



MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, WATER AND FORESTRY

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PUBLIC NOTICE

SUBJECT: A FORMAL RESPONSE TO AN ARTICLE IN THE NAMIBIAN SUN NEWSPAPER OF THE 23RD OF JANUARY 2018.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Article with the heading **“First shots fired in water war”** which appeared in the Namibian Sun Newspaper of the 23rd of January 2018 can at best be described as sensationalist and at worst be termed as irresponsible journalism.

In order to set the record straight, the Ministry of Agriculture Water and Forestry (MAWF), in consultation with the national water utility i.e. NamWater, would like to provide the following factual information:

2. The Kunene Transboundary Water Supply Project:

- (a) The Kunene Transboundary Water Supply Project is a binational project, which was conceptualized through the Permanent Joint Water Commission (PJWC), on the Kunene River, a bi-national commission, set up to advise the two Governments of Angola and Namibia, on issues relating to the utilization and preservation of water resources of the Kunene River.

- (b) The Project is a Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Pilot Project under the Regional Strategic Water Infrastructure Development Programme (RSWIDP), financed in part, by the German Government, through KfW (with a parallel running technical assistance, financed by GIZ). The balance of the funds is provided by the Governments of Angola and Namibia. The project is aimed at improving water supply and sanitation infrastructures, on both sides of the Angola/Namibia border, primarily to facilitate reliable water supply to Southern Angola.

3. Southern Angolan Water Supply Schemes

Due to the incorrect information provided by the Namibian Sun Newspaper Article, on the Southern Angolan Water Supply scheme, a short background on the project is provided hereunder:

While the two countries (Angola and Namibia) were busy implementing the Kunene Transboundary Water Supply Project, the Angolan Authorities opted to develop water supply solutions of its own, which resulted in the Southern Angolan Water Supply Scheme, starting with a purification plant at Xangongo and pipelines from Xangongo to Ondjiva and eventually to Santa Clara, at the borders with Namibia. Although, these developments resulted in changes to the scope of the Kunene Transboundary Water Supply Project, they did not halt the project completely and it was agreed between the parties i.e. SADC, Angola, Namibia and KfW that: some of the components of the Project such as a new potable water supply scheme to the Calueque village in Angola, will continue, while the Oshakati - Santa Clara pipeline construction, including pump stations & rehabilitation/upgrading of existing pump stations be withheld. These projects are currently ongoing, expected to be completed by December 2018 and are envisaged to bring about immense relief to the people of both Namibia and Angola.

4. Reasons for reduced water supply from the Calueque scheme.

The recent reduced water supply from the Calueque Scheme, which supplies water to various purification plants in northern Namibia, has nothing to do with bi-national issues, as recklessly implied in the Namibian Sun article. These challenges have been simply caused by the deteriorating condition of the NamWater water supply infrastructures at Calueque, due to age, which the Corporation is currently busy addressing! After the refurbishment of the Calueque dam by Angola, the two countries are now looking at how to put up a Joint Operating Authority, which will be responsible for the joint operation and maintenance of the Calueque dam scheme.

5. Namibia to start paying for water.

- (a) Since the 1926's, Namibia and Angola through their then colonial powers, has been collaborating on the use of waters of the Kunene River. The two countries adopted the principle of "best joint utilisation" in the planning and development of water resources of common rivers. This cooperation has led to Angola conceding rights to Namibia to construct the Calueque dam and related works in Angola territory, to be able to draw and convey water from the Kunene River free of charge (due to the fact that: North Central Namibia have periodically been inundated by flood waters and thus no feasible location for a dam in her territory). Therefore, the historical water use agreements make provisions for sharing of the waters of the Kunene River, but nowhere in these agreements is it provided or envisaged that Namibia would receive the water from Calueque Scheme at a cost! The statement that Angolan Authority wants Namibia to start paying for water is superfluous and baseless.
- (b) In addition to the above, the Ministry of Agriculture Water and Forestry would like to clearly state that: Namibia and Angola remain two brotherly/sisterly nations with shared borders and shared resources such as water. There is no impending "water wars" or conflicts, between Namibia and Angola and the two countries are working hard together, to realize better living standards for all of their people.
- (c) It is in this vein that the two countries are currently engaged in bi-lateral discussions on how to share responsibilities, relating to operation and maintenance of the Calueque Dam. There are also other projects underway, such as the Baynes Hydropower Project, through which, the two countries are engaged in binational discussions and which are aimed at coming up with joint solutions to supply the peoples of the two countries, with reliable sources of energy by utilizing the waters of the Cunene River.

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MINISTER