



## **ERONGO REGIONAL COUNCIL**

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### **MEDIA RELEASE**

**10 July 2024**

#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

To: All Media houses

#### **MEDIA STATEMENT ON ALLEGED EXPIRED TINS OF FISH IN THE ERONGO REGIONAL COUNCIL WAREHOUSE, ERONGO REGION.**

Reference is made to a misleading video circulating on social media that tins of fish meant for the drought relief programme in Usab location at the town of Karibib, Karibib Constituency, which was meant to assist the vulnerable poor communities in this difficult time have expired and were thrown away.

1. First and foremost, the Erongo Regional Council (ERC) would like to state that information is false. We therefore confirm that the tins of fish in stock have not expired. In fact, the tins will only expire in 2026. The latter can be confirmed against the same consignment of tins of fish left in the warehouse for distribution. It must also be made clear the shelf life of tinned fish is 5 years from the production date.
2. ERC also confirms that the 127 tins of fish in question were only damaged in handling by a folk lift. This, although undesirable is a normal logistic occurrence in any commodity handling process.
3. Hence, according to Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), when this occurrence happens, a certified Health Inspector is called in to inspect the products, determine the extent of the damage, declare the damaged products as “not fit not for consumption” and remove them before they spoil other products by way of disposing them immediately, as a precautionary measure. This is not the first time that such a drastic measure has been taken and it does not mean that the products have expired.
4. We, however, regret to inform you that it appears like the handling of this damaged tin of fish seems to have been handled recklessly from the warehouse to the dumping site. It has been

confirmed with the ERC that the Health Inspector who removed the tins of fish from the warehouse, did not take these products directly to the dumping site. Instead, he took them to the premises of the Karibib Municipality where they were collecting all other similar products destined for the dumping site. This is where the Town Council employee out of curiosity spotted the damaged tins of fish, took videos and shared them on social media with incorrect information.

5. This misleading allegation smacks of political propaganda and the shared video is disturbing and confusing to beneficiaries as it indirectly insinuates that the government is feeding them expired food, which is devoid of any iota of truth.
6. Although we encourage members of the public to report any anomaly observed during this food distribution, we equally advise that they refrain from politicizing drought relief food assistance and recklessly sharing wrong information that would instil fear and confusion among beneficiaries.
7. The Erongo Regional Council recommits to fervently provide a clean distribution of drought relief food assistance, noting the laid protocols in executing this noble undertaking.

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