



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

BUDGET SPEECH

VOTE 07

FOR THE 2014/2015 FINANCIAL YEAR

BY

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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

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INTRODUCTION

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,

The 2014/15 budget is being presented at a time when bilateral relations and multilateral undertakings are increasingly focusing on economic issues; a time when countries are forging new economic alliances. A case in point is the emergence of MINT that stands for Mexico, Indonesia, Nigeria and Turkey. Against this background, I would like to add my voice to those who spoke before me in congratulating the Hon. Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila, Minister of Finance, the Director General of the National Planning Commission and their staff for the 2014-2015 budget, and for the theme: “Growing the Economy and Optimizing Development Outcomes”. I fully concur with this theme as it is in line with the focus of our Foreign Policy, which is centered on economic diplomacy.

Honourable Chairperson,
Honourable Members,

REVIEW OF THE 2013/14 FINANCIAL YEAR INCLUDING ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS

When I submitted the budget of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the 2013/14 financial year, I had painted a picture of some parts on the African continent, being marred in conflicts such as the eastern part of the DRC, Mali and the Central African Republic. These conflicts stem partly from social and economic challenges. I painted a picture of rising African optimism, as they prepared themselves to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of the continental organization, the Organization of the African Unity today the African Union. I rounded up

my statement by giving you a glimpse of our bilateral and multilateral undertakings for the 2013/14 financial year. Today, I am proud to state that with the resources allocated to the Ministry, we have successfully coordinated four (4) in-bound and Four (4) out-bound Official and State Visits. The Ministry has also coordinated the participation of His Excellency the President, the Right Honourable Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister, in 18 regional and international meetings. We have also organized four (4) Sessions of Joint Commissions of Cooperation as well as two (2) Diplomatic Consultations with several of our bilateral partners. Most, if not all sectors of our social economic development continues to benefit from our sound bilateral and multilateral cooperation. I can refer to education, agriculture, trade and industry, health, among others. As Chair of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, Namibia has continued to successfully steer the activities of this body. In our capacity as Chair of the SADC Organ, Namibia led the SADC Election Observer Missions to Swaziland, and Madagascar. Today Madagascar has a democratically elected President in person of Mr. Hery Rajoanarimampianina. It is expected that Namibia will lead more Election Observer Missions to Malawi and South Africa in May this year.

In line with our foreign policy objectives of maintaining international peace and security, Namibia will assume membership of the Peace and Security Council for a two year term (2014-2016) beginning from April this year.

Further afield, the international community continues to demonstrate trust in Namibia by overwhelming electing Namibia to the UN Human Rights Council. This is testimony that our foreign policy is proactive and respected globally. We will discharge our responsibilities in these bodies consistent with our national interest and values.

As the world continues to change, so is the focus of regional and international Organisations. The Africa development blue print, namely Agenda 2063, is poised to change the face of Africa in the next 50 years. Active participation of

Namibia is essential if we are to benefit as a country from the objectives of Agenda 2063.

The end of the Cold War has left in place a unipolar world, with inherent insecurities, some of which are beginning to play out on the global arena. The emergence of political and economic alliances is all driven by the resultant growing insecurity of states. Therefore, the reality of today is such that for small countries like Namibia to succeed, we have to tactfully and carefully pursue our national interest in the region and beyond and position ourselves in the global. In order to do that, three things must happen. First, we must constantly review our Foreign Policy to reflect the aspirations of our people in this fast changing world. Secondly, we must have a structure of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that reflects the changing nature of the pillars of international relations, a befitting structure both at home and abroad will maximize the benefits we derive from the resources we invest in the implementation of our Foreign Policy. Thirdly, and perhaps more important, we must have an effective Foreign Service comprising professional men and women adequately equipped to promote and defend our national interest at all times without fear or favour. To this end, people to be employed in the Ministry as Foreign Service Officers must have appropriate fields of study. Similarly, diplomatic training and re-training will become an integral part of our Foreign Policy implementation. Hence the following budget request.

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,

MOTIVATION FOR THE 2014/15 FINANCIAL YEAR

The detailed budget request for the Ministry is on pages 65 - 73 of the Medium Term Expenditure Framework book and on pages 79 - 87 in the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure book. I now give you a brief summary of our budget request.

The Ministry is requesting a total amount of **N\$900 783 000** (*nine hundred million, seven hundred and eighty three thousand Namibian Dollars*) for the 2014/15 financial year.

16.65% or N\$150 000 000 (*one hundred and fifty million 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 buying or construction of Chanceries, and Residences as well as maintenance of the older properties. Since independence, the Ministry has acquired a total of 47 properties. Of these, one (1) is under construction and nine (9) have been renovated during 2013-2014 Financial Year.

Regarding the Ministry's headquarters, those of you who visit the Ministry, would agree with me that, that building does not in any way project a positive image to our foreign visitors. A lot of resources have been spent over the years to bring it to an acceptable level, however, since it was built many years ago, and for a different purpose, it can never be brought to the required standard of a Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Therefore, to me, the only remedy as a long term solution is the construction of a befitting Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At an appropriate time, the government shall revert to this Honourable House on this issue.

The remaining **83.35% or N\$750 783 000** (*seven hundred and fifty million, seven hundred and eighty three thousand Namibian Dollars*) of the total allocation will be utilized for the operational budget. This amount will be spread over the various programmes the Ministry is running as follows:

Programme 1: Regional and Bilateral Affairs Department

An amount of **N\$20 708 000** (*twenty million, seven hundred and eight thousand Namibian Dollars*) has been requested for this programme.

This programme aims at fostering bilateral relations between Namibia and her bilateral development partners. It further aims to explore new areas of economic cooperation as well as enhancing mutually beneficial bilateral relations in Africa and the world at large. Official and State Visits as well as Joint Commissions of Cooperation are initiated and organized under this programme. This programme is at the core of our Foreign Policy for everything we do abroad boils down to our relations with a given country. This amount is requested to expand our diplomatic presence and visibility in all the regions of the world. Africa is considered the new economic frontier. We are seeking a balanced representation both throughout Africa. We are also matching our diplomatic representation with our trade and investment priorities for the attainment of the objectives of Vision 2030. Under this programme we shall also monitor the implementation of agreements and MoUs signed between Namibia and other countries in all areas of our cooperation. Accordingly, the Ministry is seeking the cooperation of all line Ministries.

Programme 2: Multilateral Policy Co-ordination

An amount of **N\$39 208 000** (*thirty nine million, two hundred and eight thousand Namibian Dollars*) has been allocated for this programme.

Our bilateral relations as I mentioned before, impacts on our success at SADC, SACU, UN, AU, Commonwealth, NAM, to mention but some. Having strong bilateral relations with other nations facilitates success at the multilateral fora. It is therefore both pertinent and imperative that Namibia continues to enhance her stature internationally. Namibia continues to meet her financial obligations to regional and international organisations without fail. We also need to continue to actively participate at these fora by attending meetings; and ensuring that Namibians are made aware of job opportunities in regional and international organisations. As a member of the AU Peace and Security Council, Namibia will participate effectively to foster peace in Africa. Namibia is also expected to continue her participation in the United Nations Peacekeeping Missions, Peace building, mediations, post conflict- rehabilitation and reconstruction activities.

Gender equality has become an important pillar of international relations. In 2000, during our tenure in the UN Security Council as a non-permanent member, Namibia initiated an open debate in the Security Council that resulted in the adoption of UNSC Res. 1324 on Women, Peace and Security. Since then the issue has become dormant and, in order to remedy the situation, Namibia is arranging a very important event on the margins of the 69th Session of the UN General Assembly, to regain ownership as well as to reposition Namibia.

Programme 3: Protocol and Consular Affairs

An amount of **N\$15,495,000.00** (*Fifteen Million, Four Hundred and Ninety Five Namibian Dollars*) is requested for this programme.

The Department is the entrance gate between the Namibian State and Foreign Diplomatic Missions accredited to Namibia. It also receives all high ranking Foreign Government Guests visiting Namibia.

The Department is entrusted with the coordination and support of all official functions and ceremonies involving the Head of State, the First Lady, the Founding President, the Prime Minister, Deputy PM, the Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the National Council and the Chief Justice. In addition, it renders protocol services to your good selves, when you travel, as well as to all Offices, Ministries and Agencies in the preparation of national events, hosting Joint Commissions and regional and international conferences. May I appeal to Hon. Members and through you the would be invitees to state events in particular State Banquets that, if you are not able to attend, please inform our protocol department as no show up guests will be removed from the State list of invitees. It is also a waste of resources because the government would have paid for the number of guests invited including those who do not attend without the courtesy of informing the Protocol Department.

During the second half of the year the Ministry will organize a workshop on protocol and appropriate etiquette and all O/M/As will be invited to send officials for this training.

Programme 4: Foreign Missions Representations

An amount of **N\$768 367 00** (*seven hundred sixty eight million, three hundred and sixty seven thousand Namibian Dollars*) has been allocated for this programme.

Like in the previous year, I would like to point out and emphasize that this allocation has to be seen against the backdrop that its execution is affected by the volatility of foreign exchange rates.

The objectives of the Missions include the promotion of Namibia's national interest and the protection and welfare of our nationals' abroad, strengthening of relations with countries, regional and international organisations to which they are accredited to. On a number of occasions, we are confronted with emergency situations facing our nationals abroad but who do not inform our Missions of their presence in those countries. I wish to advise Namibians abroad, students and visitors on government or private missions, to please let the nearest Namibian Mission know about your presence to avoid a situation whereby the Mission will be confronted with circumstances of the person they are not aware of.

The amount requested under this programme will be to enhance the functions of the current 27 Diplomatic Missions and 3 Consular Posts. It will also enable the opening of four (4) new Missions in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo, Dakar – Senegal, Accra – Ghana and Helsinki – Finland. The decision to open these Missions was informed by the need to realize the objectives of Vision 2030 and the implementation of our National Development Programme (NDP).

Programme 5: Coordination and Support Services

An amount of **N\$57 005 000** (*fifty seven million and five thousand Namibian Dollars*) has been allocated for this programme.

The purpose of this programme is to provide administrative support to the vote's programmes which include activities of the Minister's Office and coordination thereof including Deputy Minister, the Permanent Secretary and the Special Advisor. It will ensure proper management of financial and human resources, the implementation of policies as well as for capacity building.

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,

Honourable Members,

In conclusion, I want to make it clear that, all international cooperation and support rendered to all arms of state, the private sector and to civil society is a result of our sound Foreign Policy and its effective implementation. Therefore, the budgetary allocation for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is for the success of our foreign policy objectives.

I thus submit for your approval the budget request for Vote 07 amounting to **N\$900 783 000** (*nine hundred million, seven hundred and eighty three thousand Namibian Dollars*).

I thank you