

## NATIONAL COUNCIL



### OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Parliament Building, Private Bag 13371, Windhoek, Namibia  
Tel. (061) 202 8000 / 202 8111, Fax (061) 226 121

ENQUIRIES: T. Philemon/ I. Kooper  
Tel: (061) 288 2545/ 0811299735  
(061) 202 8049/ 0811661559

OUR REF.:

8/3/3/2

YOUR REF.:

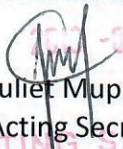
18 June 2018

#### MEDIA INVITATION

**SUBJECT: THE 3<sup>RD</sup> SoCATT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR 2-4 JULY 2018  
WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> SoCATT (Society of Clerks-at-the-Table) Africa Region, Professional Development Seminar is to be held from 2 – 4 July 2018 at the Safari Court and Conference Centre Hotel, Windhoek Namibia, under the theme; **Capacitating Parliaments towards Realising the African Agenda 2063 – the Role of Parliaments in the Knowledge Based Economy.**

The media is cordially invited to cover this event. Please see below, a short briefing note and programme breakdown for the duration of the seminar for your information.

NATIONAL COUNCIL  
Yours sincerely,  
  
Juliet Mupurua  
Acting Secretary



## ***Society of Clerks-at-the-Table (SoCATT) Africa Region***

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### **BRIEFING DOCUMENT**

#### **1. Introduction and Background**

The development agenda of SoCATT African region is aimed at improving the capacity of Parliaments to ensure the realisation of Africa's development strategy, Agenda 2063. SoCATT Africa Region hosts these development seminars annually as part of its Strategic Plan. The Society reviewed the first Strategic Plan in July 2015, and adopted a second Strategic Plan for the period 2015-2020. One of the key objectives of the Plan is to build the capacity of members of the Society in order to support Parliaments/Legislatures to deliver on their mandate. As part of the key activities, SoCATT organises Professional Development Seminars, Conferences and publishes papers presented in the Society's Journal. The Seminars are aimed at facilitating engagements, sharing information and developing knowledge in specific areas of the mandate of Parliaments.

#### **2. Overview of Seminar Theme: Role of Parliaments in a Knowledge Based Economy**

In a knowledge-based global society, with overwhelming flow of information and hyper density the work of public institutions and other representative democratic institutions such as Parliaments becomes more complex. What compounds the complexity is that, as pointed out by the World Economic Forum, "we stand on the brink of a technological revolution that will fundamentally alter the way we live, work, and relate to one another". In a different scale, scope, and complexity, now the Fourth Industrial Revolution is heralding a new transformation and reconfiguring a new world order. As pointed out by World Economic Forum, "the Fourth Industrial Revolution is building on the Third, the digital revolution that has been occurring since the middle of the last century and is characterized by a fusion of technologies that is



blurring the lines between the physical, digital, and biological spheres". Therefore, the traditional way of creating knowledge fails to grasp this emerging world. Our old modes of internalising and making meaning of the world around us become less useful.

In this regard, it is clear that responses to this increasing complexity have to be rooted not only in multi-disciplinary and information based society, but also in critical thinking and foresight. To this end, the observation underscores for Parliaments and/Legislatures, more especially those in the Commonwealth African countries, the need to:

- revisit old parliamentary codes and rules and to refashion them to respond to the needs and realities of changing Parliaments of the 21st century;
- modernize parliamentary systems and processes and explore different avenues for contextualizing new parliamentary management paradigms that have positive cumulative impact on the administration of parliamentary business;
- improve the efficiency of core business processes through technology to maximize efficiency;
- improve and provide integrated and seamless support to Members of Parliament to enable them to discharge their constitutional obligations of oversight, accountability, making quality laws and increasing public participation in parliamentary processes;
- refocus parliamentary systems and processes to be member-centric;
- ensure that the support and service offerings are tailor made for individual needs of Members of Parliament to ensure that they discharge their responsibilities unhindered;
- making considerable efforts to ensure that Members of Parliament are able to access, in real time, research, content, legal and procedural services of highest quality; and
- improving the value of information and ease of use.

For Parliamentarians or Members of Parliament in Africa Region and SoCATT Africa Region membership, the observation is that, in this current world that is at a stage of profound change and major readjustment, they face the common problem of bringing technological advances and expert knowledge to bear on parliamentary business and decision-making. As McGann (2009) rightfully observes, "in a world saturated with information, connected by the web and

challenged by complex issues that often hit like a meteor from outer space, there is a growing need to know where to turn for high quality information and analysis on critical policy issues”.

### **3. Purpose**

The purpose of the Seminar is to enhance the delegates’ understanding and knowledge of the 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution in order to determine strategies and develop context-specific capacity building programmes for African Parliaments in the knowledge based economy.

### **4. Objectives**

The objectives of Seminar are to:

- enhance and stimulate debate on the role of Parliaments in the Knowledge Based Economy using the 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution as the rallying point;
- revisit the question of what knowledge, skills and abilities do parliamentary administrations need to perform their functions by identifying relevant capacity building programmes in the changing world and parliamentary environment;
- enhance strategies for developing, managing and securing African Parliaments’ intellectual knowledge; and
- develop strategic partnerships for sustainable capacity building programmes for African Parliament.

### **5. Special delegates – Collaboration and Partnership**

SoCATT seeks to partner and work in collaboration with organizations that share similar ideals and goals which will grow its network and partnerships in Africa and abroad. These are organisations that are working in areas of research, training, knowledge and information management. As such the following organizations have been invited:

- Uganda Institute of Parliamentary Studies
- Ghana Parliamentary Training Institute
- Kenyan Parliamentary Institute
- SADC Parliamentary Forum
- McGill University & Canadian Parliamentary Centre
- Word Bank



## **7. Seminar Programme**

The Seminar is scheduled for 3 days, with the last day reserved for excursion. It will take the format of plenary sessions and group discussions in order to maximize participation of delegates.

### **DAY ONE: MONDAY, 2 JULY 2018**

**SESSION 1: CAPACITATING PARLIAMENTS IN THE KNOWLEDGE BASED  
ECONOMY TO REALISE AGENDA 2063**

**SESSION 2: OVERVIEW OF SUB-REGIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING INITIATIVES:  
REGIONAL BREAK-AWAY SESSIONS**

**SESSION 3: REPORT BACK BY SUB-REGIONS ON CAPACITY BUILDING  
INITIATIVES**

### **DAY TWO: TUESDAY, 3 JULY 2018**

**SESSION 4: STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR AFRICAN PARLIAMENTS: THE  
ROLE OF PARLIAMENTARY INSTITUTES AND RESEARCH  
INSTITUTES IN CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE KNOWLEDGE  
ECONOMY**

**SESSION 5: CONSIDERING STRATEGIC INTEVENTIONS TOWARDS BUILDING AND  
STRENGTHENING PARLIAMENTARY INSTITUTES IN AFRICAN PARLIAMENTS**

**SESSION 6: SEMINAR RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECLARATIONS**

### **DAY THREE: WEDNESDAY, 4 JULY 2018**

**EXCURSION**