

GENERAL BUDGET SPEECH CONTRIBUTION ON

APPROPRIATION BILL 2014

HON. LUCIA WITBOOI

Hon. Speaker

Hon. Members

I rise today to give support and high commendations to the Minister of Finance, Hon. Saara Kuukongelva-Amathila ^{o her team} for a job well done, in presenting the 2014/2015 National Budget with the overriding theme of “fiscal sustainability and job-creating growth – doing more with less.” In simple language, the nation is asked to tighten the belt, with clearly stated macro-economic policies, and continued interventions by our Government.

I am happy for the continued support given to education; the ~~with~~ Thirteen thousand and sixty eight billion Namibian dollar. The Grade 10 and Grade 12 results, however, remain a serious source of concern, especially when half of the candidates are not gaining points to either enter the job market, or continue higher education. Education is a three-way alliance made up of teachers, parents and the learner. It is my humble view that the State continues to appropriate much needed resources, but that teachers and parents ^{learners} do not form a strong alliance

*of Quality
Education*

in the interest of the learners. Now that corporal punishment has been outlawed, ill-discipline is our biggest worry.

Hon. Speaker

Hon. Members

In the time and age we live in, education and training remains the biggest equaliser for all formerly disadvantaged Namibians. Education is the only tool which can empower present and future generations to live prosperous. It is, however, disappointing to read in newspapers, that some teachers and some schools do not create and provide conducive environments. Our learners from formerly disadvantaged societies need all the help they can get, and this include provision of afternoon and evening studies supervised voluntarily by parents and students. The lack of discipline, as well as the lack of resources at our family homes also contribute thereto that learners simply do not pay attention to their studies.

Hon Members

The never-ending domestic and gender-based violence is a cause of concern. We thank His Excellency Hifikepunye Pohamba, the President of the Republic of Namibia, for calling a National Day of Prayer, for us to go on our knees tomorrow invoking divine blessings of healing and of forgiveness. This is a step in the right direction.

The passion killings and related violence is a result of the lack of ethics and morality, and also of ill-discipline. I hail from Gibeon and even in that small settlement parents are increasingly losing control and discipline over their children. Parents simply go to bed whilst our children are roaming the streets. I partly blame the entertainment industry, such as television because private family prayers are no more. Parents are unable to recall our children from the streets and the concept of extended African family is abused by children and parents not adhering to family principles. Children just stay out late. Children watch television on Sunday mornings not attending Sunday Schools where the ethical and moral standards are laid.

As a result, our boys and men grow up with skewed values. What they see on television, which is mostly imagination and fake, is wrongly understood ~~is real~~. Violence on television is fake and not real, and yet our men think it is the rule, right and in order to violate women through rape, beatings and killings. Many parents do not use child lock and pass words for age restricted programs on television, and children are exposed to violence at ^a/_k too young age.

Hon. Speaker

Hon. Members

Poor service delivery robs our citizens of the benefits set out in the National Budget. It is disappointing, when travelling with Parliament Standing Committees, to hear people lamenting about not receiving quality services in regional and local government context. In some small places, people still do not have access to portable, clean and hygienic water. In places such as Aus in the //Karas Region, we still find the bucket toilet system some 24 to 25 years into Independence. I am urging the relevant line Ministries to kindly please look into this situation at Aus.

Hon. Speaker

Hon. Members

I am encouraged to read in the Development Budget about new buildings to be erected, but I am concerned about the quality and lack of maintenance at buildings. Many Government buildings are run down and dilapidated, and have become eye sores. I ~~am~~^{will be} thankful when such buildings are demolished and we see new high ~~rise~~ buildings arising out of the ashes. I want to compliment the line ministries who maintain and have clean and neat offices because we are the custodians and stewards of our national resources.

Hon. Speaker

Hon. Members

Our country has hundreds if not thousands of unemployed and unskilled school leavers in every town. Unemployed and hungry youth are an ugly scene for every family home. I am calling upon my Government, especially the Ministry of National Service, Youth, Sport and Culture to undertake massive public works. Also that such works be given on tender to youth organisations for job creation and poverty alleviation.

The National Service must be reviewed and expanded to include all school leavers. This will provide a bridge year to those who wish to delay entering institutions of higher learning, and provide our youth with much needed discipline and skills, instead of just wandering in our streets. Let us continue to erect more sport, cultural and recreational facilities in all major towns, villages and settlements, because a loitering youth is without value to this nation. Let us take unemployed children off the streets.

Finally ~~Mr Speaker~~

~~Hon. Members~~

Alcohol, drugs and substance abuse is destroying the moral of our society. There are just too many uncontrolled shebeens in our towns, villages and settlements. We are aware that all ministries do not receive the required resources, but law enforcement agents must undertake sustainable actions. Closing down illegal shebeens once a year, is simply not effective, but we require the focus and actions of the police on this.

We are happy to read about arrests being made by our Narcotics Branch of the Police, but we are asking communities not to harbour and hide drug sellers and drug pushers in our societies. It is sad that the so-called known drug-selling places are not targeted 24-hours under surveillance by the police, due to resource shortage. But I believe our communities should not be silent, but report and expose those involved in this illegal trade. For this reason, I denounce the calls for marijuana (dagga) to be legalise in this country because the social evils are just increasing all over the country by people subjected by these drugs.

On this note, I thank the Minister of Finance for a well-received Budget and give my support to this Appropriation Bill. I thank you.