



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

2013/2014 BUDGET SPEECH

BY THE HONOURABLE PENDUKENI IIVULA-ITHANA, MP

AND

MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS AND IMMIGRATION

VOTE 05

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS AND IMMIGRATION

9 APRIL 2013

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

I rise to introduce vote 05 of the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration and to inform this august House on the implementation of programmes and challenges encountered for the 2012-2013 financial year. Equally, I rise to motivate the funds allocated to the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration under vote 05 for the financial year 2013-2014.

We are all aware of the massive budget tabled before this august House with a total expenditure of **thirty seven comma seven billion Namibia Dollars (N\$ 37.7 Billion)** for the 2013-2014 Financial Year.

This budget is certainly in line with the SWAPO-Party's top priorities with a huge allocation to education, health and other critical sectors of our economy. While my predecessors have been appreciating the budget allocation to the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration in the past years, they have also strived and hoped for an increased budget allocation to the Ministry year in and year out. I rise today to motivate for this hope to become reality.

It must be understood that the pivotal role that the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration is playing in our country is not appreciated and understood in terms of the allocation of resources.

Honourable Members,

The Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration generates vital statistics needed by the Government for proper planning. It is also the custodian of national records related to birth, marriage, death, national identity cards, passports and fingerprints. The Ministry also keeps statistics and records of expatriates working and or living in Namibia, information relating to the entry and exit of persons into and from Namibia, work permits, study permits, residence permits and Namibian citizenship.

The continuous inadequate funding to the Ministry will continue to have adverse effects on the generation of vital statistics which are required to inform the National Development Agenda. The need for the statistics generated by the Ministry needs no far-fetched motivation, the Government needs these statistics in order to plan and execute the national agenda. It is essential that the Ministry is afforded sufficient funds for its ambitious plan of automating all its activities to enable other Ministries and institutions to have access to its database on specific data, relevant to their sectoral needs.

The Ministry envisions decentralising most of its services such as the issuing of secured electronic birth certificates, National Identity Card printing and passports capturing at some regional offices. However, the Ministry cannot successfully implement these plans due to **inadequate financial allocations**. For the past years, the Ministry's budget and plea for additional funding has not been considered favourably.

**Honourable Chairperson of the whole House Committee and
Honourable Members**

The Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration has four major programmes, namely:

1. Civil Registration,
2. Immigration Control and Citizenship,
3. Refugee Administration, and
4. Administration.

1. PROGRAMME: CIVIL REGISTRATION

This programme can be summed up as the management of the National Population Register. It has two major projects:

- 1) The **Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS)** and **ID Engraver prints Identification Cards (IDs)**, and the
- 2) **The National Population Registration System (NPRS).**

The Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) provides access to individual citizens' fingerprint database. The Namibian Police makes use of this system to identify potential criminals who might not be on Police Criminal Record Centre. This system can also be accessed to verify information related to production of IDs and passports and information related to stolen or lost IDs and passports. **The ID Engraver prints Identification Cards (IDs).**

The National Population Registration System (NPRS) makes it possible for each Namibian citizen to have one electronic population profile which includes information regarding birth, identification, marriage and death. The automated birth records ("M-file") stores birth records that were used to apply for abridged birth certificates. This system can now be viewed in 36 offices country wide.

When fully operational, the National Population Register System will enable various stakeholders to have access to imperative national information. Some examples of these are:

- The Ministry of Education will know the total number of children turning six/seven years of age in a given year to allow advanced enrolment planning.
- The National Planning Commission will now have access to statistics necessary for national development programmes.
- The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare will be in a position to know the number of senior citizens to turn sixty years of age in order to forecast. The system will also provide statistics on expatriates working in Namibia.
- In addition, The Ministry of Health and Social Services will benefit in knowing the mortality rate by age, sex and causes thereof.
- The Electoral Commission of Namibia (ECN) already benefits from the records on deaths but will in the future be able to access information useful for updating the Voters' Roll in the event of loss of citizenship and the number of young people who would have

turned 18 years of age between the previous election and the next voter's registration exercise, amongst others.

- The Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare will be able to retrieve accurate and timely data to ascertain the eligibility of children and persons living with disability for social grants.
- The Ministry of Environment and Tourism will have access to statistics pertaining to the arrival, departure and country of origin of tourists to Namibia to enhance planning for, and monitoring of, growth of the tourism sector.
- The Ministry will be able to provide necessary information to the Government Institute Pension Fund (GIPF), and other institutions, that may require such information.

For the above mentioned programme to function as planned, I wish to request this august House to approve an amount of **One Hundred and Forty Million, Two Hundred and Ten Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$ 140 210 000)** for the financial year 2013-2014.

2. PROGRAMME: IMMIGRATION CONTROL AND CITIZENSHIP

This programme is responsible for the facilitation of lawful migration and issuing of national documents. It has two directorates:

- 1) The Directorate of Immigration and Border Control and
- 2) The Directorate of Visas, Permits, Passports and Citizenship

Directorate for Immigration and Border Control

This Directorate continues to facilitate lawful entry and exit at Namibian border posts and ports of entry. Other responsibilities of this Directorate include surveillance of suspected illegal immigrants, the facilitation of deportations of illegal immigrants, the provision of secretariat services to the Immigration Tribunals and conducting joint operations with other law enforcement agencies.

Immigration officers are our first points of contact with visitors to Namibia. Understandably, whatever impression they create usually portrays the level of service delivery in the country. As you may imagine, this impression has an impact on the growth of tourism and perception of service delivery in Namibia, negatively or positively. In this regard, my Ministry remains committed to improving the customer care skills of our staff members in order to ensure and maintain a good image.

The distances between our northern and north-eastern border posts remain long and therefore this encourages illegal migration. The borders remain permeable and this makes it difficult to effectively combat illegal migration. As a result, it contributes to the high occurrences of illegal crossing of the borders. In this regard, my Ministry's engagement with our neighbouring countries continues with a view to opening new entry and crossing points. Areas where ports of entry will be opened have already been identified and we are now pre-occupied with agreeing on the priorities. It is our belief that once more ports of entry have been

established, the movement of persons will be easily monitored and this will lead to improved combating of illegal immigration.

The creation of Regional Immigration Tribunals has improved the deportation process. I can confidently report that at the moment the period between detention and deportation has been decreased to an average of 20 days. This year the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration intends to establish Immigration Tribunals in Erongo, Omaheke and Karas Regions.

The Directorate of Visas, Permits, Passports and Citizenship

This Directorate is responsible for the receiving applications and managing various types of visas, permits, passports and citizenship. In executing its functions, the Directorate, among other things, serves as the secretariat to the Immigration Selection Board (ISB) and its Sub-Committees which consider applications for visas and permits and to the Citizenship Committee which deals with applications for various categories of citizenship.

One of the major activities that the Directorate is busy with is the automation of visas and permits. I am pleased to inform this august House that the **First Phase** of this automation process (which included software development) is already concluded. This will now be followed by the **implementation stage** which will end up with a **go-live stage**. This fascinating development, which requires hard work on the part of the Ministry's staff members and commitment of substantial financial resources, will allow the Ministry to increase high level efficiency and

effectiveness in service delivery. This will contribute substantially to our Government's e-governance policy. This project's commencement was delayed by insufficient funds, but started in April 2012 and is scheduled to be successfully concluded before the end of 2013.

In terms of statistical information relating to various activities during the financial year 01 April 2012 to 31 March 2013, the following was recorded:

1. TYPES OF VISAS AND PERMITS PROCESSED

- Employment Permits: 3 473 applications were approved and 407 were rejected.
- Permanent Residence Permits (PRPs): 95 applications were approved and 74 were rejected.
- Work visas: 10 984 applications were approved and 1 307 rejected.
- Business visas: 809 applications were approved and 58 rejected.
- Holiday visas: 1 870 applications were approved and 14 rejected.
- Transit visas: 94 applications were approved and none were rejected.
- Diplomatic visas: 33 applications were approved and none were rejected.
- Official visas: 7 were approved and none were rejected.
- Study visas: 40 applications were approved and 16 rejected.
- Study permits: 6 095 applications were approved and 131 rejected.
- Temporary Residence Permits (TRP): 587 applications were approved and 162 rejected.

A total of 24 087 applications were approved and 2 169 were rejected.

2. PASSPORTS/TRAVEL DOCUMENTS PROCESSED

The demand for travel documents continued to increase throughout the year which resulted in the following applications being processed:

- Ordinary passport approved **50 052** and **1 039** rejected
- Maxi passport approved **1** and **0** rejected
- Diplomatic passport **178** approved and **7** rejected
- Official passport **501** approved and **19** rejected
- Travel Document **9 297** approved and **188** rejected
- Emergency Travel Certificate (ETC) **7 155** approved and **26** rejected

A total of **67 184** were approved while **1 279** applications were rejected.

3. CITIZENSHIP APPLICATIONS PROCESSED

The majority of people who applied for citizenship during the past financial year fall in two categories:

- Namibian children born in exile during the liberation struggle, and
- Those born by Namibian citizens who reside outside Namibia.

The following statistics were recorded under the different types of citizenship:

- **Descent:** **495** applications were approved and **2** applications were rejected.
- **Naturalisation:** **204** applications were approved and **11** applications were rejected

- **Marriage:** 78 applications were approved and 4 applications were rejected

Therefore, a total of 777 applications were approved while 17 applications were rejected.

Besides the above stated, 26 Namibians who became citizens of other countries reclaimed their Namibian citizenship while during the same period, 21 Namibians renounced their Namibian citizenship and became citizens of other countries.

I now wish to request this august House to approve an amount of **One Hundred and Eighty-Two Million Nine Hundred and Forty Thousand Namibia Dollars (NS 182 940 000)** for this programme for the financial year **2013-2014**.

3. PROGRAMME: REFUGEE ADMINISTRATION

This programme continues to provide protection and support to refugees and asylum seekers. This is done in terms of the Refugee Recognition and Control Act 1999 (Act No 2 of 1999) and the obligation placed upon Namibia by international conventions relating to the treatment of refugees and displaced persons. It is important to inform this august House that this Directorate is involved in the voluntary repatriation exercises of refugees which are carried out in conjunction with the United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

During the year under review 3 000 Angolan refugees were repatriated voluntarily while 1 741 former Angolan refugees have opted to register for local integration. The total number of refugees in Namibia now stands at 3 550 persons mainly from Burundi, DRC and Rwanda while 450 are asylum seekers. During the year under review a total number of 29 Namibians were repatriated from Dukwi refugee camp in Botswana through the UN voluntary repatriation exercise.

I now wish to request this august House to approve an amount of **Ten Million Two Hundred and Seventy-Nine Thousand (NS 10 279 000)** only for this programme for the financial year 2013-2014.

4. PROGRAMME: ADMINISTRATION

This programme is the one responsible for policy implementation. The Directorate of Administration provides administrative support services through proper coordination, financial management, human resources, Legal and General Support Services. It is also responsible for the provision and implementation of legislation and policies in order to ensure an effective and efficient quality service delivery. It further drives, maintains, administers and coordinates the acquisition of Information Technology (IT) resources and to ensure that information systems in the Ministry are used for the intended purpose.

The Ministry is at an advanced stage on the implementation of the new approved structure. A lot of vacant positions have been filled and this

process is intended to be fully finalised in the next financial year 2014-2015.

The Ministry has been implementing capital projects and I report regrettably, that there has been a lack of co-ordination between line Ministries responsible for border management in terms of facilities. For example, Customs and Excise has far better offices and equipment than other offices of other Ministries. There is a need to standardize and to ensure inclusive budget allocation to address these imbalances through proper coordination and joint budgeting.

The Ministry has challenges such as the lack of transport which hampers the execution of activities and ministerial programmes due to inadequate funding. The Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration has been one of the piloting ministries for the implementation of Electronic Documentation Record Management System (EDRMS). EDRMS is a government initiative for the realisation of e-government, I am happy to report that the Ministry has gone live on the EDRMS project.

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

As we are all aware, there will be national elections in the year 2014. It cannot be over-emphasized that there is an urgent need for a specific budget to be allocated to the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration. The budget must be sufficient in order to carry out mobile and outreach programmes to remote areas and communities for the citizens to acquire National documents prior to the additional voters registration exercise.

Regarding revenue collection, I wish to inform this august House that my Ministry is not only a consumer of Government resources but a generator of revenue too. During the year under review the Ministry collected an amount of **Fifty-two Million, Six Hundred and Twenty-six Thousand and One Hundred and Sixty-three Namibia Dollars and Seventy-Seven cents (N\$ 52 626 163.77)**. This revenue was generated from administration fees of Permits, Visas, Passports and duplicates of birth, Identity Documents and other documents. This amount excludes administration fees generated for the months February and March 2013 and from Foreign Missions throughout the year.

I now wish to request this august House to approve an amount of **Eighty-Four Million Five Hundred and Forty-Four Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$ 84 544 000) only** for the Administration programme for the financial year **2013-2014**.

Finally, it is now my humble request to this august House to approve the allocation of an amount of **Four Hundred and Seventeen Million Nine Hundred and Seventy-three Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$ 417 973 000)** to Vote 05 of the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration for the financial year **2013-2014**.

I count on your usual support and I thank you!