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MEDIA RELEASE

Ref: No. 280**Pick n Pay Namibia says good bye to Roelf van Tonder – a “father” to many****WINDHOEK, 30 NOVEMBER 2017**

He is not only regarded as one of the greatest and most respected leaders Pick n Pay (PnP) Namibia – a subsidiary of the Ohlthaver & List (O&L) Group – has ever seen, but for many the departure of PnP National Manager, Roelf van Tonder leaves behind the emptiness of a “father” which he has been to many during his service in the group over the past 21 years.

As he embarks on an early retirement, with 30 November 2017 scheduled as his last day of work, van Tonder will be remembered as a true leader and a significant contributor to PnP Namibia’s growth, especially that of PnP stores in the north of the country. Van Tonder: “My journey dates back to 1996 when I was appointed as Store Manager at the then Model Woolworths in Tsumeb. In 2008 I was appointed as Regional Manager North and in 2015 as National Manager for PnP Namibia.”

It is his ability, according to his peers to work with people and lead them to significant successes that has van Tonder stand out among the rest. O&L Group Executive Chairman, Sven Thieme: “Roelf is synonymous with Pick n Pay, especially our northern regions, where his many long years of service has contributed greatly not only to PnP but certainly the entire O&L Group and its people. Roelf has passionately served the Group for 21 years and truly lived our purpose by developing and growing people to become successful leaders in their respective roles.”

Van Tonder says his greatest appreciation for the O&L Group, is the culture that adds significant value to its people. Van Tonder: “People are most important for the O&L Group. I have always appreciated how so much time and resources are invested in the development of its people. And I take with me the O&L Values which has become such a big part of my life – not only in my profession, but also personally. The past two decades in the O&L Group, and PnP was a journey full of growth opportunities, not only for myself, but I was also very inspired to grow everyone around me.”

PnP Namibia Managing Director, Norbert Wurm regards the departure of van Tonder as one of the saddest good byes since he took up the MD chair. Wurm: “With words it is difficult to describe someone like Roelf, who through his many long years of service has contributed so much to PnP, the O&L Group and its people. For many of us, and I include myself, he has been a father-figure and has enabled so many of our people to grow and to become successful leaders. If he was the father, we were the family. PnP was (and is) in his blood. He lived our purpose of ‘*Creating a Future and Enhancing Life*’ throughout, connecting to it fully on a personal level. His main goal was always to grow and develop ‘his’ people – by that he meant all of us. Even if frustrations sometimes resulted in his emotions getting the better of him, this was always driven by the love and passion he had (and has) for PnP and our people.”



For van Tonder, his greatest highlight, was the road he walked with PnP store managers in the north of Namibia. He has been a mentor and leader, and contributed significantly to the development and upbringing of store managers. One of those are Oshana store manager, Rachel Ekongo. She has been working under Van Tonder's mentorship and guidance since the year 2000. Ekongo: "He made me feel so important, and had the unique ability to celebrate my successes, in the midst of my failures. I will miss his entering the store, and greeting and hugging everyone. He is one of the most humble people I know. Someone who respects everyone regardless of your skin colour and ethnicity, or background. And his open door policy, and care for my and my family's well-being has strengthened not only my journey as a leader, but also my ability to love and inspire everyone around me."

PnP Katima Mulilo store manager, Petronella Samwele says van Tonder is a very straight forward man. Samwele: "I have always been impressed with the interest he has shown in the lives of his employees, and mentees. He knows his people, not only professionally, but also on a more personal level. He is a giver, great listener, and I stand in awe at his passion for other people, and his compassionate nature, which brings so much comfort in times of darkness. It is really hard to say good bye to him. He is a father, an outstanding leader. I wish we all had leaders like him. He is my friend - a man who brought life to the northern crew."

Some of the highlights of his entire life, van Tonder attributes to the world the O&L Group has opened up for him. Van Tonder: "I had the opportunity to share a plate of food with our Founding President, Dr Sam Nujoma and found myself in the company of King Shimmy at some point in my life. These are all moments I will take with me forever. I will always be thankful to PnP and O&L for giving me a life and I will never forget the team that made me and held me up, when I was down. O&L is embedded in my heart and therefore I will always feel part of the O&L family."

Roelf will go into fulltime farming, enjoying this next season in his life with his wife, children and grandchildren.

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Pick n Pay (PnP) Ondangwa Store Manager, Rosina Amakali (left) is one of the PnP store managers who has developed under the mentorship and leadership of Roelf van Tonder. His greatest highlight during his journey at PnP and the O&L Group, was the road he walked with PnP store managers in the north of Namibia. He has been a mentor and leader, and contributed significantly to the development and grooming of store managers. This picture was taken at the recent farewell gathering held for him at the Ondangwa store.



Pick n Pay (PnP) Oshana Store Manager, Rachel Ekongo (right) has been working under Van Tonder's mentorship and guidance since the year 2000. "He is one of the most humble people I know. Someone who respects everyone regardless of your skin color and ethnicity, or background. And his open door policy, and care for my and my family's well-being has strengthened not only my journey as a leader, but also my ability to love and inspire everyone around me."



Van Tonder (far left) with some of his colleagues during a recent outing.

