



Welcoming Speech by Mr. Ali Ipinge, Chief Executive Officer, Road Fund Administration (RFA) and Vice President of ARMFA, at the occasion of the official Opening of the ARMFA - Southern Africa Focal Group (ASAFG) Meeting.

Date: Wednesday, 30 January 2019

Hilton Hotel, Windhoek

Minister of Finance, Honourable Calle Schletwein

Ministry of Works and Transport, Permanent Secretary, Mr Willem Goeiemann

Chairperson of the ASAFG Focal Group, Eng. Wallece Mumba

Chief Executive Officers, Southern Africa ARMFA Focal Group Member Countries

Chief Executive Officer, Roads Authority, Mr Conrad Lutombi

Chief Executive Officer, National Road Council, Mr Eugene Tendekule

Chief Executive Officer, Motor Vehicle Accident Fund, Ms Rosalia Martins-Hausiku

Director of Ceremonies, Ms Patricia Keeja

Distinguished invited Guests

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning,

1. It gives me a great pleasure to deliver the welcoming remarks at the 17th ARMFA FOCAL GROUP (ASAFG) MEETING. This occasion is a unique one as it brings together key stakeholders in the road sector, ARMFA Secretariat, and fellow Chief Executive Officers and officials from the Road Funds of Southern Africa Focal Group member countries, under the befitting theme: ***“Sustainable Road Infrastructure: Impact on Regional Integration and Free Trade in Africa”***.
2. The African Road Maintenance Funds Association (ARMFA) has come a long way since its establishment in 2003, Libreville, Gabon. Since then ARMFA continues to contribute to continental integration, and enhance trade and economic growth between African countries, through the advocacy of roads interconnectedness between African countries. The Association has grown from 18 Road Funds in 2003 to 34 member

countries' Road Funds to date, who are actively involved and participate in driving and implementing the agenda and objectives of the Association.

The objectives, of ARMFA is as follows:

- To promote a Network for exchange of experiences and information on good practices in the financing of road maintenance in Africa.
 - To promote and strengthen ties between Road Maintenance Funds in Africa.
 - To strengthen capacities in the preservation of existing road infrastructure.
 - Provide support to the development and expansion of road infrastructure.
 - Promotion of sound management of road maintenance funds.
 - To promote an efficient public/private partnership – best conditions for the mobilization of resources for road maintenance.
 - To strengthen the sustainability and the harmonious development of Road Maintenance Funds.
3. Further, ARMFA is instrumental in identifying and sharing best practices with African Road Funds, in the quest to ensure revenue sustenance, and identify innovative methods of revenue collection. Windhoek and RFA Namibia is privileged to be the host of the 17th ASAFG Meeting and subsequent ARMFA AGA/AGM as from 10 to 16 March 2019 at the coastal town of Swakopmund. The FOCAL group should capitalise on this opportunity as all member countries of ARFMA will assemble in Namibia for the first time, and in the Southern African sub region. Therefore, the road developmental needs of the sub region have an added advantage to be heard, while hosting the audiences of the ARFMA leadership.
4. The 16th ARMFA AGA/AGM was hosted in Addis Ababa Ethiopia were 10 resolutions were adopted. Amongst these resolutions, central to continental reintegration was that ARMFA should pursue and expedite process for registration of ARMFA as a specialised Agency of the African Union (AU), and to push for the development of a Road Management Policy at AU level. Upon realisation of this resolution ARMFA will cement its position as amongst Africa's key arms in the economic enhancement,

through its mandate of road funding, road maintenance and development, which will lead to making an impact in the improvement of trade between nations, people to people and improvement of the socio-economic conditions of the African people.

5. The ASAFG Meeting, scheduled for this week will give the Southern Africa Focal Member Countries an opportunity to build on the themes and activities that were identified last year, as well as enable us to look into the achievements made at the Focal Group level and identify new themes that will be presented for adoption at the ARMFA AGA/AGM in Swakopmund.
6. As per our annual and regular interaction we have learned that challenges of road infrastructure provision amongst member countries varies from one road fund to another, but we remain weaved together by the strength of these uniqueness and common interest of promoting a road network that will improve regional integration and enhance trade.

It is my conviction that our tenacity will drive us towards achieving fruitful deliberation, and I therefore hereby welcome you to the ASAFG Meeting, and to our beautiful City of Windhoek.

I THANK YOU