS REGION
24 NOVEMBER 2025**

Director of Ceremonies, Ms Hilda Basson-Namundjebo
Honorable Governor Dawid Gertze
Members of Parliament
Honourable Regional Leaders present,
Mr. Awad Bin Rais, Director of Warifo Investments,
Mr. Husam Elshafei, General Manager of Warifo Investments,
Management and Staff of Warifo Investments,
Traditional Leaders
Distinguished Guests,
Members of the Media,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honour to stand here today on behalf of Her Excellency Dr. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, President of the Republic of Namibia, to officially inaugurate a project that directly aligns with one of the priority areas of the 8th administration and which further embodies innovation, resilience, and transformation, in line with our national development agenda.

When agriculture falters, the flow effects are felt across every sector because food production is the foundation of human life and national stability. This is why the 8th Administration places agriculture at the centre of its agenda, not only as a key priority but also as a critical enabler for food security and broader economic diversification. Food security cannot be achieved in the absence of water security and energy security. A strong agricultural sector, therefore, strengthens household resilience, expands economic opportunities, and supports growth across other industries. Investment in agriculture is therefore essential to sustaining life, protecting dignity, and achieving the transformational goals our country has set for itself.

This project speaks to agriculture, and by extension, to food security. It is, therefore, not by accident that in Vision 2030, NDP6, and the SWAPO Party Manifesto that agriculture has been highlighted as one of our seven priority areas that should drive Namibia's economic growth and sustainable development agenda.

Honourable Governor, Ladies and Gentlemen

Agriculture is the backbone of any nation. A nation that cannot feed itself lives at the whims of other nations that feed it, and can hardly take sovereign decisions without upsetting globalised geopolitical formations. After all, he who feeds you calls the shots. We are encouraged by countries like the United Arab Emirates' National Food Security Strategy 2051 which seeks to make that country “a world leader in food security by 2051, a goal supported by enhancing local production through technology, diversifying import sources, and reducing waste.”

On its part, Namibia's NDP6 is informed by four pillars: economic growth, transformation, and resilience; human development and community resilience; environmental sustainability; and good governance and effective public service delivery. These are the pillars that are guiding Namibia's transformational development agenda, primarily focusing on structural change, human capital development, green economic principles, and institutional capacity. Our clarion call is therefore to seek food security first, and the rest will follow.

The Gaidip Oasis Agricultural Project represents a landmark investment in sustainable agriculture and rural development. The project integrates state-of-the-art automated irrigation systems that tap directly on water from the Orange River. It cultivates various cultivars of dates, vegetables, and lucerne. In the long run, this does not only enhance Namibia's agricultural productivity but also creates employment opportunities, promotes food security, and serves as a model for modern climate-smart farming in Southern Africa. It stands out, indeed, as a proud contribution to the national aspirations embodied in Vision 2030 and successive NDPs.

Mr. Awad Bin Rais, Ladies and Gentlemen

We note with appreciation that N\$500 million was invested in this project. Over 1,500 people will be employed in the first phase, increasing to about 3,000 employees at full production. This collaboration between government and private sector on job creation is highly welcomed.

I am further informed that about 60,000 palm trees will be grown through this Project. The aim is to produce 5,000 metric tons of dates per year, thus positioning Warifo as the leading date palm producer in Namibia, rivalling competitors in Chile and Peru. I am also informed that Warifo's exponential growth will reach 600,000 palm trees through its own offshoots over the next five years. With this investment in agriculture, Warifo is set to produce reliable, high-quality, and significant volumes of local vegetables such as potatoes, onions, butternut, sweetcorn, pomegranate, and different varieties of dates.

This Project, clearly, is more than an agricultural initiative; it advances nearly every pillar of the current Administration. It strengthens agricultural transformation, drives job creation, promotes rural development, enhances food security, and supports national skills development. Through modern irrigation, renewable energy, export-led growth, and local value chains, the project activates the core economic enablers required to build a strong, resilient, and self-sufficient Namibian economy.

Today's inauguration of the Gaidip Oasis Agricultural Project along the fertile banks of the Orange River, highlights our commitment to economic diversification, climate resilience, and sustainable job creation. The project introduces climate-smart agricultural technologies, including state-of-the-art automated irrigation systems, directly contributing to NDP6 ambitions of modernising Namibia's agricultural sector, increase productivity, and ensure long-term food and water security. We are confident that these same state-of-the-art automated irrigation systems

can be replicated along other perennial rivers of Kunene, Kavango, and Zambezi.

Indeed through this Project, the Warifo Investments has demonstrated bold leadership by mobilising private capital for rural development and high-value production. Their mission to position Namibia as a competitive exporter of premium dates and grapes strengthens our presence in regional and international markets, boosts national revenue, and drives economic growth, transformation, and resilience. By empowering local communities and generating sustainable livelihoods, this development strengthens the social and economic foundations NDP6 seeks to reinforce across Namibia.

This Project has come at the right time, as Namibia works to reduce import dependency, enhance national self-sufficiency, and strengthen food security. Projects like this demonstrate how public-private partnerships can accelerate infrastructure development, expand service delivery, and stimulate economic growth across sectors. These partnerships reduce the burden on the national budget, create jobs, attract investment, and enhance long-term sustainability.

Director of Ceremonies,

Warifo Investments' commitment to water conservation, organic farming, and the integration of renewable energy solutions directly contributes to Namibia's climate resilience goals. This project stands as a beacon of responsible resource management and modern agricultural practices, key elements in building a sustainable, future-ready economy.

The 8th Administration calls on all sectors of society to participate in transforming the Namibian economy into a more inclusive, competitive, and innovative landscape. What we are witnessing today exemplifies exactly the type of partnership that drives such transformation, where private investment, public policy, and community development converge to unlock new possibilities.

Job creation remains a fundamental pillar of our mandate, yet our commitment goes beyond employment; we strive to create a conducive environment for investors while upholding the dignity of labour. The Government commends Warifo Investments for its role in reducing the Namibian unemployment rate. It further calls for assurances from the company that its employment conditions should be decent, including fair wages, accommodation, and other relevant benefits, and that the company is dedicated to shaping sustainable future for itself and for its workforce.

In addition, the government calls on the company to engage in corporate social responsibility initiatives that support community well-being and foster sustainable development in the Region and nationally.

On behalf of Her Excellency, I commend Warifo Investments, the project's contractors, technical partners, and all stakeholders who have contributed to this ambitious endeavour. Your work is expanding opportunity, strengthening local capacity, and demonstrating the forward-thinking development envisioned in the sixth Namibia Development Plan (NDP6). May this project continue to grow, inspire, and open pathways to greater agricultural excellence in the //Kharas Region and across Namibia.

It gives me great pleasure to officially declare the Gaidip Oasis Agricultural Project inaugurated.

Thank you.