



**Remarks on the Main Theme**  
***“Human Rights Abuses as Precursors of  
Conflict: Parliaments as Early Respondents”***

By  
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**Speaker of the National Assembly of the  
Republic of Namibia**

At

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**President of the IPU**

**The Secretary-General of IPU**  
**Fellow Speakers of Parliament**  
**Hon. Members of Parliaments**  
**Ladies and Gentlemen**

The struggle for the freedom and liberation of Namibia, was essentially to end the repression system of occupation imposed on our people, and to bring about an inclusive society. A society where people can determine their own destiny. The question of one's dignity and a democratic culture, brings about stability in society.

Communities would love to know, understand and appreciate that they are in charge of their own affairs, that they are consulted on how they would love to be governed, and that their opinions do matter in decision making.

It was in line with this thinking that the founding fathers and mothers of Namibia's independence, crafted a Constitution that upholds fundamental human rights and freedoms. These important rights are enshrined in Chapter 3 article 5 -25, and ensure that all Namibians are entitled to and enjoy basic human rights.

**Hon. Members,**  
**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Since our country's independence in 1990, we are governed by the rule of law and the three Organs of the State continue to strive to uphold the rule of law.

The Namibian Parliament continues to be the voice of the people. Being a bicameral parliament, the National Assembly is the principal legislative authority; whereas the National Council serves as the House of Review, ensuring that Bills passed by the Assembly are duly reviewed and are consistent with the Constitution. The Chairperson Hon. Margaret Mensah-Williams heads the National Council.

In countries where there has been lawlessness, Parliaments have often offered the only source of hope for the masses. Civil society and the media are very important partners of legislators in exposing human rights abuses and advocating for perpetrators to be brought to justice. We should therefore team up to ensure that the rule of law prevails and build long lasting institutions and systems in our various countries and regions.

**Hon. Members,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

As Parliamentarians, we have a duty and obligation to promote good governance so as to prevent or preempt conflict but also to serve as arbitrators when conflict does arise.

**Hon. Members,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

In conclusion, we legislators should take a strong stance against all forms of manifestation of human rights abuses. We should ensure that the perpetrators are brought to book. We should stand united against human rights abuses.

Equally important is that the lessons of the past involving human rights abuses should also be used to ensure that similar mistakes are not repeated in the future.

Therefore we welcome IPU's commitment to this subject, because IPU serves as a very important platform where our various parliaments share lessons and experiences on how to manage these challenges.

**I thank you for your audience!**