



**Speech by**  
**Honourable Uahekua Herunga, MP**  
**Minister of Environment and Tourism**  
**At the**  
**Desert Dinner, Monday, 28 October 2013**

Thank you, Master of Ceremonies.

It is nice to see you all again. I trust that your two days of adventure between the Windhoek Welcome event and tonight's dinner have been rewarding!

During the Pre-Summit Adventures and Two Days of Adventure, many of you had a chance to visit our national parks, protected areas and conservancies. Tonight, we share this stage in Pajero Canyon with the amphitheatre that nature created and the Namibian nation is protecting.

Pajero Canyon is part of the Dorob National Park, one of our nations's most recently proclaimed National Parks. The Dorob National Park is in turn part of a vast protected area that stretches from the Kunene River in the north to the Orange River in the south. That is border-to-border, non-stop conservation in action.

It is also conservation with many purposes. It includes multiple use areas where events such as this can be held, and other areas that are strictly off limits, such as breeding grounds for the endangered Damara tern.

Through innovative approaches, working with NGOs, and embracing communities and conservancies, my Ministry has been successful in having more than 44% of our country's landmass under some sort of conservation management.

Tonight, as you absorb this beauty, we ask you to be our partners in conserving these protected areas. Through tourism, we have increased employment and training opportunities for people living in rural areas. This in turn has encouraged them to take a more active role in protecting wildlife, as it is these wild animals and these stunning landscapes that draw visitors to Namibia.

It is a partnership that works for local communities, tourism enterprises, and wild life conservation for the Ministry of Environment and Tourism. It also works for you and your guests.

Namibia is a country of authentic experiences with local people and cultures, and wildlife that is flourishing under our protection.

I hope that you will continue to be inspired by Namibia's remarkable success story. I also hope that it leads to strong partnerships and prospects for the future with Namibia's tourism industry and conservation communities.

I wish you all a lovely evening and a good Summit.