



POLYTECHNIC OF NAMIBIA

WELCOME REMARKS

BY

PROF TJAMA TJIVIKUA

RECTOR: POLYTECHNIC OF NAMIBIA

ON

THE OCCASION OF THE HAND OVER OF THE SPONSORSHIP FOR
THE BOOK PROJECT ON THE LEGACIES OF A COLONIAL TOWN
BY THE FNB FOUNDATION

ON

15 APRIL 2014

11:30

POLYTECHNIC HOTEL SCHOOL

Director of Ceremonies, Prof Sampson Umenne

Chairperson of the FNB Foundation, Mrs. Jane Katjavivi

The Dean of the Faculty of Natural Resources and Spatial Sciences, Mr
Lameck Mwewa

Senior Management and Staff from the Faculty of Natural Resources
and Spatial Science

Distinguished Invited Guests

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

I welcome you on behalf of the Polytechnic of Namibia to this special event, the handing over of the Sponsorship for the Book Project titled “Legacies of a Colonial Town”. Let me extend a warm welcome to the **Chairperson of the FNB Foundation, Mrs Jane Katjavivi**, whose organisation is the sponsor of the Book Project, which is part of an ongoing project in the **Department of Architecture and Spatial Planning** called “**Legacies of a Colonial Town**”. The project goes back to 2012, when the Department of Architecture (now Department of Architecture and Spatial Planning) was approached by the **British Council in London**, through the **Directorate of Arts at the Ministry of Youth, National Service Sport and Culture**, to develop an exhibition on Namibia's architecture and design for the **2012 International Architecture and Design Showcase in London**.

This project was coordinated by Mr Phillip Lühl, a lecturer at the Department of Architecture and Spatial Planning and the concept for the Namibian exhibition was developed in collaboration with colleagues in the Department of Architecture, and some local architects and institutions.

It is now history that the exhibition received international acclaim in London and won the top prize, the Silver Pigeon Award, for the best National contribution to the event. Our Architecture and Spatial Science department now has the honour to prepare the design for the prize for this year's international Architecture and Design Showcase. Well done and congratulations once again.

This was a phenomenal achievement for a recently established Department of Architecture as well as the Polytechnic. In short, the department was established 2010 at the request of the Office of the **Prime Minister and Ministry and Education** to the Polytechnic, following extensive consultations with the sector driven by stakeholders, especially **Kerry McNamara** and the late **Hans-Eric Staby**. Today, we are especially proud to graduate a number of students in Architecture, and are planning post-graduate studies as well. The Department was grateful to the British Council for seed funding it availed, and in order to ensure the development of the content for the London exhibition within a few months, the seed funding was complemented by a generous grant from the Directorate of Arts.

The word architecture originates from Greek, meaning “**chief builder, carpenter or mason**”. Over the years, architecture has **not only transformed the building and the city, but also the role and status of architecture and human creativity**, as well as **civilisation. Architecture and its associated fields** – general architecture, interior architecture, landscape architecture, drafting and design – are important in the art and science of designing buildings and **(some) non-building structures**, from **macro-level** (urban design, landscape architecture) to the **micro-level** (construction details and furniture). It is therefore

important that a university of science and technology offer such an important discipline.

Following the remarkable international approval the exhibition received in London, it was only logical that the work of this calibre and its success be shared with the local audiences. Hence, the exhibition was staged at the **National Art Gallery in Windhoek in January 2013**, and a second time at **SOWETO market in Katutura** as part of the "**Land Matters in Art**" project in March of the same year. Around these local staging three public debates were organised, which opened a lively discourse that exposed the huge challenges ahead for Namibia to overcome the architectural and urban spatial legacies of Apartheid planning and segregation, that continue to haunt and structure everyday lives of the people.

We gather here today in anticipation of the final stage of the project, namely the compilation of the research process and documentation of the exhibitions as well as public debates in the form of a book publication. This book, with the same title as the exhibition, while it will **provide a historical perspective to the architectural and urban spatial planning in a colonial town**, but more importantly, it should also **rekindle our consciousness to move from a colonial paradigm to a more human right-based planning**, which invariably should lead us to inclusive cities of the future. The book will provide the base for further debate, and calls for further and more in-depth research.

Therefore, a book of this nature will not only speak to the reader interested in architecture or urban issues alone, but more importantly it is directed towards a more general public in the same way the exhibitions were. It will be **useful for primary and secondary educational purposes**, where there is a need to **advance critical thinking of learners rather than them absorbing and regurgitating mere dry historical facts**. Furthermore, it might be a **good introduction for the culturally and socially interested visitor to Namibia as well as for “cultural diplomacy” outside of the country**.

Last but not least it will be a milestone in the work of the Department of Architecture Spatial Planning, and will lay a strong foundation for excellence in teaching, research and service to society.

Director of Ceremonies

It is appropriate that at this point I express our deepest appreciation to Mrs Katjavivi, who is a close friend of the Polytechnic, for the involvement of her organisation in this project. Just a few months ago, I was at a similar occasion where she had sponsored the Polytechnic's Women in Engineering Solar Lamp Project. This does not take away the fact that the FNB Foundation has over the years been part of the support for the Cultural Week of the Polytechnic, an event that has become an annual feature of the institution and our city. It is clear that the Foundation keeps a keen eye on and promotes social and cultural issues within our country, which the bedrock of any society.

Today, **Madame Katjivivi**, again the Polytechnic is, indeed, indebted to the Foundation for the financial support of **N\$45 000** you have provided to this **unique project which will promote unity and harmony**, as well as the **field of architecture and spatial planning, in our country**.

The funding from the Foundation will be complementing that of our main funding partner of the exhibitions in London and Windhoek, the Directorate of Arts that has assured funding for the book. However, the funding from Foundation will be used for the **graphic design** and proof-reading in order to ensure a **publication of high quality** with the necessary **visual and editorial professionalism**. The funding will also help in the **dissemination campaign for the book**. Then again the most exciting and highly commendable initiative of the Foundation in this project has been the indication that it would like to **fund 250 extra copies of the book for distribution to Namibian school libraries**. This can only help create awareness in the youth of the historical and future developments of our architecture and urban design space. It will be a spark in the minds of the youth for interest in architecture and spatial design.

Finally, I would hereby like to extend our sincere gratitude to the **FNB Foundation**, now and also to the **British Council**, the **Directorate of Arts**, the **Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA)**, and all the other supportive people and institutions that have been involved right from the development of the exhibition and its display at different locations and participation in debates to making this book a reality.

I would also like to recognise and thank the Department of Architecture and Spatial Science for participating in this project; however, special thanks go to Mr Phillip Lühl who has been the driving force behind this project. I have no doubt that he will see this final part of the project to succeed and thus I am looking forward to its publication.

I thank you