

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**VOTE 03: BUDGET MOTIVATION SPEECH
FOR 2019/2020 FINANCIAL YEAR**

BY

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SPEAKER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

WINDHOEK

WEDNESDAY 24, APRIL 2019

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

1. In terms of Article 63 (2) (a) of the Namibian Constitution, the budget process and debate on the Appropriation Bill is a constitutional requirement and is one of the most significant events in the Calendar of Parliament during any Financial Year. This process continues to foster a culture of accountability and transparency within Government, as the public has to be enlightened on the benefits of the programmes and activities of the Government of the day.

**Hon. Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members of the National Assembly.**

2. The National Assembly as the House through which the National Budget is tabled, debated and approved, has its own vote to motivate as a public institution. I therefore feel deeply honoured to introduce the budget allocation estimates for Vote 03 for the Financial Year 2019/2020 to this August House for your support and approval.

3. In the past years, we have had a difficulty trying to make staff of the Ministry of Finance to understand that the National Assembly and Parliament in general is not like any other OMA. What would be classified as ordinary travel additional to the core function in other OMAs is in our case, obligatory travel for oversight as our core mandate. However lately, the Ministry of Finance seems to have understood our plea and I would like to take this opportunity to encourage that spirit to continue!

4. Honourable Members, with your permission, I will briefly review the work of our institution during the past financial year. The past year witnessed the National Assembly, as the principle legislative authority in and over Namibia, discharging its constitutional responsibility. We are duty-bound to continue in our mission to uphold the Constitution as the fundamental law of our sovereign and independent Republic. This is to ensure freedom, justice and peace in making and repealing laws of national concern; ratifying and acceding to international agreements; and calling the Executive to account for its activities for the good governance of this country and its people.

5. One of the key functions of the Legislature is that of the Oversight Role entrusted with Parliamentary Standing Committees. The National Assembly has eight Parliamentary Standing Committees whose role as provided for in Standing Rules and Orders of the National Assembly is to oversee the work of various OMAs and SOEs. Their role extends to outreach activities in the form of public hearings and consultations with communities on Bills, Motions and Petitions in line with the principle of participatory democracy in the law-making process.

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

6. Allow me to highlight some of our achievements, pursuant to our Constitutional functions during the past financial year by briefly explaining how we spent the money that was allocated to the National Assembly in the Financial Year 2018/2019.
7. For the Financial Year 2018/2019, the National Assembly was initially *allocated* an amount of **One Hundred and Twelve Million, Five Hundred and Thirty-Eight Thousand Namibian dollar (N\$112, 538, 000.00)** of which a sum of **Five Million**

Namibian dollars (N\$5, 000, 000.00) was earmarked for the Development activities.

8. However, during the mid-term budget review, the development budget was reduced to *Three Million and Three Hundred Thousand Namibian dollars (N\$3,300, 000)*.
9. Out of the total amount of *N\$110, 838, 000.00* allocated, *One Hundred and Seven Million, Two Hundred and Sixty-Six Thousand Two Hundred and Thirty-Eight Namibian dollars (N\$107, 266, 238.00)* representing 97% was successfully utilised.

Table 1: Percentage budget execution: Operational versus development

% Budget execution for 2018/2019 Financial Year, Operational versus Development			
Budget description	Amount allocated N\$'000	Amount spent N\$'000	% spent
Operational	107,538,000	103,966,238	97
Development budget	3,300,000	3,300,000	100
TOTAL	110,838,000	107,266,238	

Figure 1: Detailed budget execution per Main Division

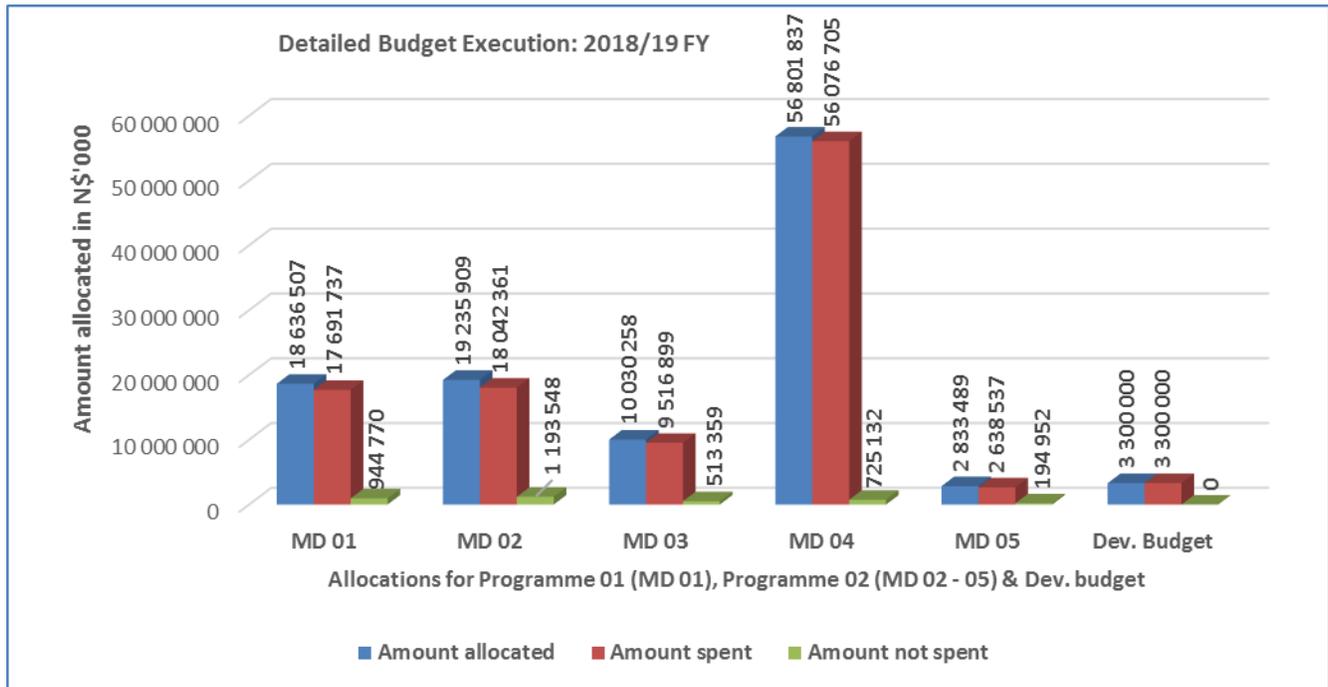


Figure 1: Note that amounts may differ from the MTEF book due to internal budget re-allocation

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,

10. With regard to the Operational Budget, the National Assembly has clustered its activities under two (2) main Programmes, namely;

- *Legislative Management which caters for one (1) main division; and,*
- *Policy Coordination and Support Services which accommodates four (4) main divisions.*

11. Programme: 1 Legislative Management (Main Division: 01)

9.1. An amount of *Seventeen Million Four Hundred and Twenty-One Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$17 421 000.00)* was allocated to this programme. The programme covers the functions of the Office of the Speaker, Deputy Speaker and Table Office. The aim of this programme is two-fold namely; to provide political leadership and guidance to the institution, as well as administrative support relating to Parliamentary proceedings and procedures.

The programme's activities include, among others, the timely and accurate processing of Session Papers, Bills and production of National Assembly's Hansard.

9.2. During the past financial year, the National Assembly considered **20 Bills** that have been translated into Acts of Parliament. These were, inter alia:

- *Micro-lending Bill;*
- *Repeal of Obsolete Laws Bill;*
- *Criminal Procedure Repeal Bill;*
- *Basic Education Bill;*

- *Public Enterprises Governance Bill;*
- *Public Service Amendment Bill;*
- *Allied Health Professions Bill;*
- *Nursing Amendment Bill;*
- *Medical and Dental Bill;*
- *Gaming and Entertainment Bill;*
- *Appropriation Amendment Bill;*
- *Combating of Trafficking in Persons Bill;*
- *Urban and Regional Planning Bill;*
- *Seed and Seed Varieties Bill;*
- *Social Work and Psychology Amendment Bill;*
- *Extradition Amendment Bill;*
- *International Cooperation in Criminal Matters Amendment Bill; and*
- *National Symbols of the Republic of Namibia Bill;*

9.3. These important pieces of legislation bring to the fore the commitment of both the National Assembly and the Government of the Republic of Namibia to seriously address issues of national concern.

9.4. In line with the provisions of Article 63 of our Constitution, during the past Financial Year, **eighteen (18)** international

instruments were tabled in the National Assembly for ratification. These included among others:

- *The ratification on the establishment of the International Solar Alliance;*
- *The ratification of the SADC Protocol on Environmental Management for Sustainable Development;*
- *The ratification of the Boundary Treaty between Namibia and Botswana;*
- *The ratification of the African Union Convention on Border Cooperation (Niamey Convention);*
- *The ratification of the SADC Protocol on the Facilitation of Movement of Persons;*
- *The ratification of the African Union Convention on Cyber Security and Personal Data Protection; and*
- *The Establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area.*

9.5. In making use of the democratic culture of our Chamber, Members introduced and extensively debated sixteen (16) Motions on issues that they strongly felt were of interest to the nation. Among these were:

- *Motion on the impact of under-resourced teachers on the quality of education in Namibia;*
- *Motion on the use of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) in our presidential, national, regional and local authority elections;*
- *Motion on value addition on all our extractive industries to stimulate employment and high foreign earnings;*
- *Motion to Transform SADC Parliamentary Forum into a Regional Parliament; and*
- *Motion on the formalization of the Informal Sector.*

9.6. During the period under review, forty-seven (47) annual and ministerial reports were tabled. One hundred and thirty-five (135) questions were asked with notice, while thirty-four (34) questioned were asked without notice.

9.7. The Office of the Speaker spearheaded important policy initiatives and interventions e.g. discussions between the two Houses of Parliament on how to take the Parliamentary Service Commission Bill forward and the finalisation of the draft Joint Rules which are now ready for tabling in this august House. The Office of the Speaker also successfully launched the Strategic Plan of the National Assembly in October 2018.

- 9.8. During the 2018/2019 Financial Year, the Speaker hosted his Chinese counterpart and this led to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two Parliamentary institutions. Some of the concrete results from that MoU was the donation by the Chinese Parliament of an outreach bus and the furniture and audio-visual electronic equipment for C1 conference hall which is currently under renovation.
- 9.9. The Speaker also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Global Head of Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) on behalf of the German Bundestag (Parliament of the Federal Republic of Germany) in the area of capacity building and other related activities as facilitated by KAS. The signing of that MoU paved the way for a Parliamentary delegation that visited Germany in February 2019 under the leadership of the Speaker. The aim of the visit of that parliamentary delegation (composed of Members from different political parties) was to concretize the activities in that MoU. That particular visit was to lay a foundation for a training and capacity development programme that will be running for approximately three years.

9.10. Furthermore, the Speaker hosted the SADC-PF Executive Committee Meeting in Windhoek as well as the Commonwealth Day. During the period under review, the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker also attended the 139th and 140th IPU Assemblies in Geneva and Doha respectively, as well as the Pan African Parliament Session in Johannesburg.

9.11. The close co-operation between the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) UK and the Parliament of Namibia that started in 2017 is still continuing. Some of you, Honourable Members, may be aware that recently, 11th-16th April 2019, we held a capacity building workshop for our Members of Parliament and staff which was co-hosted by our Parliament and the CPA UK Branch. This was a follow-up to three previous engagements, one in 2017 and two, the Public Accounts Committee and Constitutional and Legal Affairs Committee engagements in 2018. This programme is ongoing.

12. Programme 2: Policy Coordination and Support Services

10.1 The aim of this programme is to provide the following services: administrative support; research and information

publications; editorial services; information technology; Parliamentary Committee support and legal advice.

10.2. To enable the programme to perform the afore-mentioned crucial functions, an aggregate amount of ***Ninety-Three Million, Four Hundred and Seventeen Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$93,417,000.00)*** was allocated to this programme.

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

10.3. Programme 2 is sub-divided into four (4) main divisions namely:

- *Parliamentary Coordination and Support Services (Main Division 02);*
- *Information Services (Main Division 03);*
- *Committee Services (Main Division 04); and*
- *Legal Services (Main Division 05).*

10.3.1. *Parliamentary Coordination and Support Services*

10.3.1.1. The main aim of this main division is to provide administrative and financial support to the entire Vote's programmes. It accommodates the Office of the Secretary to the National Assembly and the overall administration that has wide-ranging services.

10.3.1.2. The Parliamentary Coordination and Support Services received a budget allocation of *Twenty-Six Million Five Hundred and Twenty Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$26,520,000.00)*, of which a reduced amount of *Three Million, Three Hundred Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$3,300 000.00)* was earmarked for the *Development activities*.

Hon. Members, you may be keen to know that we are striving towards achieving the aspirations of e-Parliament so that we can have a paperless parliamentary environment.

10.3.1.3. During the last financial year, the following notable developmental activities were successfully attended to:

- ✓ Repair on the aged sewerage line within the National Assembly's courtyard;

- ✓ Revamping and upgrading of the conference system in the Constitution Room;
- ✓ The procurement of power generator with a capacity of 80 kilo watts and Uninterruptible power supply (UPS) with a capacity of 60 kilo watts to mitigate the negative effect on the Chamber conference system in case of power outage; and the
- ✓ Partial completion of phase one of C1 Conference hall refurbishment.

10.3.2. *Information Services*

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

10.3.2.1 An amount of **Eleven million, Nine Hundred and Sixty-Nine Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$ 11 969 000.00)** was allocated to this main division for the provision of adequate information support relevant and up-to- date information, through research and modern ICT services to Members of Parliament and the Secretariat.

10.3.2.2 The provision of non-partisan and timely research services to Members of the National Assembly is a key function of this main division that contributes meaningfully to debates both in the Chamber and at other local, regional and international platforms.

10.3.2.3 The other mandate of this main division is to promote public knowledge on the role of Parliament and law making process to enable the public to understand the democratic process so that they can engage their elected representatives in a meaningful way.

10.3.2.4 The programme “*TAKING PARLIAMENT CLOSER TO THE PEOPLE*” is an important platform to educate the citizenry about the parliamentary process and engage them on issues related to democracy. To this end, the National Assembly continued conducting civic education in secondary schools, educational tours at Parliament and during local trade fairs.

10.3.2.5 During the period under review, public education was undertaken to sixteen secondary schools in Erongo and Ohangwena Regions where eight thousands nine hundred

and one learners (8901 learners) participated. At local trade fairs, the National Assembly was represented at the Annual Ongwediva Trade Fair and the Helao Nafidi Expo where a total of twenty-three thousand (23,000) visitors were recorded at the Parliament Stand.

10.3.2.6 These outreach activities have improved “*THE OPEN DOOR OF PARLIAMENT*” programme where 82 schools visited Parliament bringing in 3,226 learners. This is an increase from 71 schools in the Financial Year 2017/2018. This programme has strengthened the interaction between Parliament and educational institutions and we are currently devising a methodology to get the civil society deeply engaged with Parliament.

10.3.3 Committee Services

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

10.3.3.1 Parliamentary Committees are the backbone of Parliament and play an important part on the work of Parliament through their probing and oversight

functions. This is to ensure that Parliament is well-informed before making decisions of national significance. Without Committees, Parliament would have a diminished role among the citizenry.

10.3.3.2 The ultimate aim of this main division is to provide operational, administrative, secretarial and clerical assistance and guidance to Members of Parliament.

10.3.3.3 Apart from the practical administrative activities of the Secretariat and the House, the Standing Committees continued to conduct their oversight activities in the different regions of the country; especially with the view of assessing the implementation of capital projects in the regions.

10.3.3.4 During the 2018/19 Financial Year, a sum of **Fifty-One Million, Nine Hundred and Fifty-Eight Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$51,958,000.00)** was initially appropriated to Committee Services and it turned out that this amount was under estimated and this resulted in a **Six Million Namibian Dollars (N\$6,000,000) shortfall**. The under- estimation was caused *by an*

administrative error during the budgeting process. The National Assembly team wrongly filled one of the critical forms and the Ministry of Finance team did not pick it up. Both institutional teams concerned acknowledged this error at a later stage.

10.3.3.5 To arrest the situation, funds were re-allocated from other operational activities within the appropriated budget and this arrangement disrupted some of the planned Committees oversight activities.

10.3.3.6 The past year witnessed the National Assembly, as the principle legislative authority carrying out its constitutional mandate. One of the key functions of the Legislature is that of the Oversight Role entrusted with Parliamentary Standing Committees.

10.3.3.7 The Assembly has eight Parliamentary Standing Committees whose role as provided for in Standing Rules and Orders of the National Assembly is to oversee the work of various OMAs and SOEs. Their role extends to outreach activities in the form of Public Hearings and consultations with communities on Bills, Motions and

Petitions that are in keeping with the principle of Participatory Democracy in the law making process.

10.3.3.8 In line with their stated mandates, Committees carried out a wide range of activities both at local and international levels aimed at addressing specific issues and challenges the electorate is faced with.

10.3.3.9 A total of nine (9) Motions were referred to Standing Committees and dealt with. These were:

- Motion on Unskilled Youth
- Motion on service condition of truck drivers
- Motion of teenage pregnancy
- Motion on delay on government payment system
- Motion on the consumption of home brewed alcohol
- Motion on genocide remembrance day
- Motion on Genocide Lawyers
- Motion on the abnormally high incidence of suicide in Namibia and
- Motion on Possible Avenues to curtail the upsurge in Domestic Violence and Gender Based Violence cases in Namibia.

10.3.3.10 Consultations and public hearings with all relevant stakeholders were conducted in the regions with reports on the findings and recommendations tabled in this House. However, due to financial constraints, not all of the Motions mentioned were finalized during the previous financial year except for the first four (4).

10.3.3.11 Five (5) Public Hearings were conducted and two (2) Petitions were received. In addition, a total of forty-five (45) audit reports of all OMAs and some SOEs were reviewed by the Public Accounts Committee. Furthermore, eight (8) Performance Audit reports, assessing the performance of service provision in government institutions were also reviewed. Committees also undertook a number of oversight visits to various regions and a total of nineteen (19) reports were tabled in the House for discussion and for information.

10.3.3.12 For 2019/2020 Financial Year, Standing Committees will continue with the finalisation of all outstanding Motions during the current financial year, in addition to other activities they are mandated to undertake including attendance to international obligations.

10.3.4 Legal Services

10.3.4.1 The main objective of this division is to provide legal advice to the Office of the Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Secretary and Members of Parliament via Committee Services. An amount of *Two Million Nine Hundred and Seventy Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$2, 970,000.00)* was allocated to this main division during 2018/2019 financial year. The main division played a key role in the finalisation of the Draft Parliamentary Service Commission Bill and the drafting of the Joint Rules that would govern joint Sessions of both Houses.

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

11. As part of our international commitment and obligation, both the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker as well as some Members of Parliament attended various meetings of the SADC-Parliamentary Forum, the Pan African Parliament (PAP), the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) and the Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU).

12. The costs for attending to these obligations have since gone up because these organisations having become increasingly active over the past years which requires more resources.
13. These, Hon Members, are organisations the National Assembly subscribes annually to and are important in equipping Members with the necessary capacity and providing an in-depth experience through the exchange of views on operations of other Parliaments so as to improve our own systems. They also serve as another platform for Namibia to fulfil its regional, continental and global mandate.
14. In undertaking all these activities, budgetary constraints impeded the process of implementation which led to some activities such as motions being put on hold thereby delaying reporting to the House.

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

15. Having stated our past performance by highlighting some achievements and challenges, allow me to present the 2019/2020 budget for the National Assembly as follows:

16. For the Financial Year 2019/2020, the National Assembly has been allocated an amount of *One Hundred and Twenty-Six Million, Eight Hundred and Forty-Eight Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$126, 848, 000)* of which *One Hundred and Sixteen million, Eight Hundred and Forty-Eight Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$116,848,000)* are for the Operational Budget. While, Ten Million Namibian Dollars (ND10, 000, 000) has been allocated as Development Budget.

Table 2: Estimated budget allocation for 2019/2020 financial year

BUDGETARY ALLOCATION 2019/2020	Amount	%
Operational budget	116,848,000	92.12%
Development budget	10,000,000	7.9%
Total	126,848,000	

Table 3: Percentage operational allocations, personnel expenditure versus other operational activities

BUDGETARY ALLOCATION	Amount	Percentage
Personnel expenditure	85,367,000	73.1%
Other operational activities	31,481,000	26.9%
Total	116,848,000	

17. With regard to the Operational Budget, and as I indicated earlier, the National Assembly has clustered its activities under two (2) main Programmes, namely;

- *Programme 1: Legislative Management*
- *Programme 2: Policy Coordination and Support Services.*

Table 4: Operational Budget allocation by programme

BUDGETARY ALLOCATION 2019/2020	Amount	Percentage
Legislative Management	18,353,000	15.7%
Parliamentary Coordination & Support Services	98,495,000	84.29%
Total	116,848,000	

Programme 1: Legislative Management

18. An amount of *Eighteen Million, Three Hundred and Fifty-Three Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$18,353,000)* has been allocated to this programme. As indicated above, this programme is the one that drives the legislative agenda of Parliament as well as providing secretarial support to the Speaker and Deputy Speaker.

Programme 2

19. An amount of *Ninety-Eight million, Four Hundred and Ninety-Five Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$98, 495 000)* has been allocated to this programme. As indicated earlier, this programme is sub-divided into four (4) Main Divisions namely:

- Parliamentary Coordination and Support Services;
- Information and Computer Services;
- Parliamentary Committee Services;
- and Legal Services;

20. The budget allocations for this programme have to be shared among the above- mentioned four main divisions as illustrated below:

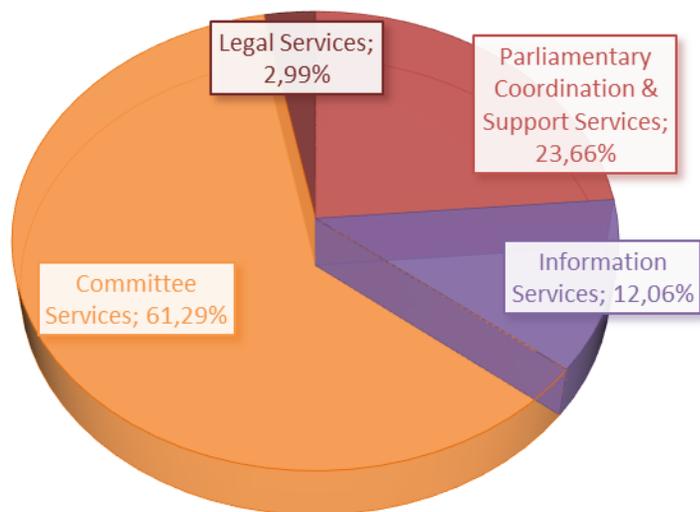


Figure 2: 2019/2020 budget allocations to different main divisions

20.1 Parliamentary Coordination & Support Services has been allocated *Twenty-Three Million, Three Hundred and Two Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$23, 302, 000.00)*. The aim of this programme is to provide administrative and financial support to the Vote's programmes as well as capacity development for Members of Parliament and Parliamentary staff.

20.1.1 The programme is also responsible for the upgrading and renovation of the aging parliament building and to achieve this objective, an amount of *Ten million (N\$10,000, 000)* has been allocated to the programme as development budget.

20.1.2 As we all know, Tintenpalast building though aging, will continue to accommodate both Members of Parliament and Secretariat staff and needs an ongoing revamp to make it habitable

20.1.3 It is also one of the most important heritage buildings to both our society and the tourism industry. It is our duty to safeguard our heritage for us to pass our historical legacy to future generations and, at the same time, to provide the present generation a connection to its past. However, the management of this heritage building becomes a tricky balance of legacy, authenticity and practicality. Whilst maintaining its 'façade' which makes it unique, some internal adjustments are permissible and this ongoing revamp will continue to tap more funds until such a time that a new Parliament building is built.

20.1.4 Thus, the funds estimated for this financial year will be used to finalize phase two renovations of C1 Conference hall and to upgrade the outdated conference system in this Chamber for the implementation of e-parliament.

20.2 Information Services

Information Services is allocated an amount of *Eleven Million, Eight Hundred and Eighty Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$11, 880, 000.00)* for the provision of relevant and up-to-date information, research, library and modern ICT services to Members of Parliament and the Secretariat. The ICT division is also involved in facilitating our outreach activities in addition to being a key player in our shift to e-Parliament in our desire to have a paperless Parliament.

20.3 Committee Services

Parliamentary Committee has been allocated an amount of *Sixty Million, Three Hundred and Seventy Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$60,370, 000.00)*.

20.4 Legal Services

This main division provides legal services to Parliament and its Standing Committees and it has been allocated an amount of *Two Million Nine Hundred and Forty-Three Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$2, 943, 000.00)*.

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

In conclusion, I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to you all and kindly implore you to approve the budget request of ***One Hundred and Twenty-Six Million, Eight Hundred and Forty-Eight Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$126, 848, 000) for Vote 03.***

I thank you!