

Anton von Wietersheim

Honourable Speaker,

I shall start my comment on this year's budget presentation, by expressing my surprise about the Hon Finance Minister's ability to convey – year after year – a rather positive picture of the serious mess we are in!

I shall qualify this blunt statement, Hon Speaker, by taking a closer look at some of the Hon Ministers introductory statements.

She quotes the previous budget's slogan "Growing the Economy, Optimizing Development Outcomes" and states that (Q) *'she is glad to report that we have made good progress to achieve the outcomes anticipated under the budget'* (EQ).

I for one can certainly not agree with that euphoric assessment!

And the Hon Minister continues a little later by saying (Q) *'in reality, we know too well that Namibia is still grappling with glaring social and structural economic challenges'* (EQ).

Yes, Hon Speaker, this takes us nearer to the bottom of the matter, and the Hon Minister then identifies these abovementioned challenges quite succinctly; and, they are not at all new to us, as they seem to be continuously defying the effects of the impressive slogans and clever policies – year after year!

In looking at these challenges identified by the Hon Minister, I should expect that this year's budget will comprehensively and forcefully address these challenges in an unprecedented manner, in order to finally start overcoming them in an effective and sustainable way, and not only superficially slap a dent into them here and there.

