



NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**BUDGET MOTIVATION SPEECH 2015/2016 FINANCIAL
YEAR FOR VOTE 03**

BY

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WINDHOEK

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**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,**

I rise to motivate budgetary allocations for Vote 03, National Assembly, for your consideration. Allow me, once again, to thank you all Honourable Members for the honour bestowed upon me by electing me as the Speaker of this August House. I further would like to thank Honourable Minister Calle Schlettwein and his entire team for the well grafted budget with an overarching theme of “*No Namibian must feel left out*”. Hon. Minister we subscribe to your notion of a “*Pro-poor, Pro-growth budget*”.

As we all know Namibia is a constitutional state, governed on the principles of separation of powers. Being the legislature and the representative of the people, we are compelled to work towards the prudent management and utilisation of limited financial resources at our disposal, leading to nation-building and sustainable socio-economic development, including poverty eradication.

The budget process and debate on the Appropriation Bill, is one of the most significant events for our nation. This process continues to foster a culture of accountability and transparency within the Government, as the electorate are enlightened on the benefits of the programmes and activities of the Government of the day.

During the past financial year, the National Assembly successfully implemented most of its operational activities as planned. An amount of *Thirty Six Million, Four Hundred and Ten Thousand Namibia Dollars* (N\$36, 410, 000) was allocated to the development budget.

**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,**

The Construction of the New Parliament Building

The proposed new Parliament Building was allocated an amount of *Twenty Five Million, Two Hundred and Thirty Thousand Namibia Dollars* (N\$25, 230 000). Due to a shortage of capital project experts at the Ministry of Works and Transport the execution rate did not meet the desired expectations. Notable progress has, however, been made in the 2014/2015 financial year in terms of the feasibility study and documentation. An amount of *Twelve Million, One Hundred and Eight Thousand, One Hundred and Seventy Namibia Dollars* (N\$12, 108,170) was paid to that effect.

Having said that, I wish to sincerely acknowledge and appreciate the tireless efforts of my predecessor, who started the process towards the construction of the new Parliament Building some years ago. We are all committed to the completion of this important milestone project within a reasonable timeframe.

During 2014/2015 financial year the renovation of SADC Parliamentary Forum Building received an allocation of *Five Million, Five Hundred and Fifty Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$5,550,000)*. The project did not commence as planned due to the fact that the recommended Tenderer was disqualified by the Tender Board. We therefore expect the Ministry of Works and Transport to re-advertise the tender in the very near future.

The construction of additional carports at the Parliament Building was successfully completed in the last financial year. I am pleased to inform you that we are in the process of finalising the installation of access control and security cameras in and around the Parliament Building. A wireless network (Wi-Fi) has also been upgraded and will soon be accessible to Members of Parliament and the Secretariat.

**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,**

Constitutional Oversight Role of the National Assembly

Regarding the operational budget, apart from the practical administrative activities of the Secretariat and the House, the Standing Committees have continued to conduct their oversight activities in different regions of the country. In line with its duties, National Assembly during the year under review considered thirteen bills of which four were passed without

amendments, eight with amendments and one referred to a Parliamentary Standing Committee. Ten motions were tabled of which three were agreed to, two were referred to a Standing Committee and three lapsed, while two were rejected. One Hundred and Forty Three reports of the Auditor General were tabled. *Thirty Nine questions were tabled and twenty nine replied to, while nine lapsed and one was withdrawn.*

“Taking Parliament to the People” is an important platform to engage the electorate on issues of national concern, including sensitising them on the legislative process. National Assembly participated in various trade exhibitions and numerous schools and tertiary educational institutions visited Parliament.

The renewable energy workshop by the Standing Committee on Economics, Natural Resources and Public Administration was conducted in April 2014, and the deliberations of this workshop should culminate in a Draft Bill on renewable energy in due course.

Notably, financial assistance to political parties represented in the National Assembly remains an item and represents **almost 21.44%** of the operational budget.

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,

Honourable Members,

The International Cooperation mandate

In relation to regional and international parliamentary relationships, Namibia successfully hosted the Executive Committee Meeting of the SADC-Parliamentary Forum in collaboration with the SADC-PF Secretariat. This is all in effort of promoting partnership and goodwill.

Study visits were also undertaken to other parliaments in Africa and internationally, to further strengthen inter-parliamentary relations. Here, it is important to note that the former Speaker was the President of IPU, whereas the Deputy Speaker was elected as one of the Vice-Presidents of PAP while I led the Namibian delegation to the Pan-African Parliament and served as its Vice-Chair of the Rules, Discipline and Privileges Committee. Equally important, a number of our Parliamentarians served on various international parliamentary bodies. Parliament also participates in various Parliamentary organisation activities, including PAP, SADC-PF, IPU, CPA and pays membership fees to these organisations.

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,

Honourable Members,

In cooperation with EU's Parliamentary Support Programme, a workshop on the development budget was conducted in September 2014. Members analysed **Two Hundred and Thirty Three** development projects contained in the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) and visited a significant number of these projects in our various regions.

**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,**

For the financial year 2015/2016, the National Assembly is requesting an amount of *Two Hundred and Nine Million, Five Hundred and One Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$209, 501, 000)* for both the operational and development budget.

This allocation consists of *One Hundred and Eighty Two Million, Eight Hundred and Sixty Three Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$182, 863 000)* for the Operational Budget and, *Twenty Six Million, Six Hundred and Thirty Eight Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$26, 638 000)*, for the Development Budget.

**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,**

May I now take this opportunity, to elaborate, on the funds required for both the Operational and Development Budget. With regard to the operational budget, the National Assembly has clustered its activities under two (2) main Programmes, namely; Legislative Management, Coordination and Support Services.

Programme 1: Legislative Management: (*Seventeen Million, One Hundred and Twenty Eight Thousand Namibia Dollars*) N\$17,128,000.

The aim of this programme is to provide leadership, guidance and specialised support in respect of Parliamentary proceedings and procedures, and related administrative services to the Presiding Officers and Members of Parliament. The programmes' activities include, among others, the timely and accurate processing of Session Papers, Legislation and production of National Assembly's Hansards.

Programme 2: Coordination and Support Services: (*One Hundred and Ninety Two Million, Three Hundred and Seventy Three Thousand Namibia Dollars*) N\$192, 373 000.

The aim of this programme is to provide, administrative support through proper financial management and optimal deployment of human resources, the provision of transport and legal advice to the Vote's

programmes and, training and capacity development for Members of Parliament and the Parliamentary staff members. Provision of relevant and up-to- date information, research, library and modern ICT services to Members of Parliament and the Secretariat.

Equally important is the need to strengthen capacity in the public relations division of our Parliament. Equally is the programme of taking parliament to the people. Moreover, the programme also renders on-going and effective services to the Standing Committees of the National Assembly in their quest to perform their Constitutional Oversight mandate.

Parliament will convene the Fifth Session of the Children's Parliament in 2016. This Session brings together four learners from each of the fourteen political regions to come and debate on issues that affect them and make recommendations accordingly.

May I now take this opportunity, to elaborate, on the funds required for the development of the SADC Parliamentary Forum House, the new Parliament Building and the Upgrading and Renovations to the current Parliament Building.

Namibia, as a host country to the SADC-Parliamentary Forum's Headquarters, has the obligation of ensuring that the Forum is taken care

of in terms of office accommodation in order to facilitate efficient and effective service delivery. Currently, the SADC-PF is housed in an old, dilapidated building, which needs extensive renovation. Hence, an amount of *Three Million, Seven Hundred and One Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$3,701,000)* is requested for this financial year to create a conducive working environment for SADC-Parliamentary Forum.

**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,**

As you are all aware, the current Parliament Building's office accommodation is inadequate, as it is not tallying with the number of seats of Members of Parliament, which increased as a result of the last Constitutional Amendments. Moreover, the envisaged creation of the Parliamentary Service Commission will also have an impact on the Secretariat's organisational structure, which will culminate into more office space being required.

Experience has proven that most of the new intake of Members of Parliament struggle with accommodation in Windhoek. We are therefore contemplating the addition of a Parliament Village to the proposed new Parliament Building. This village is intended to provide decent accommodation to those Members of Parliament that come from outside Windhoek on a temporary basis.

The provision of a Parliament Village for Members of Parliament is a norm practiced in South Africa and Botswana amongst other countries. The aspect of the village will certainly require further consultation with other stakeholders. I am convinced that you will accept our budget request, in order for us to fast-track the process of the construction of a new Parliament Building.

For the MTEF period from 2015/16 till 2017/18, estimates for the new Parliament Building are indicated in equal amounts of ***Twenty Million Namibia Dollars (N\$20,000,000)*** per each financial year. It should however be noted that the remainder of the required amount will be requested according to the progression of the phases of the Parliament Building project.

In light of the above, an amount of ***Twenty Million Namibia Dollars (N\$20,000,000)*** is thus requested for 2015/2016 financial year, to start with the preparatory earth work on the earmarked site, for the construction of the new Parliament Building. Whereas, an amount of ***Two Million, Nine Hundred and Thirty Seven Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$2,937,000)*** is requested for the purpose of designing a new water reticulation system so as to mitigate recurrent pipe bursts, water leakages and low water pressure due to the ailing condition of the current Parliament building. The new water reticulation system needs to be connected from the Parliament Building to the existing Municipal

connection points, which will call for the overhauling of other obsolete piping networks.

**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,**

In conclusion, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for your attentiveness and kindly implore you to approve the budget request of *Two Hundred and Nine Million, Five Hundred and One Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$209 501 000)* for Vote 3.

I thank you