



BUDGET 2013/2014 CONTRIBUTION

BY

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Honorable Speaker, Honorable Members of this August House

Honorable Speaker, good afternoon, first and foremost I am extending my appreciation for this wonderful opportunity accorded to me to make a meaningful contribution towards the Parliament general debate.

On the eve of our hard-earned 23rd independence anniversary celebrated on the 21st March, Thursday last week, where all the Namibians demonstrated once again the peace and tranquility that prevail in our beloved Namibia. Today I am going to address critical issues, issues of national interest, which are very close to my heart, and if I do not do that than I will fail in my duty to serve this brave nation.

Hon. Speaker, before I start with my contribution, allow me to thank the Honorable Minister of Finance, Me. Sara Kuugongelwa-Amathila, the Director of National Planning Commission, and their teams for their diligent work in presenting a detailed, "Jointly Doing More with Less" budget for the fiscal year 2013/2014. A sisterly appreciation to comrade Kuugogelwa-Amathila for her consistent excellent deliveries of services in a challenging male dominated financial world.

Comrade Amathila-Kuungongelwa, the increases in the budget allocation to all the Ministries, and in particular Ministries Gender Equality and Child Welfare and Health, Labour and Social Welfare is noted and highly appreciated, as it will make a positive and big difference to both the vulnerable and other beneficiaries. I am convinced that this financial boost will be utilized as intended.

Cde. Hon. Speaker and Honorable Members of this August House,

Before I dwell on pertinent issues on Gender Balance and Child Welfare, allow me first, to pay tribute to a Champion, a real man, for his commitment in advancing gender agenda, his awakening spirit to the nation at large to denounce gender based violence, Honorable Comrade Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab.

And to our partners, all the Donor Funds, Grants Institutions, and their sympathetic Governments, to the tireless Namibian women for their braveries, and to all our brothers, for their unwavering support accorded to their female counterparts in waging women emancipation, let's keep the momentum, Aluta Continua!!

**Comrade Chairperson and Honorable Members,
Gender**

Cdes. The Ministry of Gender is enacted by Parliament with a clear mandate to "Ensure gender equality and socio-economic development of women and men and the well-being of the children". As stipulated by Article 95, of the Namibian constitution, which encourage the principle of participation of both men and women, and to be remunerated equally.

In light of that, Cde. Speaker, I strongly believe the following issues are important, and deserve to be addressed by this August House, due to their significant impact on gender matters.

Lobbing for 50% of Women representation and participation

Hon Speaker, we set our self a target of equal representation to be achieved by 2015, where women cadres are equally represented in politics and decision making structures. Nearing 2015, the status quo is currently only 26% in Parliament today.

Namibia has ratified the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, implementation of Affirmative Action Policy is advanced, Constitutional and Legislative Provisions are taken care of. Hon. Members, a concerted unison effort must be deliberately done, Swapo Party, the big brother, is leading by example, as it is paving right platforms through our pledges and commitments. My plea here is, may all the Parties emulate it. Practically preparation time is now whereby all Parties needs to be aggressively indulged, party list must tell the tale.

Cde Speaker,

Equal representation target for 2015, aims to ensure equal participation in all Government and private sectors spheres, and at this stage equal representation fall short of the 50% goal.

This practice is counterproductive and discouraging, overlooking competent women and may stifle economic growth and development.

This calls for aggressive campaigns, effective outreach, ongoing education and mobilization at grass roots and remote areas. On time information dissemination is always critically needed, an informed citizen on important policy matters and legal issues, will effect and will empowered to take well informed decisions, which is good for development. As a result, civic and community based organization, churches, schools, and other partners, must be the instruments in delivering this notable effort.

Cde Speaker and Hon Members,

Gender based violence is a daily occurrence in our society. One need to address and research on the courses, what trigger gender based violence, as this monster is still far from stopping. This monstrous behavior must be stopped immediately! Solutions to GBV, strongly demands that everyone, all responsible citizens, must get involved. Let us encourage those who are in abusive relationships to stand up for their rights and speak up!

Concerted efforts, involving community based organization, churches and traditional leaders, schools and other sympathetic and friendly institutions, which are involve in combating GBV needs to be motivated to intensify efforts as GBV is still on the rampage.

Mini-skirt

There is no law passed by Parliament which prohibit woman from wearing mini-skirts. Article 7 of the Constitution guarantees personal liberty of all Namibians. NAMPOL directive may have been within the limits of the law of Combating of Immoral Practices, Act 7 of 2000. This Act is not loud on Mini-Skirt per say, emphasize are on indecent and immoral dressing, which may not be necessarily Mini-Skirt. We leave in a two face society, whilst a blind eye is turned on boys wearing "sapping trousers" where the underwear is seen, yet this is overlooked and only the girls "mini-skirt" is mentioned.

Honorable Members be reminded that "What is good for the gender is good for goose.

Research found that in most cases rape incidents happen in mostly within families, circle of friends, people who in most cases know each other's. If toddlers and elders are raped, please destroy the myth the Mini-Skirt is an invitation to rape. What is happening to this brave nation?

The Gender Balance initiative in Namibia is alive and awake, twenty three years after independence, as it speaks of volumes.

Cde Speaker and Hon Members,

Old age Pension - allow me to add my voice to prior Contributors on this noble matter, by first thanking Honorable Minister of Finance, for increasing old age pension and disability grant. This provision will indeed make a big difference, especially during this economic trying time. However, honorable members of this august house, I have a major concern with grants

provided to orphans, vulnerable and children with disability, a monthly contribution grant of N\$200,00, is insufficient.

Hon. Speaker and honorable Members, disability in general is costly, more so for the children with disability, especially those lovely children with cerebral palsy (children suffering with back related disabilities), those who needs twenty four hour care, and diapers which does not cost less than N\$100,00.

Comrade Speaker, Honorable Members,

Allow me to thank the first and current Right Hon Prime Minister Dr. Hage Geingob, who created the first platform, in a higher office, a Disability Advisory Unit. I will not overlook Hon. Nahas Angula for maintaining the foundation and maintain the momentum. Last but not least, to my President Comrade Hifikepunye Pohamba, who for the first time, appointed me as a Member of Parliament.

In addition, I would like to thank the entire Swapo Party, for the trust they have put in me, in order to continue using this platform to advance the views, issues, and interests of the Namibian nation. My hopes and aspirations are that this platform will continue to be used even beyond Meme Manombe-Ncube, who's slowly aging.

Comrade Speaker, Honorable Members

As you know the **National Disability Council** of Namibia was established by an Act of Parliament, Act No. 26 of 2004, aiming at uplifting the livelihood of People with Disabilities in the Republic of Namibia. But only after three (3) years, in 2007, the Disability Council was established and launched. This was a milestone achievement for Namibian people with disabilities.

Comrade Speaker and Honorable member,

The Disability Council's objectives as outlined in their Strategic Plan consist out of following strategic themes, Resources Mobilization, Institutional Capacity, Strong Relationship, and Compliance Management. Comrade Speaker, allow me to elaborate on the shortcomings experienced giving rise to the current status quo, that is, the disability is not yet fully streamlined into the Namibian Public Services.

Honorable Members of this August House,

Resources Mobilization: is a critical theme which aims to ensure that the required input resources are adequately anticipated, planned and solicited. Given the current reality, lack of

sufficient resources is an acute problem, it is not only unique to the Namibian government of the day, but it is a global economic reality, emanating from the stagnated world economic growth.

Institutional Capacity: Core strategic objectives such as conducting Research and Development, issue of leadership and competent, trained and motivated staff, requisite appropriate infrastructure, these ideals are still not in place, hence, the delays in immediate implementation of the Act, the time lapsed (3 years) in establishment of Disability Council, these are testimonies to the prevailing state of affairs.

In addition, the delay in the appointment of new Council Members, citing the Consultation and the outstanding Results, this has taken another two years to date. I am also reliably informed about another delay, where an elected member was replaced with their own preferred candidate by the power being. Subsequently this attributed to unrest, commotion and unhappiness, in view of people with disability, this is nothing else than manipulation and disrespect. However, honorable Members, for your information, after a long and bitter struggle, the name was changed again back to the recommended right name. The popular slogan "Nothing about Us Without Us", must come into full force.

Hon. Speaker and Hon. Members, the nation demands to know, is it in order for an Act of Parliament to be disregarded, the time lapse, and the ongoing dissatisfaction of the people with disabilities. Is that acceptable?

Comrade Speaker and Honorable Members of this August House,

My contribution in this regard, I am contenting that the state of mind of the Namibian nation largely could be ascribed that any business to do with people living with disability, is a slow business and slow mindset and slow response to any of their business. Equally so! Allow me to make an observation, largely there are out there non-disabled Namibian, fully functioning presumably, but who are unfortunately disabled, due to their own state of mind. It calls for Namibia to institute a complete change management at a national level.

Honorable Speaker and Hon Members,

It is worth revisiting the rights of people with disability, Namibians, people with disabilities, like any other legitimate Namibians, are entitled to equal rights, as opposed, they continuously battle exclusion and restriction to their full participation in our society, leading to them facing discrimination, abuse and poverty.

Disability is a crosscutting, it's an every Ministry, and an issue of national interest, and yes indeed an issue of every one. To be noted, we all move in the shade of it, like death. Honorable Cde. Peter Illonga, Deputy Minister of Defense said, "Communist and Socialist do not have

personal interest at heart but those of humanity". I agree with that as it closely linked to Ubuntu and as an African, people come first.

Honorable Speaker and Hon Members,

In the same line, people living with disabilities, are entitled to equal access to education and employment, equal rights to parenthood, property ownership, political rights, and legal representation, on the contrary, this is still farfetched, it is clearly noticeable that our people living with disability are regarded as second class citizens, as their needs are not a priority, hence, all these delays which lead to further marginalization.

Cde Speaker and Hon Members,

The ongoing misconceptions and problems such as:

Inter-Ministerial Committee – The Act stipulates and recommends for an Inter-Ministerial Committee to be set up, this has not yet been achieved. The Disability Council continues with their business, an Annual Report for the year 2011-2012 has been compiled, highlighting the challenges and achievements to date, but this Report is still unattended.

There are many people with disabilities who are not receiving packaged services - Visibility and accessibility are the bottlenecks in pursuing effective deliveries of much needed services to people with disabilities. The excuse assumed is that people with disabilities are not reachable as they are hidden, whilst the reality is information accessibility, and suitable infrastructure and environmental structures are in short supply. Non-user friendly buildings and public transport are among operational challenges faced by people with disabilities, even those newly erected buildings do not comply with the existing regulation.

Comrade Speaker and Honorable Members,

Let us convert the existing regulation into legal binding requirements.

People with disabilities must be treated equal among the citizenry, implementation of policies must not be an exclusive responsibility of a certain Ministry only. Disabilities issues are cross cutting over different sectors. Their needs are felt all over different Ministries, such as, education, transport, health, gender, labour and employment skills development, etc.

It is against this background that accessibility to all public services and information must be readily available from all the relevant Ministries concerning all the disabilities affairs, in the same manner as it is attained by the rest of all citizens, which is mainstreaming people living with disabilities affairs into the core activities of national Public Service and facilities.

Honorable Speaker and Honourable Members of this August House,

I need to comment on the state of our national hospitals at large. Before going into that, Cde. Chair, a special word of thanks is extended to the Ministry of Health, and the Minister for excellent job, by containing new infections of HIV/Aids, and other infectious epidemics, such TB, Malaria, etc.

I am taking cognizance of the limited budgetary resources, despite that we are still facing challenges such as compliance to the Abudja Declaration (this is under correction) as per the latest Report of 2011, Namibia is not among the list of those Countries which reached the allocation of 15% as pledged by the Heads of State and their respective Governments.

Honorable Speaker and Honourable Members of this August House,

As we know **the Ministry of Health** and Social Services is mandated to oversee, provide and regulate public, private and non-governmental sectors in the provision of quality health and social services, ensuring equity, accessibility, affordability and on sustainable basis.

Unacceptable service levels, deteriorated health facilities, at times unfriendly and incompetency, pilferage and misused of much needed resources, these are all contributing factors to the poor state of affairs in our health system and this is unacceptable.

Cde. Speaker, my contribution on this sorry state of affairs is that it is known fact that the Government is not out there to make profit, but we need to conduct Government affairs based on sound business principles, in order to achieve measureable results and to provide customer satisfaction.

Today the haves visit private hospitals whilst the have-nots are queuing for these public services, which need to be realigned. Public facilities needs to be managed efficiently and economically, basic things like toilets, running water in toilets, clean bed sheets, friendliness of service deliverers, does this really need additional budget, no it is about passion and taking ownership with the drive to deliver satisfaction to all the stakeholders.

As a result of this, Government facilities are losing its client base, people are unhappy and resort to visit private facilities, this is not because of incompetency in the health profession, or the dilapidated infrastructures, but it is because of the state of affairs in our public health sector.

Honorable Speaker and Honourable Members of this August House,

Cde Speaker, allow me to contribute towards **Orthopedics** activities under the Ministry of Health, in particular, carrying stock of orthopedics equipment. It is observed that in most cases key orthopedic inventory lists, which are in most instances on demand, are at times out of stock.

Mind you if a needy person living with some sort of disabilities, is advised to wait due to stock unavailability, potentially that may lead to worsening conditions, non-performance of the individual, further economic decline and total discomfort.

Leadership, management and supervision, institutional effectiveness and systems employed, these are some of the challenges which need to be addressed to improve performance which will guarantee satisfaction.

Cde. Speaker, with the budgetary increase, surely I trust that the overall orthopedic services will improve notably, by ensuring that much needed inventories will be readily available. This is a significant milestone and is highly appreciated by the beneficiaries.

Comrade Speaker and Honorable Members,

Last but not least, the Land issue is as old as the first colonial settlers in Namibia, it is the course for our liberation struggle, yet it still remains a burning issue not settled for the majority of the population of this country.

The majority of Namibians are getting poorer whilst the minority getting richer. Namibia is facing a looming drought, many landless people find themselves grazing in the corridors alongside private farmland. Commercial farmers are now claiming these corridors as theirs, as a result the poor landless emerging farmers have nowhere to turn their animals for grazing.

Cde Speaker, how long are landless people and some of them who are paying astronomic reaps to their landlord, the true sons and daughters of the soil going to endure this pain and humiliation?

The authorities are citing certain law which only strengthen the Commercial farmers whilst threatening the marginalized. The landless or the land hungry citizens of this beautiful country should be given to their inheritance, a dwelling place, a place to call their own.

In conclusion, Hon. Speaker and Honorable Members I support the tabled budget without any reservation, and I trust that the concerns raised will be attended to and will bear fruits in the foreseeable future.

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