
PARLIAMENT OFFICE

**Budget speech of
Dr.Kuaima Riruako,
President of Namibia,
Tuesday 26 March
2013**

Hon: Speaker, Dr. Theo Ben Gurirab, and fellow MP's I took the floor this afternoon to present my contribution to the budget tabled by Hon: Minister of Finance Sarah Kuugongelwa –Amadhila. First of all I would like to congratulate her for tabling the budget early as possible to allow enough time for Parliament to deliberate on it.

Hon: Speaker, before I start with my speech allow me share with this August house and the Namibian people my sadness and shock with this August house about the untimely passing on the of Hounourable Governor of Omaheke Region Hon. Rapama Kamehozu who passed away over the weekend. It is indeed a great loss for SWAPO Party, the Omaheke Region and the entire Namibian people. Unfortunately we cannot undo what the almighty has decided to do.

Hon: Speaker, my contribution to the budget this time will dwell on the following issues that I regard as important to this house to look at during our deliberations; these are

- **Education**
- **Agriculture / Drought**
- **Regional and Local Governments / Decentralisation**
- **Old age pension and orphans**

I think the purpose or the aim of the Minister tabling the budget early in the beginning of the year is that after approval it must be implemented. It is a known fact that communities are on the outcry that there is a delay in the implementation of the development projects. Therefore I would like to call upon the Ministers, Permanent Secretaries and National Planning Commission to see to it that projects are implemented in order to create jobs and uplift the living standard of our people.

Education

Hon: Speaker, since the inception of the Namibia Parliament in 1990, this has become a habit that the Education Sector has been always a priority number one to the Minister of Finance and the Government

that's why the biggest percentage of National goes to Education at the expense of other sector.

Hon: Minister, that has gone wrong with our Education, every year we are sending thousands of our young people to the streets because our education system has completely failed the Namibia nation .

I support the concerns raised by the Minister of Education Hon: Namwandi when he said that, although the Education sector gets the highest allocation, the fruits from this Ministry leave a lot to be desired. The reason, to me Hon: Speaker, is that having a scarcity and uneven distribution of resources, Education standard in rural areas as compared to urban schools will remain just as it was poor before independence.

Hon: Speaker, where does the problem lies? Is it with the Education System, is it with the Parents, is it with the learners or where is the problem?

Without providing answers to these three fundamental questions, our Education standard will

remain as it is even if we allocated the whole budget to this sector.

I hope the new Education Minister Hon: Namwandi will a conducive learning environment by ensuring that learning resources are available in schools libraries by suitably qualified personnel.

I believe that much more must be done to address inherited inequities in the education system so that all the stakeholders in education will eventually benefit from the system.

Agriculture / Drought

Hon: Speaker, while over 70 % of the Namibian population depends on Agriculture directly or indirectly for their basic existence, Namibia under the SWAPO led government since then has not been able to develop a comprehensive agriculture policy and strategy to majority of population ~~their~~ make a decent living out their hard work especially those farming with cattle in rural areas.

Resources allocation^{ted} to agriculture remains skewed. Currently the country is facing a drought situation, but there is no clear direction within the Agricultural vote how much money will be used to remedy the drought crisis.

This is my conviction that it is high time that this August house in consultation with the Ministry of Agriculture should come up with a Drought Relief Fund which will support farming communities in rural and communal areas immediately when drought starts but not after animals and people have died of hunger.

The main contributor to the fund will be the Central Government by putting aside 100 million dollars per financial year whether there is drought or not as a preparation when it is time for drought.

Namibia is rich of virgin land that needs to be developed to be used during drought time. This is not being done.

Government should buy farmers and reserve them only for drought situation to assist during drought time in different regions. Specifically farmers to accommodate farmers from surrounding communal.

Hon: Speaker, preparation for drought should not only come from the Government alone, but Farmers Associations and Co-operatives must also create their own Drought Relief Funds to assist their members when time comes.

Hon : Speaker, for now I would like to request this House in consultation with the Ministry of Finance to increase the vote for the office of the Prime Minister in order to assist in the drought crisis we are facing.

Decentralisation

Hon: Speaker, let me ask ourselves two questions. Is our government constituted in a manner that makes all our citizens feels part of it? Is all stakeholders' part of the governance process?

I think the answer to these questions lies in the Decentralisation process.

As long as the decentralisation process in Namibia proved to be very elusive, despite the Decentralisation Act having been passed into law years ago, we will never provide sufficient answer to these questions.

We passed a law that represented sub-national governance to being represented by Regional and Local Authority Councillors.

The unfortunate thing is that these levels of government are not fully equipped in order to bring development to their regions. Regional Councils has to go to Central Government to ask for funds but they don't have their own budget. How can they develop their areas? The masses have lost hope and credibility in them because they promise things which they don't have power over.

I would like to request our new Prime Minister and incumbent President Dr. Pohamba to look into this matter as a matter of Emergency.

In conclusion Hon: Speaker, I once again compliment the Finance Minister for increasing the old age pension fund with another N\$ 50-00 per month, but my question is what about the orphans.

We are criticizing the old age pensions saying they are using their money for their children, but what else can they do if the allocations to the orphans are so minimal.

I want to request the Minister of Gender Equality to look into this vote and increase orphan's contribution from N\$ 200-00 to at least N\$ 350-00 per month.

The current economic situation in our country does not allow for these orphans to live from N\$ 200-00. With these remarks Hon: Speaker, I support the appropriation bill

I thank you.

