

Good morning to all the Honourable Dignitaries, Sail Africa Heroes, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great honour to present the World Sailing 11th Hour Sustainability Award trophy to the Sail Africa Youth Development Foundation. It is an extraordinary privilege, as a South African, to discharge this responsibility.

In 2018, World Sailing and 11th Hour Racing joined forces to create the World Sailing 11th Hour Sustainability Award. It celebrates the effective execution or ongoing delivery of high-impact, highly replicable sustainability initiatives aligned with the World Sailing Sustainability Agenda. On behalf of the International Federation, I would like to recognise and thank 11th Hour Racing for their generous continued support to these awards. I would also like to thank 11th Hour Racing for all they do for the sailing community and maritime industries to advance solutions and practices that protect and restore the health of our ocean. They certainly live the values and are really making an impact.

We can be incredibly proud as countrymen of everyone at Sail Africa for the phenomenal success in winning this significant global award. Past recipients are the Corpus Christi Yacht Club, the Royal Yachting Association and the manufacturer Starboard. Please note all these winners are very much Developed World leaders of the sailing community. Sail Africa steps up to join this illustrious group as the first ever winner from the Developing World. And it does so against the stiffest of competition.

In all there were 21 nominations from 15 countries. The judges were hard pressed to select 4 finalists which were then put to a vote of the sailing public. A record number of 42000 votes were cast. We wish to recognise and pay tribute to the calibre of the other nominations from around the globe and thank them for all the valuable the work they do.

Sustainability is measured by a number of yardsticks. Whatever reference you might choose sailing makes a contribution; such is the holistic nature of our sport. Given the crisis of climate change understandably most people's default mode is to think about environmental contributions as the most important yardstick. Sailing as a wind driven activity is certainly a leader on this measure, with little to no carbon footprint when on the water. But as members of the human race, we all have to admit, we are the root cause of the problem of securing a sustainable planet.

Education is paramount. This is the area where Sail Africa, in addition to all its other contributions to sustainability, excels.

Growing human capital is the most rewarding of vocational endeavours. However, it is not for the faint hearted. It takes hard work and commitment over extended periods. Many thousands of people hours have been invested in the success of Sail Africa's students since the organisation was founded in 2008 by Craig Millar. I am delighted personally that Craig is here with us today.

The excitement of a student's 'Ah ha' moment as the flood gates of knowledge open is the ultimate reward for the dedicated teacher. This is more than sufficient for passionate individuals immersed in the excitement of their student's voyages of discovery. Nevertheless, I would like to suggest, prestigious awards of recognition also have their role to play. They not only celebrate the committed selfless individuals who are changing the world for the better they publicise great works and hopefully inspire others also to become involved.

Based in Durban, the success of the programme has been felt across the country. Sail Africa's efforts at giving young South Africans opportunities in life have been widely recognised nationally. They have won the highly prestigious Jack Cheetham award for changing the lives of fellow South Africans through sport in 2016. This was quickly followed by the equally important Ethekewini Maritime Cluster Award for Empowering Youth in 2017.

We have listened to and heard wonderful accounts of Sail Africa's contributions this morning. In the interests of time, I will not repeat them now. But be assured all of these rich successes individually and collectively were instrumental in the voting for the Foundation winning.

As the first winner from the Developing World Sail Africa is an inspiration for others, no matter how modest their means, to get involved. By committing to sustainable

activities, sharing our experiences and supporting each other we can and will make a difference.

So, with this award Sail Africa's influence now extends globally and it joins hands with the many smaller sailing nations, especially in the rest of Africa, Oceania and the Caribbean. And with this inclusivity the World Sailing 11<sup>th</sup> Hour Sustainability Award takes a major step forward in the evolution of its history.

In 2026 something phenomenal happens on our Continent. For the first time in its 127-year history the International Olympic Committee will stage an Olympic event in Africa. The Youth Olympic Games takes place that year in Senegal. It is vital that Africa is strongly represented and essential that South African youth from all corners of our country have the opportunity to compete in the sailing events. There is no doubt that amongst many centres of excellence in our country Sail Africa will be a key platform offering a launching pad to fulfil the Dreams of Young People.

My heartfelt congratulations go to everybody involved in the Foundation, especially Nigel Milln, Chairman of Sail Africa, Jackie de Fin, Operations Director and Craig Miller the Founder. Their dedication to make the vision a reality and their commitment to helping people has changed the lives of so many.

To win Sail Africa had to capture the imagination of thousands around the world. By shining a light on the great work being done by smaller projects such as this the voting public, in it's wisdom, is saying there is no limit to what can be achieved. We look

forward in years to come celebrating many other successes such as Sail Africa's in many other parts of the world.

It is with great pleasure that I invite Nigel, Jackie and Craig on stage to receive the World Sailing 11<sup>th</sup> Hour Sustainability award for 2021.

Thank you!