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**STATEMENT BY JOHN MUTORWA, MP AND MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, WATER AND FORESTRY (MAWF), DELIVERED AT THE 2016 AGRIBUSDEV'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM), 9 MARCH 2016, NAMPOWER CONVENTION CENTRE, WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA.**

- Honourable Ministers;
  - AgriBusDev Board Members;
  - Representatives of AMTA and the Agronomic Board;
  - AGRIBUSDEV Staff Members;
  - Members of the Media;
1. I have the distinct honour and duty, to address the first Annual General Meeting of the AGRIBUSDEV. I am particularly grateful to be officiating at this special occasion. The occasion affords us an ideal opportunity as Shareholders, in this company, to take stock of achievements made, in the context of our national aspirations and targets, as articulated in Vision 2030, NDP4 and AGRIBUSDEV's Strategic Plan. What shall happen at this meeting would be that, we must track our achievements in the context of set targets. Apart from only looking at the progress made, we shall and must also critically identify; and at the same time, reflect on

the challenges, that are impeding the achievement of desired results.

2. Taking it from the Chairperson's report, which he just tabled; we could all see that some notable progress have been made, in putting the Company on sound governance structure and in stabilizing the food production in our Country. However, in the years of persistent droughts that we have been experiencing, in our Country and in our Region, the SADC, it is becoming increasingly an indispensable and unavoidable must, for us to scale-up financial investments in both the water-and agricultural sectors! More investment is needed than ever, to scale up crop production under irrigation. This goes to say that both Government and Private entities must embrace the monumental task, to mobilize the required investments, if our Vision 2030 target of putting 27 000 hectares of irrigation land under irrigation is to be achieved! Doubling the noted investment would mean that the targets will be achieved. The reverse is unfortunately also equally true!
  
3. In an effort to pull the investments required together, I would like to draw your attention to the following legal and policy instrument, that created ample economic spaces, for both Government and Private Sector, to participate in economic activities in general and the GRN's Green Scheme Programme in particular! Article 98 of the Namibian Constitution: "Principles of Economic Order," fundamentally provides for the participation of both Government and Private business in the quest for economic growth, prosperity

and dignity for all Namibians. In the same framework, Article 5 of the Green Scheme Policy stipulates different models through which private investment could be channelled into the Green Scheme Programme.

4. The persistent droughts that we have been experiencing over the years, is really and urgently calling for innovative and responsive strategies. One of the innovative strategies would be to practically integrate animal fodder production into our food production chain! I would like to direct that: all the by-products that are currently coming from our Green Scheme Irrigation production lines shall have to be turned into different animal fodders! The wrong perception of seeing the by-products as waste should change, as waste is merely a resource at the wrong place! Just by transferring or transforming the perceived waste, you create a product that is useful to another human being in one way or another.
  
5. You will probably agree with me that: human resources are the most critical assets for any company. As reflected in the company's annual report, I am very pleased to note that the long-outstanding issues related to employees' contracts have been resolved. I am equally pleased to note that, a harmonized grading and remuneration system across all the Green Scheme Projects have been adopted. The most welcome part of this exercise is the fact that, all this was achieved without any industrial stoppages or strikes. For this I could only implore both the Board, the Management, Staff and indeed, all employees of AGRIBUSDEV to

maintain the prevailing industrial harmony, to achieve maximum food production at all the GRN's Green Scheme Irrigation Projects.

6. The sustainability of the Company and its business centres is very important. However, for the desired sustainability to be achieved, we need to maintain a sound financial discipline at all levels of the business. This entails exploring various initiatives that would boost revenue generation and adopting strict control measures, that would contain the expenditures within budgeted and acceptable levels. Looking at the financial report tabled before us, I am inclined to direct both the Board and Management to spare no efforts, to bring all the projects under this portfolio on the profitability trajectory. Whereas profit is not the main reason for AgriBusDev's existence, the fact remains that: only those businesses that make profits would have sound sustainable basis!
  
7. Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen; the Green Revolution that we have embarked upon, provides answers to many contemporary social-economic issues that confront humanity today. Assuming that the 27 000 hectares are eventually developed, more than 40000 direct employment would be created, the current level of cereal demand of approximately 200 000 tonnes would be 100 % met and this would mean achieving food security, full import substitution of cereal, relieving pressure from urban centres and so forth. I would therefore want to make a clarion call to the AGRIBUSDEV Board, Management, Staff and all employees to activate the system to trigger the instant development of Katima / Liselo Green Scheme and Zone Green

Scheme Project upon budget approval, with the required utmost urgency! The nation is looking upon us, as entrusted workers in the MAWF, to free it from poverty, hunger, unemployment and from other socio-economic problems and challenges.

8. Last but not least, let me extend a vote of thanks to all the employees of AGRIBUSDEV for their tireless efforts, to make this programme hitherto, a resounding success. Let us continue working together, for improved results. On behalf of the main shareholder (the Government of the Republic of Namibia), we will be looking forward to see improved results at the next AGM. We need to work and sweat to earn our food and therefore our lives. This was and is a Divine and send-off assignment. Let us all pull together, for victory is ours! Our ultimate goal is prosperity for and to all!

I thank you all