



The National Council

The National Council consists of 26 voting Members. Each of the 13 regions elects two regional councillors from its Regional Council to represent it on the National Council. Members serve for a six-year term and are eligible for re-election. The National Council came into being following the passing of the Regional Councils Act, (Act 22 of 1992) and the first Regional Councils election held from 30 November to 3 December 1992.

Functions and Powers of the National Council

Among others:

- consider bills passed by the National Assembly;
- investigate and report to the National Assembly on any subordinate legislation, reports and documents referred to it by the National Assembly for advice;
- hold public hearings to hear the views of concerned citizens on the bills being considered.
- recommend legislation on matters of regional concern for submission to and consideration by the National Assembly; perform any other functions assigned to it by the National Assembly or by an Act of Parliament.

SEPARATION OF STATE POWERS

Published: Parliament of Namibia
Division: Research and Information Services
1st Revision: August 2005
Private Bag 13323/13371
Tel: (061) 2028000/ 288911
Fax: (061) 226121/ 231687
Windhoek, Namibia

Separation of the State Powers

There are three branches of the Namibian State: the Executive (Cabinet); the Judiciary (Courts) and the Legislature (Parliament).

The Executive

The State President is the Head of the Executive which is responsible for running the affairs of the country. Cabinet Ministers are members of the Executive. They supervise the work of their different government ministries. They formulate and explain Government actions to Parliament and to members of the public in areas like foreign policy, international trade agreements and the nation budget.

Cabinet Ministers are appointed from Members of the National Assembly. Deputy Ministers can be appointed from either House. They are expected to attend sessions of their Houses and inform the public about their different activities.

A number of statutory bodies advise the President on matters of the State. Among them are the Judicial Service Commission; the Public Service Commission; the Security Commission; and the National Planning Commission.

The Judiciary

The Supreme Court, the High Court, and the Lower Courts share the judicial powers. There is an Ombudsman, whose main duty is to protect fundamental human rights. He/she reports to the National Assembly on activities or any irregularity or violation of a fundamental right by an organ of the State or private institution in Namibia.

The Legislature

The supreme lawmaking branch of the State. Our Legislature is a bi-cameral system, thus consisting of two Houses of Parliament – the National Assembly and the National Council. The National Assembly came into being on 21 March 1990 and the National Council on 23 February 1993.



Vision

“To promote and uphold a strong and dynamic parliamentary democracy by passing laws which best serve the interest of the Namibian people.”

The National Assembly

The National Assembly has 72 voting members, elected for a five-year term. They are elected on a proportional representation (party list) system. Thus, each political party taking part in the National Assembly elections draws up a list of 72 candidates. There are additional six non-voting members appointed by the State President based on their expertise, status in society, skills and experience. This brings the total number in the House to 78 members. Members are eligible for re-election after their five-year term.

Functions and Powers of the National Assembly

Among others:

- debate and vote on proposed laws (bills) tabled in the House;
- hold public hearings to hear the views of concerned citizen on the bills being considered;
- approve government spending and regulate taxation by considering the budgets prepared by government ministries;
- approve international agreements entered into by the Government of Namibia with other governments/bodies;
- receives and scrutinise reports on activities of government ministries/offices/agencies;
- debate issued and advises the State President on matters which the Constitution has authorised him/her to deal with.