

AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

Namibia Monthly Briefing January 2020

Namibia Summary 22 January 2020

The ruling South West African People's Party (SWAPO Party of Namibia) loses two regional council by-elections in mid-January as an opposition legal challenge to the results of the 26 November presidential election begins in the Supreme Court. Icelandic fishing company Samherji exits Namibia as the 'Fishrot' defendants fail to have their arrests ruled unlawful. A Chinese company is set to acquire a majority stake in Ohorongo Cement. Namibia's current account narrows substantially in the 2019 third quarter. Inflation rises slightly to 2.6%. In ARC's January security review, Namibia remains virtually immune from global terrorism and conflict, and is relatively safe in terms of criminal activity.

SWAPO loses two important by-elections ...

Voters are continuing to punish the ruling **South West African People's Party (SWAPO Party of Namibia)** for the economic malaise affecting the country, amid perceptions that corruption and fraud by a well-connected elite is occurring on an increasing scale. SWAPO lost two of the four constituency by-elections held on 15 January to replace regional council members who had resigned so as to be eligible to become SWAPO members of parliament (MPs) in the **National Assembly (NA)** after the 27 November legislative and presidential elections (see *ARC Briefing Namibia, November, December 2019*). The contests were the first test of SWAPO's popularity since the elections and the results demonstrate continuing political discontent, pointing to the ruling party suffering further losses in the nationwide 14 regional council and local authority elections taking place later this year. Local political commentator **Ndumba Kamwanyah** said based on the outcome of the by-elections, the voters have sent a very strong message to the ruling party that "*they are not happy with the status quo*".¹ He added that several socio-economic issues such as unemployment and the "*Fishrot*" corruption scandal (see below) had dented the voters' confidence in the ruling party. If no solution to these and many other socio-economic challenges is found, SWAPO will find it hard to convince voters across the country to vote for its candidates in the upcoming regional and local authority elections, according to Kamwanyah. However voter turnouts were low, and SWAPO seized on this to explain its defeats.

The by-elections took place in the **Walvis Bay Urban, Khomasdal, Keetmanshoop Urban, and Gobabis** constituencies.² In Walvis Bay, one of two independent candidates standing, **Knowledge Iipingge**, won with 1,636 votes, 46% of the total 3,593 votes, defeating SWAPO candidate **Sirie Topulathana** by just over 300 votes in a four-horse race. Turnout was just 15.5%. Iipingge becomes the new **Erongo Region** councillor, replacing its former chair, **Hafeni Ndemula**, who caused the vacancy by stepping down in December. Iipingge joins **Kennedy !Haoseb** of the **United Democratic Front (UDF)** as one of the two non-SWAPO representatives on the seven-member council.

Iipingge was endorsed by **Panduleni Itula**, the independent presidential candidate who stood against President **Hage Geingob** (2015-present) in the November elections (see *ARC Briefing Namibia December 2019* and note below). SWAPO lost despite Namibia's founding president, **Sam Nujoma** (1990-2005), campaigning on behalf of Topulathana. The constituency is home to many of Namibia's roughly 16,000 fishing industry workers, several thousand of whom lost their jobs as a direct result of the catch quota manipulations allegedly carried out by former fisheries and marine resources minister **Bernard Esau** and his associates (see *ARC Briefing Namibia December 2019*). In

¹ The Namibian, 17 Jan 2020.

² Namibia News Digest/Namibia News Agency, 16 Jan 2020; The Namibian, 17 Jan 2020, 7 Jan 2020.

Keetmanshoop, the regional capital of the southernmost and least densely-populated **||Karas** region, **Landless People's Movement (LPM)** candidate **Maxie Minnaar** defeated SWAPO's **Festus Shilimela** even more emphatically. She gained 1,958 out of a total 3,556 votes (a 55% majority) on a relatively high 30.8% turnout, 600 votes more than Shilimela (1,306 votes), and replaces former veterans affairs deputy minister **Hilma Nicanor**. Minnaar said that her priority would be to secure the provision of land to the landless, especially those living in informal settlements:

"The development and empowerment of our communities in our region and constituency is my number one duty." ³

SWAPO did retain both **Khomasdal**, a **Windhoek** suburb, on an 8.2% turnout, and **Gobabis**, the regional capital of the eastern **Omaheke** region, on a 17.3% turnout. SWAPO's **Samuel Angolo** won 1,227 (58%) of the 2,104 votes cast in **Khomasdal**, defeating candidates from the LPM, **Popular Democratic Movement (PDM)** and the **South West African National Union (SWANU)**. In **Gobabis**, **Augustinus Tebele** won 1,409 votes for SWAPO, treble the number gained by the next-placed candidate from the LPM.

Correction: In *ARC Briefing Namibia December 2019* we misspelled **Panduleni Itula's** name due to an oversight, for which apologies are offered.

... as a legal challenge to the presidential poll result kicks off

The **Supreme Court** on 17 January began hearing a legal challenge to November's presidential election and Chief Justice **Peter Shivute** said the court will deliver a judgement by 6 February.⁴ **Panduleni Itula** is spearheading the application to set aside the election result and rerun the poll within 30 days.⁵ He is supported by applicants from four opposition political parties: **Mike Kavetora (Rally for Democracy and Progress (RDP))**, **Henk Mudge (Republican Party)**, **Epafrans Mukwiilongo (Namibian Economic Freedom Fighters) (NEFF)**, **Ignatius Shixwameni (All People's Party) (APP)** ⁶ The largest opposition party, the PDM, has not joined the action.

The applicants maintain that the **Electoral Commission of Namibia's (ECN)** use of electronic voting machines (EVMs) unequipped with a verifiable voter paper audit trail (VVPAT) compromised the election outcome. **Itula** had launched a last-minute, unsuccessful legal bid in late November to have both the presidential and NA elections delayed so this could be resolved; the present application is not seeking to set aside the NA poll results. In the hearing's first day, Advocate **Jeremy Gauntlett** claimed there had been deliberate non-compliance by the ECN with the provisions of Section 97 of the **2014 Electoral Act** in using EVM's without a verifiable paper trail facility in elections.⁷ The respondents in the case are the head of state, the urban and rural development minister, attorney general, the ECN and its chairperson, **Geingob** in his capacity as SWAPO's presidential candidate, along with all the political parties and their leaders that participated in the elections. The applicants maintain that the decision by former urban and rural development minister **Charles Namoloh** in October 2014 that the parts of the Electoral Act requiring a verifiable paper trail for EVMs would not be implemented with other sections was inconsistent with Namibia's constitution and therefore invalid. **Namoloh** was safety and security minister at the time of the elections but failed to be re-elected as an MP. During a rebuttal of these arguments by the senior council acting for the respondents, **William Mokhare**, **Shivute** commented that "*a fundamental difficulty*" on his part was that parliament had ordained that EVMs could be used in elections, subject to there being a voter paper trail for votes. The decision not to implement that part of the law requiring a paper trail effectively undid what the legislature decided, he added.⁸

³ The Namibian, 17 Jan 2020.

⁴ The Namibian, 20 Jan 2020, Namibia News Digest/Namibia Press Agency, 17 Jan 2020.

⁵ The Namibian, 30 Dec 2019.

⁶ The Namibian, 30 Dec 2019.

⁷ Namibia News Digest/Namibia Press Agency, 17 Jan 2020.

⁸ The Namibian, 20 Jan 2020.

Fishrot company Samherji exits Namibia ...

The **Icelandic** seafood company accused of being at the heart of the so-called “fishrot” scandal is selling off its Namibian assets and will exit the country entirely (see *ARC Briefing Namibia December 2019*). Samherji's acting chief executive, **Björgólfur Jóhannsson**, confirmed the exit in a 17 January statement.

“Samherji is currently de-investing its operations in Namibia but that will take some time. The process will be conducted in close dialogue with relevant authorities and in line with international standards and law.”⁹

According to extensive documents leaked last year by whistleblower **Johannes Stefansson**, a former Samherji manager in Namibia, the firm paid substantial kickbacks to Namibian politicians and officials engaged in questionable transactions worth up to N\$2.5 billion (\$174m). Former chief executive **Thorsteinn Már Baldvinsson** resigned in November after the corruption scandal became public, and the company intends to start implementing a corporate governance and compliance system to combat fraud later this year.¹⁰

Meanwhile, Esau and his fellow five accused – former justice minister **Sackerius ‘Sacky’ Shanghala**, former **Investec Asset Management Namibia** managing director **James Hatuikulipi**, a son-in-law of Esau’s **Tamson ‘Fitty’ Hatuikulipi**, senior Investec employee **Ricardo Gustavo** and **Hangeneni Investment Holdings** administrator **Pius Mwatelulo** – have filed an appeal in the Supreme Court to overturn an end-December ruling by the **Windhoek High Court** that declared their bid to be released from police custody “*not urgent*”. The six had sought to have their arrests on 27 November declared unlawful on the grounds that the arrest warrants were invalid.¹¹ But acting judge **Kobus Miller** found their application did not meet the requirements to be heard urgently and ordered the case to be struck from the rolls, and in addition ordered them to pay the other side’s legal costs. According to court documents filed on 3 January, Esau and his co-accused want the Supreme Court to review the High Court ruling and “*correctly decide the law*” to set a precedent for future urgent cases where there is implication of personal liberty.

An appeal hearing date has not yet been set; however, the six were expected to apply for an ‘expedited’ date due to their continued imprisonment on remand, which they claim is an infringement of their rights and liberties, deteriorating personal circumstances and negative impact on their financial position and their families. They previously complained of being detained “*under horrible conditions*” at **Seeis Police Station**, but have now been moved to the **Windhoek Central Correctional Facility**.¹²

... and a Chinese firm is set to buy majority interest in Ohorongo Cement

China looks set to further expand its ownership of Namibian strategic economic assets, as **Schwenk Ziment International (SZI)**, the overseas affiliate of **Germany**-based **Schwenk Ziment**, is selling its 69.8% shareholding in **Schwenk Namibia**, which owns and operates the **Ohorongo Cement** plant near **Otavi** in north-central Namibia to **West China Cement (WCC)**. Ohorongo is the country’s only large, integrated cement plant and one of **Africa**’s most modern; it uses nearby limestone deposits and produces some 1m tonnes annually of high-quality product, mainly for domestic demand but also for exports to **Angola** and **Botswana**. Production began in December 2010 and Schwenk has invested some N\$3 billion (\$208m) to date. It is feared the transaction will result in Namibia importing increasing quantities of cement from China.¹³

The 3 January sale and purchase agreement is subject to the approval of the **Namibian Competition Commission (NCC)**, which has yet to review the transaction. Last July the NCC conditionally approved

⁹ The Namibian, 18 Jan 2020.

¹⁰ The Namibian, 18 Jan 2020.

¹¹ The Namibian, 13 Jan 2020, 27 Dec 2019.

¹² The Namibian, 13 Jan 2020.

¹³ The Namibian, 15 Jan 2020.

the purchase by a subsidiary of state-owned **China National Nuclear Corp. (CNNC)** of the 68.6% majority equity interest held by **Anglo-Australian** resources group **Rio Tinto** in the **Rössing** uranium mine (see *ARC Briefing Namibia July 2019*). Ohorongo spokeswoman **Frankleen Alberts** commented:

*"We confirm that Schwenk Zement International and West China Cement International entered into a sale and purchase agreement in respect of Schwenk Namibia shares."*¹⁴

Shaanxi Province-based WCC is listed on the **Hong Kong Stock Exchange (HKEX)** and in its 3 January after trading hours announcement the company said it will acquire the entire listed capital of Schwenk Namibia (1.5m cumulative redeemable preference shares) and a parent company shareholder's loan for an aggregate consideration of just over \$104m. Most of this is for taking over Schwenk Namibia's outstanding debt; as of 30 June 2019 loans extended by Schwenk Zement (including accrued interest) totalled \$84m. So the purchase price breaks down into \$85.0m for the loans and \$19.3 for the cement plant itself and related infrastructure.¹⁵

This is the second attempt by the German company to sell its equity stake to a Chinese company. At the end of June, the **Singapore Stock Exchange (SGX)** blocked a proposed sale to **International Cement Group (ICG)**. The reason given was that the acquisition did not comply with the SSE's listing rule for a "*very substantial acquisition (VSA)*". At the time, the Chinese firm disclosed that the SGX had noted that foreign exchange losses arising from the loan claim would remain in the *pro forma* financial statements. Since the losses would continue to affect the enlarged group's financial position, the SGX deemed that ICG did not have sufficient cash resources to fund the acquisition price, with no certainty that sufficient profits would be generated to service the loans (see *ARC Briefing Namibia July 2019*). It is presumed that after this transaction lapsed, Schwenk went out to find another buyer, although it has not confirmed this. However, it would seem that the accumulated debt by Schwenk Namibia and its inability to repay it are the driving force behind Schwenk's decision to divest. Unless the NCC decides to block the deal, it seems better placed to go through, as WCC appears to be in a stronger financial position than ICG while regulatory compliance by the HKEX is not as stringent as that of the SGX.

As the NCC approved the Rössing deal, it would seem likely to green light this transaction also, although it may impose similar conditions such as maintaining local employment and the Namibian supply chain. But a deal breaker could be the reduction of competition in the sector. WCC reportedly also owns **Whale Rock Cement**, which wholly owns **Cheetah Cement**, which mainly imports cement from China. Official trade statistics show Cheetah Cement imported 40,000 tonnes of cement clinker from China in 2018. The NCC mergers and acquisition department economist **Jowetha Andima** said that so far the commission has not approved the proposed transaction since it has not received a formal notification of it. She added that the NCC was not aware of the ownership structure of WCC.¹⁶

The sale to WCC marks a departure from Schwenk's original strategy of expanding local shareholding in Ohorongo. The Ohorongo website currently states:

"It is the intention of the company to be 100% Namibian owned and to transfer shareholding gradually to Namibian Institutions once the greenfield risks are over."

There is currently only one local shareholder, **Development Bank of Namibia (DBN)**. Other minority partners are **South Africa's Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA)** and state-owned **Industrial Development Corp (IDC)**. IDC also owns a minority equity stake in Rössing.¹⁷

¹⁴ The Namibian, 5 Jan 2020.

¹⁵ West China Cement Ltd, Discloseable Transaction Acquisition of Schwenk Namibia, 3 Jan 2020.

¹⁶ The Namibian, 15 Jan 2020.

¹⁷ Ohorongo Cement website, <https://www.ohorongo-cement.com/about-us/>

Current account deficit narrows in Q3 ...

Namibia's current account deficit shrank in the first nine months of 2019 compared to the same period of 2018, largely because of a reduced merchandise trade deficit caused by a fall in the value of imports. However, **Oxford Economics** economist **Gerrit van Rooyen** commented that the improved external balance "*believes an economy that remains deep in depression*".¹⁸ The narrowing of the external deficit stemmed mainly from low global oil prices, depressed consumer demand and reduced mining output.

Current account 2018-2019 (\$m, Jan-Sep) ¹⁹			
	2019		2018
	\$m	% change	\$m
Exports	2,903	-7.0	3,122
Diamonds	486	-24.3	642
Other mineral products	804	7.3	749
Manufactures incl processed fish	1,242	-6.3	1,326
Food and live animals	185	-19.2	229
Imports	3,906	-10.1	4,346
Consumer goods	1,053	-0.5	1,058
Mineral fuels and oils	677	-2.9	697
Trade balance	-1,003	-17.3	-1,213
Services (net)	-43	-	72
Travel (net)	166	-20.6	209
Primary income (net)	-130	-48.4	-252
Secondary income (net)	996	-7.6	1,078
of which SACU receipts	968	-8.2	1,054
Current account	-180	-40.8	-304

Exports declined to \$2.9 billion, a drop of 7% from a year earlier, but this was more than offset by reduced imports of \$3.9 billion, down by 10%. Accordingly, the merchandise trade deficit fell to \$1.0 billion, down by just under 17% compared to a year earlier. The value of consumer goods imports was virtually unchanged at \$1.1 billion, but oil and other fuel imports were down by 3%. The fall in imports more than offset a slump in diamond exports, which decreased by 24% to \$0.5 billion. This was to some extent mitigated by growth in the value of 'other' mineral products, primarily uranium, gold and zinc, which increased by 7% to \$0.8 billion. While services (net) recorded a negative balance compared to a positive one a year earlier, largely due to net travel receipts coming in lower, the deficit on primary incomes (net), which covers direct and portfolio investments, almost halved. Due to the 10% depreciation in the **United States (US)** dollar value of the Namibia dollar/rand during the first nine months of last year, secondary income, almost all comprising Namibia's share of **Southern African Customs Union (SACU)** receipts, fell by just under 8%. But in local currency terms, SACU receipts were 2% higher at N\$13.9 billion.²⁰

¹⁸ Namibia Economist, 13 Jan 2020.

¹⁹ Bank of Namibia, Quarterly Bulletin December 2019.

²⁰ Bank of Namibia, Quarterly Bulletin December 2019.

In Q3 2019, Namibia continued to import most goods from South Africa (67.3%), the **Eurozone** (5.5%), China and **India** (4.2% each). The major export markets were the Eurozone (26.2% - processed fish, beef, base metals and uranium), South Africa (25.3% - gold, live animals and beverages), Botswana (13.7, rough diamonds), China (11.7%, uranium).²¹

... and inflation rises fractionally

Year-on-year (y/y) inflation blipped up to 2.6% in December 2019 from 2.5% in November after four months in which inflationary pressures had continued to slacken. Even so, last year's annual inflation rate fell to 3.7%, down from 4.3% in 2018, and was still the second lowest level recorded by the **Namibia Consumer Price Index (NCPI)** since June 2015 (2.9%).²² The inflation differential between goods and services narrowed slightly. Price increases for goods averaged 2.0% (up from 1.7% in October), with those for services remaining at 3.4%. The chief factors restraining inflationary pressures remained weak domestic consumer demand and the relative stability in the foreign exchange value of the South African rand, to which the Namibia dollar is linked at par. In addition, the government kept domestic fuel prices unchanged for the fifth successive month in December, although there is a risk that price cap may have to be lifted, due to heightened **Middle East** geopolitical tensions since the start of 2020, which have driven up global oil prices. The benchmark Brent crude price spiked up sharply to \$71 per barrel in the immediate aftermath of the 2 January US airstrike on **Baghdad** that killed Major General **Qasem Soleimani**, the military commander who headed **Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard's Qud Force**. Brent crude subsequently stabilised at around \$64 per barrel, although it rose slightly to \$64.85 in the week ended 17 January on the back of trader optimism generated by the mid-January signing of the **Phase 1 US-China** trade agreement.²³ A further escalation of current conflicts could cause the global oil price to spike up again, while **IJG Namibia** noted:

*"Another potential risk for the oil price is if [the **Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries**] OPEC goes ahead with the implementation of its plan to cut production by 500,000 barrels per day. Such shocks in the oil price will result in the Ministry of Mines and Energy increasing fuel pump prices for Namibians which will translate into higher transport inflation."*²⁴

The rand has continued to trade in a narrow band against the US dollar, and was worth \$1=R14.47 in mid-January. However, **Bank of Namibia** (central bank) data show that the annual average value of the Namibia dollar/rand depreciated by 8% against the dollar to \$1=R14.414 last year, compared to an average \$1=R13.234 for 2018.²⁵ This pushed up import costs, although weak consumer demand constrained import volume growth (see below).

While prices for seven of the 12 categories in the National Consumer Price index (NCPI) rose faster in December than in November 2019, these included only two of the four with the biggest weightings, transport (14.3%), alcoholic beverages and tobacco (12.6%). Y/y transport inflation accelerated to 2.0% from just 0.1% in November, although this was still a decrease of just under nine percentage points compared to a year earlier (10.9%). Vehicle purchase prices rose by 4.3%, up from 3.1% in November, while personal transport operating costs went up by 0.8%, compared to a 0.2% decrease in November. Alcohol and tobacco inflation went up to 3.2% from 2.7%, driven by a 5% increase in alcohol prices. In contrast, and despite the continued drought conditions affecting much of the country, food inflation (excluding beverages) slowed sharply to 1.7%, from 2.9% in November. Price rises for bread and cereals, the main food staple, slowed to only 0.2% (from 2.3% previously) and registered a 1.1% month-on-month decrease, while fruit and vegetable prices decelerated to 12% and 13% respectively.²⁶

²¹ Bank of Namibia Quarterly Bulletin December 2019.

²² Namibia Statistics Agency, National Consumer Price Index, December 2019.

²³ Oilprice.com (online), 17 Jan 2020, USA Today/Associated Press, 14 Jan 2020.

²⁴ IJG Namibia, NCPI-December 2019.

²⁵ Bank of Namibia, Quarterly Bulletin December 2019.

²⁶ Namibia Statistics Agency, National Consumer Price Index, December 2019.

IJG currently forecasts slightly reduced annual average inflation of 3.5% for 2020:

“The largest upside risk to this forecast is higher food costs and fuel prices. Although the northern and central regions received an encouraging amount of rainfall in December, large parts of the southern region are yet to receive their first rains. Food prices will likely increase if the country experiences another year of below average rainfall.”²⁷

Namibia security overview

Namibia remains virtually immune from global terrorism and conflict, and with only a tiny Muslim minority and that mainly originating from **Malaysia** and India, there is no local base for any potential jihadist activity. In 2018 Namibia ranked only 138th as measured by the **Institute for Economics and Peace’s Global Terrorism Index (GTI) 2019** along with 25 other countries where terrorism has no impact or are not included. There was no change in the score over 2017. This compares to South Africa, which was ranked 41st with a GTI score of 4.5 out of 10, just behind **Israel**, where the impact of terrorism is rated as medium.

With the exception of a brief armed uprising in 1999 by one small group of secessionists in **Caprivi** (now **Zambezi**) region, there has been no armed conflict within the country since independence. There is occasional low-level political violence during election campaigns. During the 28 November presidential and legislative elections, the Namibian police were reported to have fired tear gas and rubber bullets at supporters of the independent presidential candidate in northern Namibia (see *ARC Briefing Namibia, November*). So far, the military (**Namibia Defence Force**) (**NDF**) has steered well clear of any engagement in politics. However, before the elections the NDF announced the elevation of Namibia’s security level, after its observation of “*dangerous insinuations*” (which were not itemised) published on social media. In a post-election statement of 2 December, the NDF acting chief, Air Vice Marshal **Martin Kambulu Pinehas**, expressed his happiness that peace and stability had prevailed before, during and after the polls. But he added that the alleged threats made before the elections continued to be shared on social media.

*“NDF is particularly disturbed by declarations by some individuals that since their candidates did not win, they would resort to unconstitutional means such as assassination of the president, storming and burning of the **State House**, launching civil war, blocking of roads, and sabotaging of the government installations and national key points.”²⁸*

In the view of some political commentators, this suggested the military were preparing for a clamp down, had President Hage Geingob lost.²⁹

Namibia is relatively safe in terms of criminal activity, although as the economy has deteriorated in recent years and unemployment has soared, the incidence of muggings and burglaries has risen, with visitors, mainly tourists, often falling victim. The local media also regularly report murders, rapes and other incidents of personal violence. Namibia and Botswana are the only two **Southern African** countries given the rating of ‘*low criminality, high resilience*’ by **Global Initiative’s Africa Organised Crime Index Africa 2019**. Out of 65 countries rated, in terms of average resilience, Namibia is ranked 21st globally from the top with a score of 5.04 (out of ten, after **Cabo Verde, Mauritius, Botswana, Senegal, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Nigeria, South Africa, Ghana, Seychelles** and **Kenya**). In terms of criminality, Namibia is 51st, where the bottom rank is the least affected, with a score of 3.81 (where 1 is best). **Sao Tome and Principe** was rated as the country with least criminality, followed by Rwanda, Botswana, **Eswatini (Swaziland), Equatorial Guinea, Lesotho, Djibouti, Cabo Verde**, then Namibia.³⁰

²⁷ IJG Namibia, NCPI-December 2019.

²⁸ Institute for Economics & Peace, Global Terrorism Index 2019

²⁹ Institute for Economics & Peace, Global Terrorism Index 2019

³⁰ Enact, Organised Crime Index Africa 2019.

Planner

13 Feb 2020 **(Namibia) Statistics Agency**, January 2020 NCPI;

19 Feb 2020 **(Namibia) Bank of Namibia**, Monetary Policy Committee rate setting meeting

9-10 Mar 2020 **Abidjan (Cote d'Ivoire) Africa CEO Forum**;

1 Jul 2020 **(Africa) African Continental Free Trade Area** deadline for 90% tariff liberalisation;

2020 **(Namibia) Regional council and local authority elections**;

Chronology

22 Jan 2020 **Oshikoto Region (Namibia) Reuters. Mine Workers Union** assistant secretary-general **Paul Situmba** says more than 400 jobs are at risk as **Africa-focused copper miner Weatherly** is set to halt operations at its **Tschudi mine in Oshikoto Region** at the beginning of March;

22 Jan 2020 **Oshikoto Region (Namibia) The Namibian. Southern African Customs Union** receives approximately N\$2.5m (\$175,000) from the **United Kingdom** for the region's customs modernisation programme;

21 Jan 2020 **Windhoek (Namibia) Reuters. State-owned meat processing and marketing firm Meatco** is in talks with **Botswana** to import cattle amid a severe drought that has decimated local herds and threatens beef export deals with **China and Europe**;

21 Jan 2020 **Windhoek (Namibia) Mining Weekly. Australia-listed miner Deep Yellow's** board green-lights a prefeasibility study on the **Tumas uranium project in Namibia**, following a positive scoping study;

20 Jan 2020 **Windhoek (Namibia) The Namibian. Canada-based gold-prospecting and mining company Antler Gold Inc** enters into an agreement with **Rhombus Investments** to buy 75% of its gold exploration licence for a maximum consideration of NAD 3.3m (\$230,000);

17 Jan 2020 **Windhoek (Namibia) The Namibian. Iceland-based fishing company Samherji's CEO, Björgólfur Jóhannsson**, says he plans to withdraw the company from **Namibia** following the **Fishrot** bribery scandal;

15 Jan 2020 **Windhoek (Namibia) The Namibian. Anti-Corruption Commission** says it is investigating another law firm, **Ellis Shilengundwa Incorporated**, in connection with funds deposited into their bank account by the **National Fishing Corporation of Namibia** in the **Fishrot** scandal;

5 Jan 2020 **Windhoek (Namibia) Namib Times. China-based West China Cement** acquires **Namibia's largest cement manufacturing company, Ohorongo Cement**;

18 Dec 2020 **Windhoek (Namibia) AP. Independent presidential candidate Panduleni Itula** lodges a legal challenge at the **Supreme Court** to order a re-run of the November elections as soon as possible, charging that they were unfair;

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