



**MINISTRY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND
COOPERATION**

BUDGET SPEECH

VOTE 07

FOR THE 2016/2017 FINANCIAL YEAR

BY

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DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER

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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCTION

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee

Honourable Members

Three days into our 26th independence celebration, it is not too late to congratulate ourselves and to celebrate the commendable achievements we have made in all sectors of our socio-economic development. Once again, as we celebrated our independence anniversary, some of our international friends have joined us, among them His Excellency Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, President of the Republic of Mali who was our guest of honour. We were also honoured to have H.E. Rupia Banda, Former President of the Republic of Zambia, H.E. Salim Ahmed Salim, former Prime Minister of the United Republic of Tanzania and Former Secretary General of the OAU as well as Hon. Akinwunmi Ambode Executive Governor of Lagos State.

We have gained international friends, not only because of our good hearts and natural attractions, but also the manner in which we address national and international issues. As we celebrated the 26th Independence Anniversary, H.E. Dr. Hage G. Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia had this to say, “As a nation, we pride ourselves on the principles of Democracy, Unity, Peace and Stability and the rule of law that we enjoy. These principles form a part of a foundation characterised by a sound and robust Governance Architecture which is globally recognized and lauded”.

Since Independence, Namibia has been persistent and consistent in calling for the lifting of the US Embargo against Cuba and the normalization of relations between Cuba and the US, for the sake of their people and humanity in general. It is therefore, a welcome coincidence that, as we celebrated our 26th Independence Anniversary on the 21st March, H.E. Barack Obama, the US President was on his second day of a three day Visit to Cuba. That is a first visit of the US President to Cuba in 88 years. It is our hope that such a visit will lead to the lifting of the US Embargo against Cuba.

Hon Members,

When engaging with our neighbours, AU member countries and the rest of the world, we are guided by our Constitution. However, Namibia and the world look different from the 1990s, and so much in the world continues to change. New opportunities and challenges are emerging. It is for this reason Hon. Members, that we have embarked on a process to **review our foreign policy**. The aim of this review is to analyze how global changes impact on our domestic policies and to identify strategic priorities of our foreign policy, in order to maximize the benefits to our people. Reviewing a Foreign Policy is not an easy or small exercise. That is why we will be conducting consultations with different sectors of our society. I therefore ask you Honourable Members to avail yourselves when we will reach out to you for your views on Namibia in the International Community. Our plan is to finalize the review of our Foreign Policy/White Paper in the course of 2016/17 Financial Year.

During the period under review, two economic multilateral conferences have taken place. These are: the India-Africa Summit and Forum for China Africa Cooperation. In both instances, the two countries have pledged to intensify economic cooperation with Africa, focusing on Trade and Investments. We are currently in the process of studying the offers and identifying projects based on the national priorities, which we could benefit from.

REVIEW OF THE 2015/16 FINANCIAL YEAR INCLUDING ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee

Honourable Members

The Ministry is pleased with the contribution it was able to make towards offering protocol and etiquette training to new members of the National Assembly and National Council respectively in response to requests from the two Houses. The Ministry also contributed to the hosting of several international and national conferences and workshops during FY 2015/16. Particular reference is made to Namibia's successful hosting of the C-10 Summit in Windhoek in January 2016. Other events facilitated by the Ministry include four ceremonies of Presentation of Credentials by Foreign Heads of Mission and two Commissioning Ceremonies of Namibian Heads of Mission. The Ministry also played an instrumental role in arranging Annual Year End Function and the New Year Greetings Ceremonies for the Diplomatic Corps.

Namibia enjoys strong and healthy bilateral relations with many countries around the world. Through these partnerships, we wish to foster stronger political engagements, encourage people-to-people solidarity, promote trade, investments and tourism. Our international relations and cooperation find expression through various bilateral agreements and Commissions of Cooperation that we have entered into over the years. **These are important vehicles to nurture and build strong relationships with our immediate neighbours and the rest of the world.**

Hon. Members,

In the world of increasing growth in the area of Communication Technology, one expects the number of international conferences, meetings and face-to-face contact to reduce. However, the opposite is true.

Increasingly, there are more face-to-face engagements internationally, in the fields of politics, economic and business at different levels. This has been made necessary as we are living in the global village whereby the world affairs are managed as one, hence a need for world leaders to meet regularly. Against that background, more and more Summits are being organized to address different issues be it social, economic and political.

It is no longer strange to hear about a Summit on Education, Health, Rural and Urban Development, and Sustainable Development, Financing, Climate Change and many more. A trend is also developing to isolate delegations who are not represented at the appropriate level of a particular conference. More often than not, they are put at the bottom of the list and based on the time, they may end up not making their national views heard, therefore, Bilateral visits at the Heads of State level such as state, official and working visits are very critical and have great impact on socio-economic development of countries. Such visits are also important for the maintenance of world peace.

Hon. Members,

These visits are indispensable and form the cornerstone of any country's standing globally. They also provide a good opportunity for Heads of State to exchange views and analyse matters of common interest and mutual benefit, with a clear view to further strengthen bilateral relations in the best interest of the country and people.

As a country, we have committed ourselves to eradicate poverty, and as part of the global village we cannot do so alone. Therefore, the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation and the Minister who is the immediate Advisor to the President on matters of International Relations, can justify H.E the President's international trips as they are adding value to our national development goals. I am aware of the financial implications, however it should be recognised that you have to spend if you are to meet your intended goals.

In today's world, networking is a must for any institution to succeed. That is why this House hardly sits without some Honourable Members being out on foreign missions. Those in business can attest to the importance of networking. That is why business Executives are always on the move. Therefore, the travels of the President as the Chief Diplomat of Namibia, outside the country are necessary, as they promote economic and security interests of our country.

Hon. Members,

The past financial year was marked by international challenges, including natural and climate-related disasters, conflicts and terrorism that threaten peace and security as well as our economies globally. The adoption by the UN General Assembly of the Social Development Goals (Agenda 2030) in September 2015 with poverty eradication being goal number one, talks well to our national agenda and is a hope for world prosperity. In the same vein, the outcome of COP 21 on Climate Change has raised the confidence of the world population in the leaders to serve the planet.

At the sub-regional level, Namibia concluded in August 2015 its last year on the Troika of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation. The Honourable Members would recall that Namibia, under the able leadership of Their Excellencies, President Hifikepunye Pohamba and President Dr. Hage G. Geingob, dealt with the political and security situation in the Kingdom of Lesotho. Thanks to the timely intervention by the SADC Organ, the situation could be contained. However, such intervention was not without cost to our country, as we had to support the SADC Facilitation process.

Furthermore, Namibia continued to contribute to the consolidation of democracy in the Region. Our country participated in the consultative process for the Revision of the *SADC Principles and*

Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections. In addition, Namibia was part of the SADC Electoral Observer Missions to Tanzania in October 2015 and to the Seychelles in December 2015.

The adoption of the SADC Industrialization Strategy and Roadmap in April 2015 and the AU first ten (10) years Implementation Plan of the Agenda 2063 in July 2015, has brought to light important instruments on the road to economic independence for our country, the sub-region and the African continent. The African Union Agenda 2063, is the development blueprint for the continent over a period of 50 years for “**The Africa We Want**”. A Ministerial Committee to oversee the implementation of the eleven (11) flagship projects contained in the first ten years of Implementation of Agenda 2063 has been established. Namibia was elected to represent Southern Africa region on the committee for the period of two years.

With peace being a prerequisite for development, one of the Flagship Projects of the Continent under Agenda 2063 is a programme called “Silencing the Guns by 2020”. This programme was the focus of the 6th Annual High-Level Retreat of Special Envoys and mediators on the Promotion of Peace, Security and Stability in Africa, hosted here in Windhoek, from 21 to 22 October 2015 under the theme “Silencing the Guns, Terrorism, Mediation and Armed Groups”.

Furthermore, last year, at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting held in Malta, Namibia was elected to the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG), together with eight other countries. CMAG has two statutory meetings per year. However, extraordinary meetings to address specific Political and Security issues in Commonwealth Member States may be convened. The last extraordinary meeting took place at the Commonwealth Secretariat in London on the 24th February 2016 to consider the situation in the Maldives.

While on the Commonwealth, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Ms. Sharonice Davinnia Busch, a Namibian Youth, for having been elected as the Regional Representative for Africa and Europe to the Commonwealth Executive Youth Council from 2015 to 2017.

May I also inform the Honourable House that, during the 59th Session of General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), held in Vienna, Austria from 14-18 September 2015, Namibia was elected as a member of the IAEA Board of Governors, for the period September 2015 to September 2017. The Board has the special responsibility amongst others to

promote the peaceful use of nuclear technology. As the 4th world's largest producer of Uranium, we view this membership as important.

Honourable Members will recall that Namibia's tenure as a Member of the UN Human Rights Council will end in December this year. Namibia continues to advance the promotion and protection of human rights, including the right to development, in the region and the world at large. We can be proud that Namibia was founded on the principles of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, and that we uphold good governance.

MOTIVATION FOR THE 2016/17 FINANCIAL YEAR

Honourable Members,

The proposed allocation for the 2016/17 financial year is **NS\$900 862 000 (Nine hundred million, eight hundred sixty two thousand Namibia Dollars)**. A decrease of **NS\$ 13 506 640 (thirteen million five hundred and six thousand six hundred and forty dollars)** from the budget of last year.

16% or NS\$144 255 000 (one hundred forty four million two hundred fifty five thousand Namibia Dollars) of the total amount requested will be utilized for capital projects at our diplomatic missions and at headquarters. The projects for missions are all ongoing in the form of purchasing, construction or renovation of Chanceries and Residences, as well as maintenance. Since independence, a total of 49 properties for use by our diplomatic missions were acquired. Of these, three (3) are currently under development and construction (Addis Ababa, Ondjiva and Pretoria). Most of our properties were acquired during the 1990s and need renovation. Most properties continue to be rented at high cost to the government, hence the efforts to gradually acquire them.

The remaining **84% or NS\$756 607 000.00 (seven hundred fifty six million six hundred and seven thousand Namibian Dollars)** of the total allocation will be utilized for the operational budget over the various programmes of the Ministry as follows:

Programme 1: Regional and Bilateral Relations and Cooperation

An amount of N\$20 536 000.00 (*twenty million five hundred and thirty six thousand Namibia Dollars*)

The essential aspect of the programme of Bilateral Relations and Cooperation in the Ministry, is organising and coordinating Joint Commissions of Cooperation with other countries. Joint Commissions of Cooperation address the most pressing needs and areas of priority as set out in our developmental goals and visions.

As part of our bilateral diplomacy, I am pleased to inform this august house that Chinese and Canadian investments in Namibia's economy such as Husab mine as well as Canadian investment in B2Gold mine, demonstrates the practical benefits of Namibia's economic diplomacy. I shall continue to invest energy, time and resources, working actively with our Diplomats abroad, to ensure that similar investment continue to flow to Namibia.

I also have the honour to inform this August House that, the Government has decided to establish a Namibian Embassy in Algiers, the capital of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria. Already, relations between Namibia and Algeria are strong and continue to be growing, with a large number of Namibian students benefitting from Algerian scholarships to pursue university studies in that country. Let me take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the Government and people of Algeria for maintaining this strong bond of friendship and cooperation. Strengthening cooperation with Algeria has a great potential for economic benefit of our countries.

Hon. Members,

As we all know, the Government of the Republic of Namibia and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany are engaged in discussions with regard to the genocide committed against our people by the imperial German troops in 1904-1908. This inhumane act against our people, affected mostly the Herero and Nama communities and continue to negatively impact on our country. A motion to pursue discussions on this matter with the Federal Republic of Germany by the Namibian government was passed in this August House.

Since the Namibian Parliament referred that Motion to the government for implementation, the Government has been engaging the German government and this August House has been updated. H.E. Dr. Hage G. Geingob, then Prime Minister and Hon. Utoni Nujoma as Minister of Foreign Affairs have addressed the issue in this Honourable House respectively.

Last year, the two governments have agreed to appoint Special Envoys who will be carrying national positions on the matter as the engagement has moved to another level. Accordingly, H.E. Dr. Hage Geingob has appointed Ambassador Dr. Zed Ngavirue as Special Envoy.

The Government has established the Political Committee Chaired by H.E Dr. Nickey Iyambo, the Vice President. The Political Committee is served by a Technical Committee with people who are knowledgeable about this particular history. Affected communities are also represented on the Technical Committee. The Technical Committee is the Think Tank of the Political Committee. As the Ministry dealing with the issue on a daily basis, we are the first to acknowledge the importance of this matter to the nation. The Government of the Republic of Namibia has been acting and will always act in the interest of its citizens, contrary to what is being said. The Government has no other motives, but rather doing everything in the best interest of our people. Negotiations are not held in public and the affected communities are being consulted. Therefore, the nation must continue to have trust in their government. An amount of **Ten Million Namibia dollars (N\$ 10 000 000)** have been budgeted for this programme. Although in the Estimates of Revenue, Income and Expenditure, it is placed under programme 2.

Programme 2: Multilateral Policy Co-ordination

An amount of **N\$60,541,000.00 (sixty million, five hundred and forty one thousand Namibian Dollars) (including the Ten Million dollars mentioned above under programme 1)** is being requested for this programme, to be utilized in carrying out our obligations at multilateral fora.

The real value of our interaction at the multilateral fora will be measured by the tangible and lasting impact on the lives of our people.

Global efforts to address the challenges we face have led to the creation of new organisational entities and treaties and hence the need for more resources. The Ministry will continue to participate in various regional and international conferences.

In the course of the year, the Ministry will be hosting a workshop on the domestication of the AU Agenda 2063. This is an important project to ensure that our national Development Plans, laws and regulations are in line with the African development blueprint over a period of 50 years until 2063. Also, remember that Namibia is representing Southern Africa on the Ministerial Committee for the implementation of the first 10 years of Agenda 2063.

Namibia actively participated in the UN Climate Change Conference of State Parties held in Paris in December 2015, which resulted in a legally-binding agreement aimed at reducing the global carbon emissions. I wish to congratulate the Minister of Environment and Tourism and his team for their active participation in the development and finalization of the final document. His Excellency, the President will be joining other world leaders at the High Level Thematic Debate on achieving Sustainable Development Goals in New York in April 2016. During this meeting, world leaders will be expected to sign the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, which will pave the way for its entry into force. Namibia will fully utilize that platform to effectively lobby for **Namibia's bid to host the Regional Office of the Green Climate Fund**, through which programmes to combat climate change and desertification will be funded.

The Ministry will also continue to work with relevant ministries to ensure Namibia's participation in various AU and UN Peace keeping missions. Moreover, as a proponent of the UNSC Resolution 1325, on Women, Peace and Security, Namibia will always work with the international community in broadening awareness of the important role that women play in conflict prevention, resolution, and mediation.

Namibia is proud of its record of paying her assessed contributions to International Organizations fully and on time. It is a well-known fact that Namibia's active participation in international Organisations has not only earned her recognition and respect among nations, but it has also put her high on the world map. Therefore, Namibia must remain engaged and continue to seek membership to governing bodies of various international organizations. Such an ambition requires that our requested budget be granted, Honourable Members.

Programme 3: Protocol and Consular Affairs

An amount of **NS19 802 000.00** (*nineteen million, eight hundred and two thousand Namibian Dollars*) is requested for this programme.

The program of Protocol plays a facilitating role in the preparation of all the visits undertaken by the Head of State, Vice President, PM, DPM and all the Ministers and Senior government officials as well as captains of industry. The program pays particular focus on the logistical arrangements both in advance and during the actual visits. This program also provides Consular Services to diplomats based in Namibia and ensure proper accreditation when international events are taking place in the country.

The program will focus on professionalizing the services offered by this program. This will entail restructuring of the program, as well as enlarging the staff component. The Ministry will

coordinate with the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development for the latter to facilitate protocol training for Regional Council officers.

Programme 4: Foreign Missions Representations

An amount of NS742 874 000.00 (*seven hundred forty two million, eight hundred seventy four thousand Namibian Dollars*) has been allocated for this programme.

Our diplomatic missions and consulates are key in the implementation of our foreign policy. The trade delegations that we see visiting Namibia so often are a direct result of the intervention of our Ambassadors, High Commissioners and their staff.

The opening of a diplomatic mission in the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, will bring the number of our diplomatic missions to 34 including 3 consulates. This is important for our efforts to broaden diplomatic presence across the globe. As we implement our program for poverty eradication, it will be important to continue to enhance our **economic diplomatic activities in order to contribute to the Growth at Home Strategy and the envisioned Harambee Prosperity Plan.**

Programme 5: Coordination and Support Service

An amount of NS57 109 000.00 (*fifty seven million one hundred AND nine thousand Namibia Dollars*) has been allocated for this programme.

The Coordination and Support of the Ministry's services is a determinant of the level of output that the Ministry will yield in terms of overall performance. Our key strategic pillar in this area is **to ensure effective performance through supportive management practices, while putting the people first.**

It is, therefore, a key objective and milestone that the Ministry has embarked on the quest for excellence standards through the implementation of the Performance Agreements, which are currently being reviewed.

Hon. Members

As I referred to earlier, in July this year, the Ministry will organize the Foreign Policy Review conference. To ensure the skills transfer and strengthening of capacity for the Ministry's Human Capital, it is our intention to facilitate a networking and learning exchange platform during the deliberations at the various sessions and themes that will be underway. Furthermore, the Ministry will convene the 8th Heads of Mission Conference in August this year in order to review our operations and to expose Heads of Mission to new Government priorities.

Before I conclude, let me inform that, the Ministry will continue to engage in **public diplomacy** by communicating effectively with both the internal and external stakeholders. We should generate sufficient appreciation among our citizenry for the necessity to be at the forefront of international relations and solidifying relations with other countries and international institutions. The public outreach that took us across many corners of our country during the previous years will continue. It is important that our foreign policy is rooted among our people, enjoying the support of all of us in Parliament.

Hon. Members,

Having elaborated on the achievements of the Ministry, I want to thank the Deputy Ministers Hon. Dr. Peya Mushelenga and Hon. Maureen Hinda for their dedication and commitment. Same commendation goes to all staff members of the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation both at home and at Missions. Under the able leadership of the Permanent Secretary, Ambassador Selma Ashipala-Musavyi the staff continue to be a reliable force for us as political leaders, and we are grateful to them.

At this stage, let me thank the Hon. Calle Schlettwein, the Minister of Finance, and Hon. Tom Alweendo the Minister of Economic Planning and Director-General of the National Planning Commission and their team for a people-centered budget presented to this House.

I now submit for your consideration the budget request for Vote 07 amounting to **N\$900 862 000.00 (Nine hundred million, eight hundred sixty two thousand Namibia Dollars)**

I thank you