WINDHOEK RESIDENTS

Windhoek residents to receive only 37.6 electricity units for N$100 from August

p. 04

NAMIBIA

Three transitions impacting Namibia

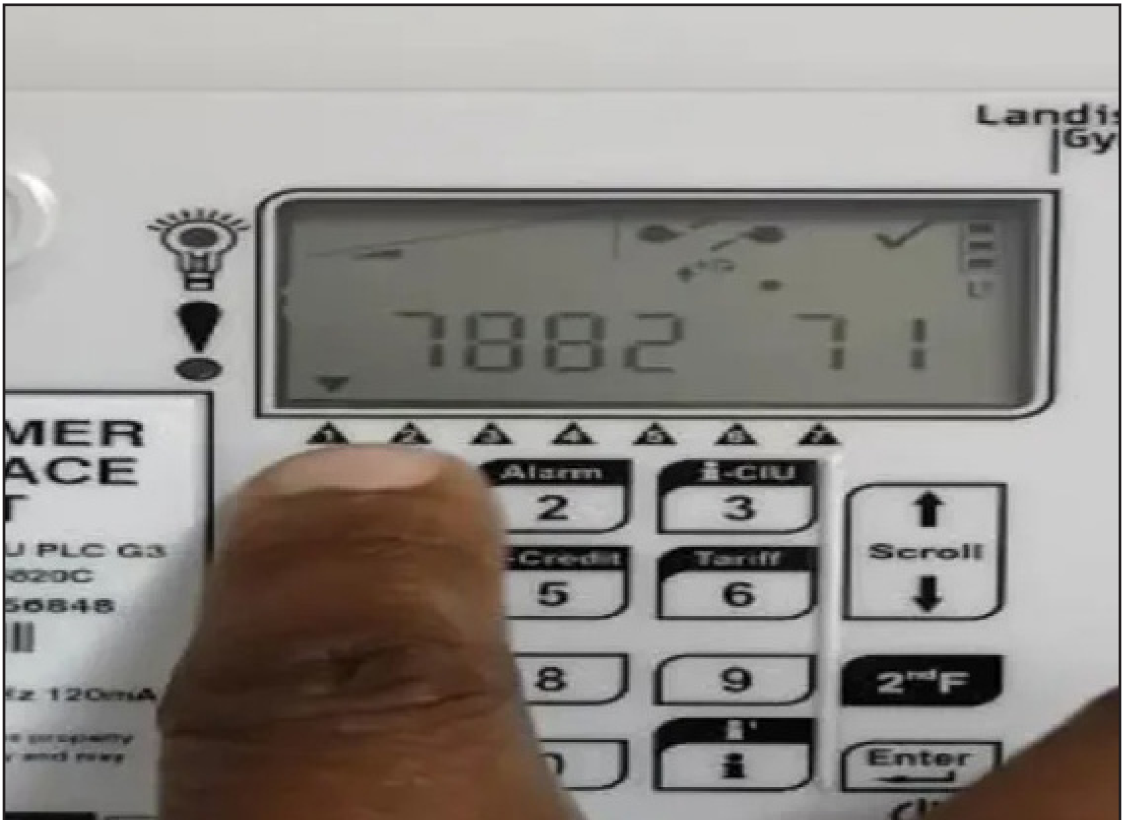
p. 06

PARTNERSHIP

What the new Namibia China partnership actually means

p. 15

THE BRIEF
News Worth Knowing



Namibia to introduce three-year electricity pricing model in 2027

MONDAY 20 JULY 2026

MAIN STORY

Namibia to introduce three-year electricity pricing model in 2027

Namibia will replace its annual electricity tariff review process with a three-year pricing framework from the 2027 financial year, in a move aimed at improving regulatory certainty, strengthening utility performance and supporting long-term investment in the country's power sector.

The Electricity Control Board (ECB) said the new Multi-Year Price Determination (MYPD) framework will establish a transparent, rolling three-year tariff path, providing greater visibility over future electricity prices for consumers, utilities and investors.

The regulator is currently piloting the framework with selected electricity licensees ahead of its planned rollout next year.

ECB Executive for Economic and Market Regulation Pinehas Mutota said the new model would reduce pricing uncertainty while enabling more effective long-term planning across the electricity value chain.

"As for the three-year MYPD framework, we are currently piloting it with select licensees. The primary advantage for the consumer is long-term tariff predictability and a highly stable pricing path. Consumers will know exactly what their tariff trajectories look like over a rolling three-year horizon, making financial planning simple," Mutota said.

Crucial Dates

- **Bank of Namibia Monetary Policy announcement dates:**
  * 12 August 2026
  * 29 October 2026
  * 10 December 2026
- **Namibia Corporate Social Investment (CSI) Mukopano**
  11 August 2026 at the Hilton Windhoek.
- **Namibia Oil and Gas Conference**
  18–21 August 2026 in Windhoek

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> The pricing reform also introduces a performance-based regulatory regime that links tariff approvals to the operational efficiency of electricity distributors.

The pricing reform also introduces a performance-based regulatory regime that links tariff approvals to the operational efficiency of electricity distributors.

Under the new framework, distributors that fail to meet prescribed efficiency targets, including system loss and operational performance benchmarks, will face reductions in their allowable revenues, shifting the financial burden of inefficiencies away from consumers.

The ECB said the approach is intended to incentivise utilities to improve operational performance, reduce technical and commercial losses, and enhance service reliability without automatically passing avoidable costs on to end-users.

"Additionally, it introduces performance-based pricing controls. If a distributor exhibits high system losses or operational inefficiencies, they will be penalised through reductions in their allowable tariff formulations. This forces the industry to become inherently efficient, ensuring consumers get better service for the money they pay," Mutota said.

The introduction of the MYPD aligns Namibia with a growing number of electricity regulators globally that have adopted multi-year tariff frameworks to improve regulatory certainty, encourage infrastructure investment and promote operational efficiency across the power sector.

For investors, the move is expected to provide greater visibility over future revenue streams and strengthen confidence in long-term investments in electricity generation, transmission and distribution infrastructure, while supporting Namibia's broader energy transition and power sector modernisation agenda.

Windhoek residents to receive only 37.6 electricity units for N$100 from August

Windhoek electricity consumers will receive approximately 37.6 units of electricity for every N$100 purchased from 1 August 2026, down from about 39 units previously, following the Electricity Control Board's (ECB) approval of a 3.7% bulk tariff increase.

According to the ECB, City of Windhoek customers will continue to receive the highest number of electricity units for every N$100 purchased among the country's major electricity distributors, despite the reduction in purchasing power.

Customers in Windhoek will receive 37.60 units, compared to 36.35 units for NORED customers, 35.52 units for CENORED customers, 33.89 units for Keetmanshoop Municipality customers and 31.11 units for Erongo RED customers.

The new tariffs follow the ECB's approval of a moderated 3.7% increase in NamPower's bulk electricity tariff for the 2026/27 financial year after the utility had applied for an 8.4% increase.

The regulator said the approved increase, which is below Namibia's current 4.4% inflation rate, is not expected to place additional upward pressure on inflation.

"The approved average NamPower bulk tariff increase of 3.7%, which is below the current inflation rate of 4.4%, is not expected to place upward pressure on inflation. The increase is thus estimated to result in an average 3.7% increase in distributors' end-consumer tariffs. The estimated electricity units that consumers will receive for a N$100 purchase after the tariff adjustment vary across distributors. CENORED customers will receive 35.52kWh, City of Windhoek customers 37.60kWh, Erongo RED customers 31.11kWh, Keetmanshoop Municipality customers 33.89kWh, and NORED customers 36.35kWh," ECB Chief Executive Officer Robert Kahimise said.

Kahimise said the ECB Board had initially approved a 4.8% increase before it was reduced to 3.7% through a N$90 million government relief package.

The relief package comprises N$50 million from the Long Run Marginal Cost Fund and N$40 million from the National Energy Fund, reducing the increase ultimately passed on to consumers.

Under the approved tariff structure, NamPower's average bulk tariff will increase from N$2.06 per kWh to N$2.14 per kWh with effect from 1 August 2026. Had NamPower's full application been approved, the average bulk tariff would have risen to N$2.23 per kWh.

"Following engagements with the Honourable Minister of Industries, Mines and Energy, and through a combined relief allocation of N$90 million, comprising N$50 million from the Long Run Marginal Cost Fund and N$40 million from the National Energy Fund, the increase was further reduced to 3.7%, which is the increase to be passed on to customers. Accordingly, the average bulk tariff will adjust from N$2.06 per kWh to N$2.14 per kWh with effect from 1 August 2026," Kahimise said.

He said the tariff decision sought to balance the need to keep electricity affordable while ensuring the long-term financial sustainability of Namibia's electricity supply industry, adding that financially viable utilities remain critical to maintaining reliable electricity supply and supporting economic growth.

The ECB also confirmed that social tariffs will remain unchanged, with electricity distributors directed to maintain existing support measures for vulnerable consumers.

Three transitions impacting Namibia

By Dr Johannes !Gawaxab

The global economy is undergoing several profound and overlapping transitions.

Geoeconomics is increasingly displacing the traditional separation between national security, domestic policy and international trade.

Governments are reconsidering supply chains, strategic industries, energy security and access to critical minerals through a geopolitical lens.

At the same time, the world is experiencing technological change comparable in scale to an industrial revolution. Artificial intelligence, automation, digital infrastructure and scientific innovation are transforming production, employment and global competitiveness.

A third transition is emerging within major advanced-economy central banks. After an extended period of cautious data dependence, policymakers are confronting the need for more forward-looking monetary policy, regulatory reform and greater attention to structural shocks and risks.

"Governments are reconsidering supply chains, strategic industries, energy security and access to critical minerals through a geopolitical lens.

Namibia is navigating its own important transitions.

President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah's recent diplomatic engagements in Ghana, China and South Africa demonstrate a deliberate effort to strengthen Namibia's international relationships and economic positioning.

These engagements suggest that Namibia is moving from being regarded primarily as a small frontier economy towards becoming an emerging resource economy of strategic relevance. In a world searching for energy security, resilient supply chains and critical minerals, Namibia has an opportunity to reposition itself.

However, diplomatic visibility and investment commitments are only the beginning. The more difficult task is to convert external interest into internal transformation.

Namibia's journey can be understood through three sequential transitions.

The first is a geological transition: the discovery and development of oil, gas and critical minerals, alongside the country's green hydrogen ambitions.

The second is an economic transition: using these resources to diversify production, develop local industries, raise productivity and build internationally competitive businesses. This requires more than extracting and exporting commodities. It demands infrastructure, domestic supplier development, technological capability and greater participation by Namibian enterprises.

The third—and most important—is a societal transition: ensuring that economic growth produces employment, reduces poverty and inequality, expands opportunity and improves living standards.

Countries do not become prosperous simply because valuable resources are discovered beneath their soil or seabed. Natural resources can provide revenue and investment capital, but they cannot substitute for capable institutions, educated people, sound policy and disciplined execution.

Oil, uranium, gold and rare earths may provide the capital. Human capital, institutional strength and innovation must create the prosperity.

The 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly, opening in September 2026, offers Namibia an important opportunity to consolidate its new positioning.

Namibia should approach UNGA with clearly defined investment propositions and measurable objectives: strategic infrastructure financing, technology transfer, access to new markets, domestic processing, skills partnerships and support for locally owned businesses.

The country's success should ultimately not be measured by the number of agreements signed, diplomatic visits completed or billions of dollars announced. It should be measured by factories established, businesses developed, skills transferred, jobs created and households lifted out of poverty. Namibia's defining challenge is therefore not merely to become a resource economy. It is to use its geological wealth to build a productive economy—and to use that productive economy to create a fairer and more prosperous society.

Property Hub NAMIBIA

Ausblick, Academia to face biggest rates increases under Windhoek's new tariffs

Property owners in Ausblick and Academia will face the highest increases in municipal rates and taxes after the City of Windhoek approved an average 4% tariff adjustment for the 2026/27 financial year.

According to the City, homeowners in Ausblick are expected to see an estimated monthly increase of N$436.09, the highest among residential suburbs, followed by Academia (N$362.76), Klein Windhoek (N$340.33) and Kleine Kuppe (N$339.77).

The tariff adjustment applies to water, rates and taxes, sewerage, waste management, refuse removal and the fire brigade levy, with the municipality saying the increase is necessary to maintain service delivery and the City's financial sustainability.

Lower-income suburbs will experience smaller increases. Okuryangava is expected to record the lowest estimated monthly increase at N$63.97, followed by Goreangab (N$90.36), Otjomuise (N$98.20) and Katutura Central (N$126.87).

The City said the average 4% adjustment reflects rising inflation, increasing operating costs, ageing infrastructure and the need to fill critical vacancies affecting service delivery.

"The average 4% tariff adjustment was approved to ensure the continued financial sustainability of the City of Windhoek and to enable the uninterrupted delivery of essential municipal services," the municipality said.

According to the City, the increase will fund the maintenance, rehabilitation and replacement of ageing infrastructure while supporting continued investment in reliable municipal services. Officials said the impact on individual households will vary depending on property value, customer category and the level of municipal services received, with higher-value residential properties expected to experience larger nominal increases than lower-value homes. The 2026/27 adjustment follows a year in which residential customers saw no tariff increase before the municipality approved the latest average 4% rise across key municipal services.

PAN
PAYMENTS ASSOCIATION OF NAMIBIA

MEET OUR BOARD MEMBERS

The Payments Association of Namibia (PAN) proudly introduces its Board Members, who provide strategic leadership and oversight in support of the Association's mandate under the Payment System Management Act, 2023.

Together, they are committed to strengthening governance, fostering collaboration, and supporting the continued development of a safe, efficient, resilient and inclusive National Payment System for Namibia.

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Independent Chairperson

A seasoned executive, board leader and governance specialist with extensive leadership experience across financial services- spanning banking, investments and insurance- as well as development finance, and social protection administration and institutional governance.

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A Chartered Accountant and business strategist with extensive experience in finance, audit, and advisory services. He currently serves as Head of Finance at Hyphen Hydrogen Energy and provides consulting services through ProlifiK Consulting

Ms. Selma Ambunda
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Non-Executive Director

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Head of Payments Product House at First National Bank Namibia, with more than 20 years of experience in financial services and payment systems. He has played a key role in the development of Namibia's payments ecosystem and previously served on the PAN Management Council.

Mr. Rodney Shivangulula
Non- Bank Financial Institutions

Head: Payment Solutions at NamPost Financial Services and a seasoned payments and technology professional. He has extensive experience in digital financial services, payment systems modernisation, and banking technology, contributing significantly to Namibia's evolving payments landscape.

Ms. Irene Venter
Ex-officio and Executive Members

A seasoned financial sector professional with extensive experience in banking, payments regulation, policy development, and digital financial innovation. She currently serves as the Deputy Director: National Payment System and Financial Surveillance at the Bank of Namibia, where she contributes to the oversight and modernization of Namibia's payment system.

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Payment System Operators

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Mr. Allvan Farmer
Banking Institutions

Chief Information Officer at Standard Bank Namibia and a seasoned executive with over 20 years of experience in banking, technology, operations, and digital transformation across Southern Africa.

Namibia requires retirement funds to adopt investment policy statements under new law

By Frederick Muller

New regulation places focus on transparency and member understanding

Retirement funds in Namibia are required to strengthen how they manage investments and communicate with members following the implementation of the Financial Institutions and Markets Act 2 of 2021 (FIMA).

A core requirement of FIMA is that every registered retirement or pension fund must have and maintain an Investment Policy Statement (IPS), unless exempted.

The IPS must also be made available to all members, including active, retired and deferred members, giving them clear insight into how their savings are invested.

NAMFISA has issued standards outlining what must be included in an IPS. This includes the fund's investment return objectives, risk tolerance, asset allocation and investment restrictions.

These requirements are aimed at improving transparency and ensuring more consistent decision making across the industry.

"A core requirement of FIMA is that every registered retirement or pension fund must have and maintain an Investment Policy Statement (IPS), unless exempted.

A practical tool for trustees, not just compliance

While the IPS is a regulatory requirement, it also plays an important role in how funds are governed. At its core, it is a document that sets out how investment decisions are made and managed over time.

The IPS provides a clear framework for trustees, helping them make decisions that are consistent, disciplined and aligned to long-term objectives.

It also defines the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders, which supports accountability and continuity when trustee boards change.

The IPS is not just a compliance document. It helps ensure that investment decisions are consistent and aligned to the long-term interests of members.

A well-structured IPS will typically outline the fund's investment goals, its approach to managing risk and how assets are allocated to achieve these goals.

It also sets guidelines for monitoring investments and reviewing performance over time.

What members can expect and why

it matters

For retirement fund members, the IPS provides important insight into how their savings are managed. It explains the level of risk being taken and how different investments are used to meet long-term objectives.

For funds that offer member investment choice, the requirements go further. Members must receive clear information, at least annually, on the investment options available to them and must have access to investment education.

This gives members a better understanding of their options and helps them make more informed decisions about their retirement savings.

Access to the IPS also promotes transparency and trust. It allows members to see how trustees approach investment decisions and how their savings are being protected and grown over time.

Why this matters now

As the retirement industry in Namibia adapts to FIMA, the IPS is now central to how funds demonstrate governance and accountability.

It brings together regulatory requirements, investment strategy and member communication in a single document. For trustees, it provides a clear framework for decision making. For members, it offers visibility into how their financial future is being managed.

Members are encouraged to request and review their fund's IPS to better understand how their retirement savings are invested and what this means for their long-term outcomes. At Alexforbes Investments, we believe the IPS should be viewed as a practical governance tool that supports better investment decision making, clearer accountability and improved member understanding.

* ***Frederick Muller, Managing Director, Alexforbes Investments***

Namibia airport passenger movements rise 5.3% to 99,735 in May

Namibia recorded 99,735 passenger movements across its airports in May 2026, up 5.3% year-on-year despite a 2.4% decline from April, according to the Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA).

Passenger movements fell from 102,237 in April to 99,735 in May but remained higher than the 94,729 recorded in the corresponding month of 2025.

Hosea Kutako International Airport accounted for 81.9% of all passenger movements during the month, followed by Walvis Bay Airport (8.6%) and Eros Airport (5.2%).

"In absolute terms, a total of 99,735 passenger movements were recorded across airport terminals nationwide in May 2026, down from 102,237 movements registered in April 2026. Nevertheless, this represented an increase compared to the 94,729 passenger movements recorded in the corresponding month of 2025," the NSA said.

At Hosea Kutako International Airport, passenger arrivals declined 2.7% month-on-month to 40,496, while departures increased 3.6% to 41,213. Compared with May 2025, arrivals rose 5.2%, while departures edged down 1.1%.

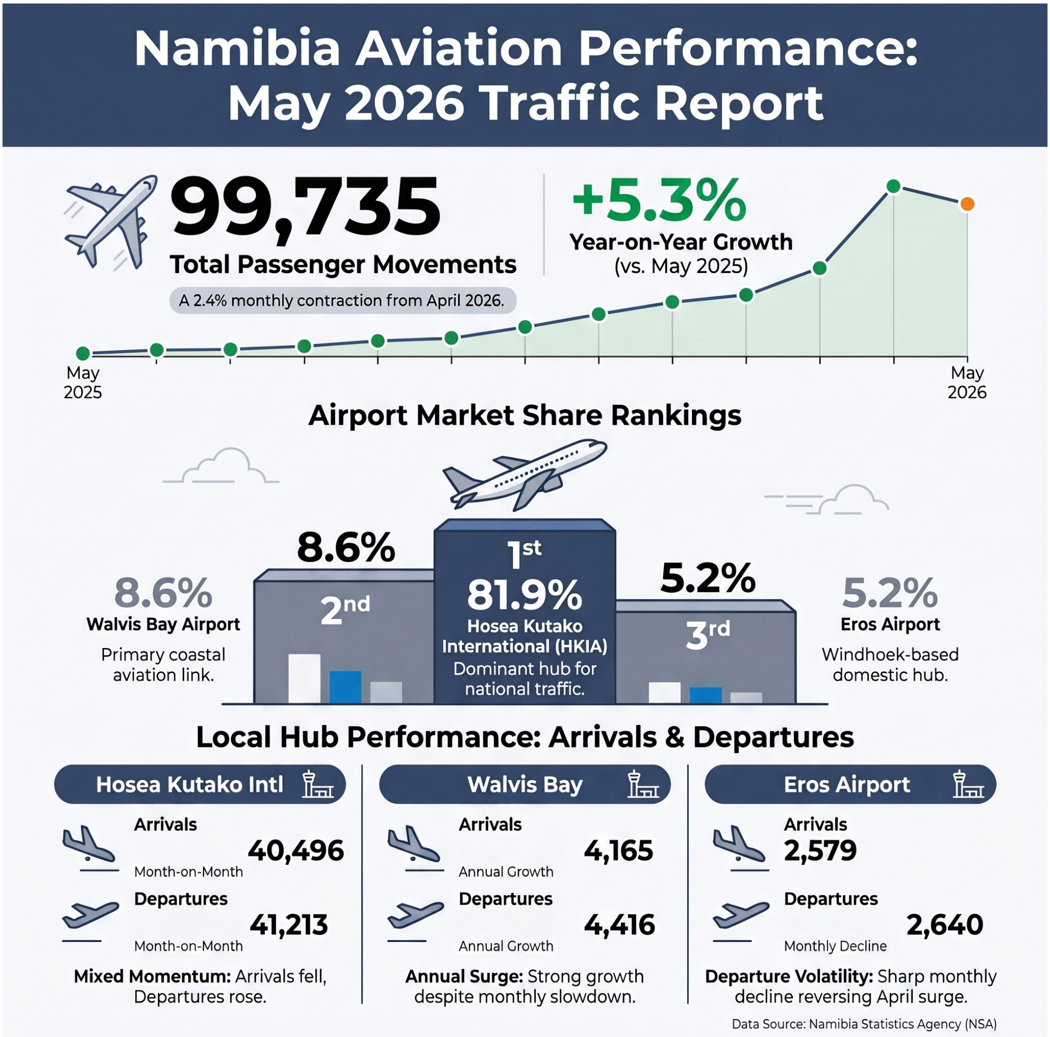
Walvis Bay Airport also recorded weaker activity on a monthly basis. Passenger arrivals fell to 4,165 from 5,342 in April, while departures declined to 4,416 from 5,209.

Despite the monthly slowdown, Walvis Bay continued to post strong annual growth, with arrivals increasing 21.5% and departures rising 10.3% compared with May 2025.

"The Arrivals Index for Walvis Bay Airport declined by 22.0% on a month-on-month basis in May 2026. Despite the monthly contraction, the index increased by 21.5% compared to the corresponding month of 2025," the NSA said.

At Eros Airport, passenger arrivals increased 8.7% month-on-month to 2,579, while departures fell 34.6% to 2,640, reversing the sharp increase recorded in April.

Despite the decline in monthly departures, Eros Airport recorded annual growth in both categories, with arrivals increasing 19.0% and departures rising 5.3% compared with May 2025. "The Departures Index for Eros Airport declined by 34.6% on a month-on-month basis in May 2026, reversing the 99.2% surge recorded in April 2026. Despite the monthly contraction, the index rose by 5.3% year-on-year compared to the corresponding month of 2025," the agency said.

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My position statement: Competition must triumph in Namibia's cement industry

By Jefta Macgregor Gaoab

I have followed with keen interest the proposed acquisition and merger of Schwenk Namibia by Whale Rock Cement.

The Namibia Competition Commission's (NACC) first public stakeholder engagement on the proposed acquisition of shares in Schwenck Namibia Pty Limited (Schwenk Namibia) by West China Cement (WCC) was held on 9 July 2020 in Windhoek, at the Commission's chambers.

A second stakeholders' conference on the same matter was held on 5 June 2025 at Protea Hotel in Windhoek. I attended both in person, participated actively, and on each occasion stated my objection to the proposed acquisition and merger clearly and without equovocation.

On both occasions, NACC, drawing on stakeholder input and its own analysis, objected to the proposed acquisition and merger. It gave sound reasons for doing so.

The Ministry of Mines and Energy plays a pivotal role as custodian of Namibia's natural resources and must ensure that these resources are explored, developed and utilized responsibly, in a manner that grows and sustains the Namibian economy for the benefit of its people.

This cannot be overstated. NACC, by contrast, is an independent statutory body established under the Competition Act, 2003 (Act No. 2 of 2003), mandated to promote and safeguard competition in the Namibian economy for the benefit of consumers, businesses and the country as a whole.

> "The Minister is well aware of the consequences of his actions, and history will judge both him and those whose interests are served by his use of Section 49.

In fulfilling this mandate, NACC weighs consumer welfare, legal certainty, competition law, consumer welfare, public interest and market concentration.

Having considered public and stakeholder input, NACC reached its conclusion and formally objected to the proposed acquisition and merger of Schwenck Namibia by Whale Rock Cement.

I am confident that the Honorable Minister Amutse was briefed on NACC's position, and equally informed of public's objection.

Allow me to place this in context. In the Vitol matter, a different sector (petroleum) NACC originally prohibited fuel retailer Nasan Energies from procuring fuel from global energy trader Vitol for five years.

This was a strict condition attached to Nasan's acquisition of 53 Engen and Shell service stations, intended to prevent excessive market concentration, given Vitol's already substantive share of the wholesale market.

The same Honorable Minister Amutse on this condition, citing unfamiliarity with Vitol's ties to Namibia, a curious admission from a Minister who ought to be fully across the affairs of so strategic a portfolio.

Despite clear warnings of market concentration (and the risk of monopoly pricing, the Honorable Minister invoked section 49 of the Competition Act to overturn the prohibition of the merger, attaching conditions of his own.

Those conditions amount to little more than a smokescreen and carry scant weight against NACC's original findings. It remains uncertain whether the promised jobs will materialize, while it is factual that the acquisition and merger will entrench a dominant market position bordering on monopoly.

What, then, is left for NACC to monitor going forward? The Minister is fully aware of the implications of his decision, and it is difficult to see how this serves the best interest of NACC or Namibian consumers.

Following the Vitol/ Nasan matter, the first instance of the Minister overturning NACC's prohibition, he went on to overturn the prohibition of the Ohorongo Cement–Cheetah Cement merger as well.

Whose interests is the Minister serving? Clearly not Namibia's, and clearly not NACC's considered position. NACC may speak confidently of the Minister's statutory powers to overturn its decisions, and I note the change in its tone on this point compared to its own earlier findings. History, however, will judge these matters in due course.

It is on record that NACC prohibited the proposed acquisition of Schwenk Namibia by Whale Rock Cement on two separate occasions.

What, then, changed following the

appointment of Honourable Minister Amutse? One is left to wonder whether he alone is fully versed in Section 49 of the Competition Act, and whether his predecessor simply lacked the same command of it.

The Minister is well aware of the consequences of his actions, and history will judge both him and those whose interests are served by his use of Section 49.

My position remains that competition must prevail in Namibia's cement industry, and that no provision of the Competition Act should be invoked to serve narrow interests at the expense of the Namibian nation.

The Minister is not above the law. Every institution and individual, the President, senior government officials and the judiciary must remain open to scrutiny and accountability in the national interest.

As I have done on previous occasions in opposing this merger and acquisition, I maintain that position, even as the saying goes, "when the wind changes direction, what was hidden becomes visible."

That said, the exercise of such discretion does not place the decision beyond criticism or debate.

I continue to believe that the Commission's original decision better safeguarded competition, protected local industry, and promoted Namibia's broader economic interests.

Respectfully, I remain unconvinced that the reversal serves those objectives.

Therefore, my position statement is that competition must triumph in Namibia’s cement industry above everything else.

***Jefta Macgregor Gaoab, Otavi Resident**

U.S. ends routine visa services at Windhoek embassy, shifts processing to South Africa

The United States will stop processing routine visa applications at its embassy in Windhoek from 1 August 2026, with Namibian applicants required to travel to South Africa as Washington restructures its visa operations across Africa.

Under the new arrangement, routine U.S. visa services for Namibian citizens and residents will be transferred to the U.S. Consulates in Cape Town and Johannesburg.

The U.S. Department of State said the move forms part of a broader realignment of visa operations to regional hubs aimed at strengthening security screening, improving efficiency and aligning resources with U.S. national interests.

"Effective August 1, 2026, routine visa appointments will no longer be offered at the U.S. Embassy in Windhoek, Namibia. Routine U.S. visa services for Namibian citizens will be provided at the U.S. consulates in Cape Town and Johannesburg," the Department said.

Namibian citizens and residents seeking U.S. visas on or after 1 August must book appointments and pay visa application fees through the U.S. consulates in Cape Town or Johannesburg. According to the Department of State, the regional hub model is intended to strengthen national security by promoting more consistent screening, vetting and adjudication standards while improving operational efficiency.

The Department said similar visa processing arrangements have already been implemented in several African countries and parts of Europe.

The changes form part of the Trump administration's broader efforts to streamline U.S. government operations and strengthen border and national security.

The Department said the realignment would not affect the operational status of the U.S. Embassy in Windhoek, which will continue carrying out its diplomatic, consular and bilateral functions.

The U.S. government said guidance is being provided to applicants affected by the changes ahead of the transition on 1 August.

Beyond the signatures: What the new Namibia China partnership actually means

By Dr. Penny T. M. Uukunde

Diplomatic visits are often remembered for photographs, ceremonies and signatures. Yet their true significance lies in what they reveal about the direction of a relationship.

President Netumbo Nandi Ndaitwah's state visit to the People's Republic of China was therefore about far more than the nine cooperation documents signed.

It marked the evolution of a relationship that has matured over more than three decades into one centred on industrialisation, human capital and shared economic development.

The visit culminated in the elevation of bilateral relations from a Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative Partnership to a China Namibia Community with a Shared Future for the New Era.

While diplomatic terminology can appear technical, such language carries considerable political weight.

It reflects a relationship built on sustained political trust, long-term cooperation and strategic alignment rather than transactional diplomacy.

For Namibia, this recognition is significant. For China, it represents confidence in a reliable African partner whose strategic importance continues to grow within an increasingly multipolar international system.

The symbolism surrounding the visit was equally important. President Nandi-Ndaitwah deliberately chose China for her first state visit outside Africa, signalling the importance Namibia attaches to the relationship. Equally, the relationship has enjoyed sustained high level engagement from China over recent years, demonstrating that the partnership continues to receive attention at the highest political levels. Diplomacy is often communicated through protocol as much as policy, and both countries used this visit to demonstrate mutual respect and long term commitment.

> **"The Economic Partnership for Shared Development establishes a broader framework for coordinating future investment and economic cooperation.**

Perhaps the greatest achievement of the visit was not the number of cooperation documents signed, but the philosophy that connected them.

For many years, Namibia has exported significant quantities of uranium and other minerals while much of the higher value processing, manufacturing and technology remained elsewhere. During the visit, President Nandi Ndaitwah articulated a position that has increasingly become central to Namibia's development agenda: natural resources alone do not guarantee prosperity unless they generate industries, skills and employment within the country itself.

This message was reflected throughout the cooperation documents.

The Economic Partnership for Shared Development establishes a broader framework for coordinating future investment and economic cooperation. Rather than supporting isolated projects, it creates space for long term planning between both governments and encourages investment that contributes to Namibia's structural transformation.

The Green Minerals Cooperation reflects the changing realities of the global economy. Namibia possesses uranium, lithium and rare earth minerals that are increasingly indispensable to clean energy technologies, while China possesses globally recognised strengths in manufacturing, processing and industrial production. The opportunity therefore lies not simply in extracting minerals, but in creating more value within Namibia through processing, technology transfer and industrial development.

Importantly, this represents cooperation rather than confrontation. Namibia is not rejecting foreign investment; it is seeking deeper participation in the value chain alongside its international partners.

Equally significant are the agreements relating to Human Resources Development and Technical and Vocational Education and Training. Industrialisation is ultimately driven by people. Engineers, technicians, artisans, machine operators and skilled professionals form the foundation upon which every successful manufacturing economy has been built. Investment in human capital ensures that future industries are supported by a workforce capable of sustaining them.

The Paired Hospital Cooperation Mechanism expands cooperation beyond economics into healthcare, allowing institutions to exchange expertise, strengthen professional training and improve service delivery. Development is increasingly understood as multidimensional, recognising that healthy populations are fundamental to sustainable economic growth.

The cooperation between China Media Group and the Namibia Tourism Board similarly reflects the growing importance of people-to-people exchanges. Tourism depends not only on infrastructure but also on visibility, cultural understanding and international confidence.

Increased cooperation in media and tourism has the potential to strengthen Namibia’s profile within one of the world’s largest outbound tourism markets.

Meanwhile, the protocol allowing the export of fresh Namibian table grapes into the Chinese market demonstrates diplomacy delivering practical outcomes. Such protocols require extensive technical cooperation on phytosanitary standards, inspections and market access before products can reach consumers. For Namibian farmers and exporters, this represents a tangible commercial opportunity rather than a symbolic announcement.

The cooperation documents covering Infrastructure and Industrial Development provide the enabling environment within which all other ambitions can succeed. Reliable infrastructure reduces production costs, improves logistics, supports regional integration and creates conditions under which private investment becomes commercially viable.

Taken together, these initiatives reveal a coherent development strategy rather than a collection of independent agreements. Minerals require processing. Processing requires infrastructure.

Infrastructure requires skilled people. Skilled people require education and healthcare. Market access requires trade protocols. Tourism requires connectivity and visibility. Each document supports another, forming an integrated framework for long term development.

Equally important is what this partnership communicates to the wider international community.

Namibia has not chosen exclusivity. It continues to engage constructively with Europe, the United States and other development partners while simultaneously deepening cooperation with China. This reflects a confident and increasingly sophisticated foreign policy that seeks to maximise opportunities through diversified partnerships rather than dependence on any single relationship. For development partners, this approach should be viewed not as competition but as complementarity. Namibia’s objective remains consistent across all partnerships: investment that creates employment, builds domestic capability, transfers knowledge and supports inclusive economic growth.

The success of this visit will not ultimately be measured by communiqués or ceremony. It will be measured by implementation.

If these commitments lead to expanded industrial capacity, increased skills development, stronger institutions, new investment and greater value addition within Namibia, then this visit will be remembered as an important milestone in the country’s economic transformation.

For China, the visit reaffirmed a trusted relationship with a politically stable African partner possessing globally strategic resources. For Namibia, it demonstrated that diplomacy can move beyond managing bilateral relations towards actively shaping national development.

That may ultimately prove to be the visit’s most enduring achievement.

Govt allocates N$10m to food and cash for work programme

The government has allocated N$10 million to launch a new Food/ Cash for Work Programme aimed at providing temporary employment and income support to vulnerable households while creating community infrastructure in rural areas.

Speaking at the 2026 Annual Rural Development Progress Review and Planning Workshop on behalf of the Minister of Urban and Rural Development, Deputy Minister Evelyn Nawases-Taeyele said the programme was introduced in response to rising socio-economic challenges, particularly high unemployment.

"For the first time this financial year, we have allocated N$10 million for the Food/ Cash for Work Programme. This investment is important, especially considering that Namibia's official unemployment rate stands at 36.9%, while 44.1% of young Namibians aged 15 to 34 are unemployed. Although this programme is not a permanent solution to unemployment, it provides immediate income support, creates community assets and strengthens resilience among vulnerable households," she said.

Nawases-Taeyele said the ministry would continue advocating for increased funding to expand the programme and extend its benefits to more communities.

She noted that rural development remained a national priority, with 50.5% of Namibia's population residing in rural areas, according to the 2023 Population and Housing Census.

The Deputy Minister called on regional councils to improve project implementation, strengthen accountability and ensure development funds translate into tangible improvements in people's lives.

"Every delayed project and every unspent development dollar is a missed opportunity. Public resources are entrusted to us to improve lives, not to remain unused. Public trust is earned through action, accountability and results. The days of business as usual have come to an end. Going forward, performance matters," Nawases-Taeyele said.

The Annual Rural Development Progress Review and Planning Workshop serves as a national platform to assess progress in rural development, identify implementation challenges and develop strategies to improve service delivery.

The workshop also forms part of the ongoing review of Namibia's National Rural Development Policy and Strategy, which is intended to strengthen rural development planning and improve the delivery of development programmes across the country.


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