

CONTRIBUTION TO THE BUDGET 2014/2015

1. Introduction

Honorable Speaker and Honorable Members of Parliament I rise to make my fourth budget maiden speech in this august house.

As I said last year in my contribution to the budget discussions, political parties are products of their own experiences and the ideas if not ideological perspectives with which they have been confronted in the past.

This is the demonstration that our struggle was not in vain and therefore our socialists' ideological decision was to benefit Namibians upon attaining independence.

Hence, allow me to urge all our socialists comrades and parties in the House to re-dedicate ourselves to the socialist ideals so that budgets are designed in that context.

Budgets are about people. Figures like inflation rates, deficit rates, GDP, etc are macro-economic indicators therefore they remain vehicles towards easing socio-economic improvements they ^{be} cannot ends in themselves.

Excellent macro-economic indicators that do not translate into enhancement of standards of living of the grass-roots, and reduction in poverty and effective tangible provision of jobs are as good as they are on paper and that's it!

I cannot agree more with the Minister when she says: *"...we have to do things differently ... and to transform the structure of our economy, so that all Namibians can share in the opportunities that our country offers."*

The answer will vindicate SWANU as we have all along advocated for that ideology: *Socialism*.

Now, Honourable Members, which ideology can transform the structure of our economy, so that ALL Namibians can share in the opportunities?

Allow me to pay homage to the victims of the relentless violence. Had they lived to see this budget they could be beneficiaries too. We need to find the causes of this unprecedented violence and not jump at the solutions like “burying the perpetrators alive”. As WB du Boo once said, “*the fault lies not with our stars but within ourselves*”. This violence of killing and also the phenomenon of suicides (being the highest in the world), mostly afflict a strata of society mostly in the 20s / 30s age groups. Therefore, let us interrogate the effectiveness, fairness, equity of our budget policies and allocations for our youth and society at large.

Where has the gender-based budgeting gone? Has TIPEEG derailed our thinking making us forget this very important aspect of budgeting? Even the economic and budget analysts have not pronounced themselves on this issue recently and currently.

Comrade Speaker, allow me to remind ourselves that once the Appropriation Bill is laid upon the table it becomes our bill and no longer that of the Minister or Government. Therefore, we ought to do everything possible and practicable as we as legislators see fit.

Regrettably, however in practical terms this has never happened in this August House. Because of the overwhelming majority of the ruling party in the house and compounded by the dominance of the Executive over the Legislature scrutiny of the Appropriation Bill is tantamount to beating a dead horse.

For example even if some of us, who cherish values of caring, sharing and solidarity, wanted to increase the Old Age Pension allocation, the majority will say NO! and It is a big big NO!!.

