



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT, HOUSING AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

**CONTRIBUTION
OF
HONOURABLE PRISCILLA BEUKES, M.P.
DEPUTY MINISTER OF REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT, HOUSING AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
ON THE
2013/14 NATIONAL BUDGET
IN THE
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**Thursday, 29 MARCH 2012
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, WINDHOEK**

Thank You Honourable Speaker

First and foremost, I congratulate the Honourable Minister of Finance for having presented a detailed well prepared 2013/14 national budget. The budget avails funds earmarked for furthering the attainment of our **Vision 2030** and for enhancing financial control. The theme of this year's budget symbolizes that indeed financial prudence is the key element for the progress of our people - "Doing More with Less." I am of the view that budget before this august house will without any doubt in my mind sustain economic difficulties that all the countries in the world encounter currently. Notable is its characteristics that are geared towards targeting practical needs of the people of Namibia. As was the previous budgets, I have a premonition that this one will be resilient against the rough social-economic currents facing our communities.

The budgetary allocation for this will take us a long way in achieving some of the goals set out in Vision 2030. TIPEEG was initiated with two major intentions, firstly, to create employment and, secondly, to embark on infrastructural development which I consider as the starting point for Vision 2030. These are amongst other, building of schools, bridges, and other social amenities such as up-grading of sanitation and servicing of land for informal settlements in our cities, towns and rural areas.

I cannot emphasize enough the need for increasing funding for the housing of our people. After all, this is a secure investment which will bring direct financial returns back to government in a shortest period of time as houses will be allocated on loan basis. Our people must be pulled out of the abhorring and undignified environment of living is shacks.

Therefore, we should consider allocating more funds to Local Authorities and Regional Authorities, being sub-government structures strategically positioned directly to communities and an individual person, in order that they execute

well-conceived government programs. This will, in turn, create more employment to the local inhabitants of such places to stimulate more local economies.

Secondly, I wish to commend the professional service provided by the Office of the Auditor General. It has lived up to its mandate of keeping checks and balances in the fiscus by identifying flaws in administration, management and governance of state funds and brings any flaws to the open.

Thirdly, With respect to **TIPEEG**, I consider it as a tool for accelerating alleviation of poverty. For example if rural communities such as the ones of Gibeon, Hoachanas, Fransfontein, Berseba, Sesfontein are provided with skills and technical assistance in order to develop aqua-farming or fish farming as it is generally known then that in itself can alleviate poverty as these communities will sustain their respective livelihood from such endeavors.

I make mention of these villages and settlements as they are endowed with natural fountains which are discharging water that run to waste. The Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry and that of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development can offer development assistance with agricultural and other applicable projects. Again skills and technical assistance need to be provided. These two Ministries can empower such rural communities rapidly under TIPEEG. Such communities will be self-sustaining if such projects are implemented correctly and supervised accordingly by the responsible respective ministries.

Fourthly, Education being close to our hearts as the key to development, I shouldn't be hesitant to state that we have to embark heavily on investing in this sector to open channels for knowledge based development. My recommendation is to apply, as an example, the scenario employed for medical students at UNAM whose loans were converted to bursaries.

For critical fields of studies such as engineering, be they (clinical/civil/mechanical/electrical), science, geology, government should consider granting full bursaries. We must ensure that conditions attached to guarantee sustained long term and broad based benefits to our people. In my opinion, deserving students who wish to pursue studies in these critical areas should be given priority in terms of funding. The time frame for implementation should be the next financial year.

By so doing, many young Namibians will be encouraged to embark on studying these fields. Private sector should also play a significant role in assisting students with bursaries. There is a significant number of financial institutions and some mining companies that play a pivotal role but this horizon needs to be expanded so that all companies and enterprises can play a role be it small and nominal. Let there be less talking and more action when it comes to this critical area.

Fifthly, I would commend the Honorable Minister on the quest to deploy resources that will provide infrastructure for Walvis Bay in order to enable it to be a major trading hub in SADC Region which has obvious economic spin offs such as Forex, jobs, and foreign as well as domestic investments. This will also engender inter-regional trade between SADC countries.

Finally, from the look of things all systems are gearing up to have the SME bank being established with the appointment of Board of Directors recently. This is a significant contribution to economic stimulation and employment opportunities. It is a commendable milestone achievement and yet a critical step that has been taken by SWAPO-led Government which is meant to diversify and empower small and medium business.

Thank You Comrade Deputy Speaker