



Official Statement

By

Honourable Uahekua Herunga, MP
Minister of Environment and Tourism

At the occasion of the

*Adventure World Travel Windhoek
Welcoming Event*

26 October 2013, 16H00

Parliament Gardens

Director of Ceremonies;
H.E. Dr. Hifikepunye Pohamba, President of the Republic of the Namibia;
Hon. Ministers, Invited Dignitaries and most importantly, Delegates of
the Adventure Travel World Summit 2013;
Distinguished Invited Guests;
Members of the Media;
Ladies and Gentlemen
(All protocol observed)

Thank you, Director of Ceremonies.

It is with great pleasure that I echo the sentiments expressed by my colleague the Minister of Foreign Affairs – Welcome to Windhoek, Welcome to Namibia, Welcome to Africa and Welcome to a Summit that we trust you will remember forever.

After the Namibian delegates left Switzerland, they returned home to form *Team Destination Namibia*, a team of 72 people from the public and private sectors, who have been working together in synergy for over a year, preparing for your arrival. For me, this partnership is one of the defining things of the Summit – we have pooled the strengths and the resources of our public sector, our private sector, our NGO's and conservancies, to make this Summit happen. More than any other industry, tourism must be a partnership, and in preparation for this Summit, we have certainly demonstrated how powerful such a partnership can be.

The opportunity to host the 2013 Adventure Travel World Summit has acted as a catalyst to examine ourselves, and has triggered a new positive energy in the tourism industry, which is already the second largest contributor to GDP and creator of jobs in Namibia.

The build up to today has seen a flurry of activity, including city-wide clean up campaigns; Women in Tourism events; Adventure Connect events attended by hundreds of people; and regular media coverage – all indications of the pride that we Namibians take in our country – and the eagerness to show it at its very best. Although not every Namibian can participate in the Summit, I guarantee you that everyone in Namibia knows it is happening and understands why.

This Summit is possible because established and emerging tourism businesses in Namibia rose to the challenge to become enthusiastic partners in *Team Destination Namibia*. We have also received strong support from Namibia's corporate community, including First National Bank, Namibia Breweries, and Standard Bank, and from your hosts tonight, the City of Windhoek. Our partners in the public and private sector actively practice the principle that *tourism is, indeed, everyone's business*.

It is my wish that Namibia will capture your imagination, that you will take home wonderful memories of our Big and Little Five, our endless horizons, our culture, our cuisine, our hospitable people and our great adventures. But not only that, I hope you will leave inspired by the partnerships that you see at work in our country.

And we certainly hope that you will invest in us, by spreading the word about Namibia to your friends, your family, your clients and by encouraging them to visit.

I wish you all a good Summit.