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PARLIAMENT OFFICE

Budget Speech 2014

By

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NUDO President

Budget Speech –Hon.K.Riruako

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members of this August house let me use this opportunity to congratulate the minister of finance of tabling the budget so early. This is a sign of matured from her side this shall give the government to put into practice its work. It is a very good sign of self governance and determination which is guaranteed by peace and stability which might lead our country to better economic development.

The National Budget Speech is a much anticipated event every year and while many of us are keen to hear how much more we will pay for petrol and beer, there are other critical components that are well worth considering. After all, our country's budget is no different to our own budgets with a focus on finding a balance between income and expenses.

Hon: Speaker, Hon: Members we are debating the 23rd budget of our government and we must always look back and take stock of what was implemented and what is still

outstanding. By so doing the various Ministries will be in a better position, ^{to do a} ~~for~~ proper planning.

In the same vein I want to ~~It is critical that we~~ see greater "accountability and discipline in the stewardship of public resources", and in order to achieve this we need a public sector that is capable and paid a fair wage. We recognise the concerns about the costs of "the public sector wage bill" if these costs are related to a top-heavy administration at the expense of middle to lower level public servants, in particular critical auxiliary staff required to keep our clinics, hospitals and schools routinely maintained, inspected, clean and safe. We call on the Minister of Finance in conjunction with the Office ^{of} Prime Minister to undertake a thorough review of the "public sector wage bill" across Regions to ensure that wage costs are those of the many and much needed ordinary health workers and teachers rather than a bloated senior administration.

Having said that, Hon speaker our budget is earmarked at fiscal sustainability and job creating growth doing more with less, which is a very good indication that government is seriously embarking upon poverty eradication. The main

question remains how practically these jobs are going to be created. To my understanding an important sector to create jobs is the infrastructural development such as building schools, construction of roads to mention but a few.

Hon:Speaker, when you look at vote 10 Education it received more money as usual but no infrastructural development are taking place in some regions how can we convince the inhabitants of that specific regions that they might be catered for to have a bread on their tables.

As long as our budget is not skewed in such a way to equally benefit from it, the status quo will remain and region such as Hardap, \\\Karas and Kavango will suffer the consequences.

I therefore want to caution the Honourable Members who are heads of the ministries to make sure that in all our developmental projects we must tread all regions equally.

One of our leading think-tanks IPPR was "unimpressed by the small surplus Government is expected to produce by the end of this financial year, because the turnaround will be short-lived and spending is set to return to new highs in the next financial year."

Having said that Hon: Speaker let me dwell on some critical that I think they need more attention.

Regional Development

Hon. Speaker, I believe that the only vehicle that will bring about development in rural areas in particular and regions in general is the implementation of the Decentralization Policy as approved by Parliament.

It is only through strengthened Regional Governments where a true Regional Development will take place. The current budget tabled by Finance Minister will not have a positive impact on the regional development unless the elected people representatives, civic organizations and traditional leaders owned the process, more especially youth and women.

The remote control approach of development process that government has been implementing for the past 23 years failed to deliver the required needs, because the affected people in the regions have never been considered for them to be part and parcel of these programmes.

However I'm very pleased with mass housing projects this was overdue, but let this project not be money making

projects for flyby night's companies. So here I plea to the general to make sure this does not happen as these hoses are for the not so well people of our com ~~people in the~~ ~~regio~~

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Health

Hon: Speaker, Hon: Members as much as I appreciate the efforts of the Hon Minister of Health, I cannot accept that Namibia after 23 years of Independence, we don't have enough qualified doctors and registered nurses. One good example is the current sage of the UNAM doctors who now have to take long periods to complete their courses pleases the minister must do something very fast.

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Hon: Speaker, Hon: Members, this practice will minimize the long queues of patients lining up every day in front of hospitals waiting for doctors.

Lands

In conclusion, Hon:Speaker, let me touch on the issue that is very much close to my heart .That is "LAND" our land that has been taken away from our people. **The land that our forefathers paid with their precious blood.** The SWAPO government has dismally failed to priorities, address and resolves the land question. The land question is one issue which defined the urge for resistance to foreign invasion and settlement from the early days of the colonization, and consequently spurred the burning desire for decolonization over a period of more than hundred years.

The SWAPO regime has systematically marginalized the rural areas. The disparities between the urban areas continue to widen in both economic and social indicators. The rural areas are characterized by high levels of poverty, unemployment and poor quality services.

I propose that communal lands must resort to common property ownership under land users' associations, trusts and / or traditional authorities.

Future impact of government acquiring communal land, without turning such land into a communal state, need to provide post settlement support packages to sustain production and contribution to the economy. Land to be acquired should support a certain objective. It is no longer a secret that with the current land prices and lending rates it is question of time before Affirmative Action Loans Scheme (AALS) beneficiaries' farmers are repossessed. Production from the land will by no means enable emerging farmers to services their loans and make a decent living.

I advocate for land prices to be based on the optimal production value of the land (i.e. taking into account the productivity and suitability of the land)

Land has a variety of socio- economic political and cultural meaning to the Namibia people. Therefore, the land reform process must be specific in it's intend and have a differentiates purpose for which it and resettlement is intended.

Hon: Speaker, the current resettlement programme of the government does not address the real issue of those Namibians who physically lost their land.

In Namibia, we have two groups of landless people.

One group is of those who need land because of overcrowding in their respective ancestral land, the group that has never lost land because of colonialism.

The second group Hon: Speaker is the one of those landless people that lost their land as a result of brutal colonial and apartheid system of yesteryears.

To my understanding when implementing the resettlement programmes priority should be given to the second group of landless.

Hon: Speaker, the division of communal land in portions of 20ha's is not an answer to the outcry of land.

I believe that the best way to go about is for the communal land at least to resort to common property ownership or land users associations or even under traditional authorities. Furthermore I call upon the Ministry to embark upon serious consultations and bring back that act to Parliament for serious review.

I thank you.