

PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

National Assembly

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CONTRIBUTION TO THE BUDGET DEBATE

2011 – 2013

Presented By

Hon. Clara //Gowases

Republican Party Member of Parliament

Honourable Speaker
Honourable Members

I am indeed honoured to address this house, as I rise to join the Debate on The National Budget 2012/2013, on behalf of the Republican Party of Namibia driven by the needs of the Namibian people whom we represent.

I stand to congratulate Honourable Saara Kuugongelwa – Amadhila – Minister of Finance and her team for a well prepared budget and in the same vain I applaud the Budget Theme “Do more with Less”. It is however my prayer that we do not end up with “Do less with more”.

I agree that the honourable minister of finance that the unemployment rates are unacceptably high and urgent intervention is very much needed.

For 22 years we have developed one program after the other to address the plied of the impoverished Namibian masses yet we still face major socio-economic challenges such as high levels of *unemployment, poverty, socio-economic inequalities, labour skill shortages and narrow industrial base* as stated by His Excellency President Hifikepunye Pohamba during his State of the Nation address.

Honourable Speaker
Honourable Members

TIPEEG implementation has progressed on a very slow pace, which is understandable as it is still in its infancy. In principle TIPEEG presents solutions to economic challenges that our country faces and the minister has that her ministry has evaluated the implementation rate and came up with possible avenues for smooth implementation of the program.

However, the program needs thorough control, monitoring, and precise implementation as per its core objectives and principles.

We should guard as the government against TIPEEG becoming yet another tool to empower a selected few as many other programs such as the fishing quotas.

We have seen that fish quotas were given to individuals or organizations who have submitted proposals for community development projects which they wish to fund from the proceeds of the quotas, only to end up in the pockets of individuals without benefiting the people whom the quota was intended for.

Honourable Speaker

Honourable Members

We have seen that the Ministry of Education has received the lion share of the budget. This has been the case each and every fiscal year. Yet we still fail to produce able human resources to operate the engine of our economy.

For example: TIPEEG implementation is limited by the “scarcity of engineering capacity with regard to project preparation”. We should have our own engineers now to handle our projects. We spent so much to prepare our children only to import expertise 22 years after independence.

As a teacher myself, I believe that it is not how much money we put into education that would save our country but a re-introduction of disciplinary measures at our schools right from pre-primary school. A person without discipline would never succeed in life even if he or she has a high IQ.

We are productive people in this August house because we came from a community that formed us through strict discipline. We owe it to the youth to transfer that which our forefathers and mothers have transferred unto us.

Yet again the biggest chunk of the education budget ends up in the pockets of officials and does not directly reach the child.

With this kind of Budget we should not pay for any education in this country.

Honourable Speaker

Honourable Members

The honourable Minister of Finance has mentioned that the agricultural sector is the source of livelihood for 65% of the Namibian population.

The resettlement program was designed to give agricultural land to landless Namibians.

The Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rehabilitation buys a farm which employed people and contributed to the GDP as an economic unit and give it to people who do not have enough livestock to sustain the farm, while there are successful communal farmers who could be promoted to become commercial farmers.

A commercial unit which was a state fiscal asset becomes a liability.

So much money is invested in the Green Scheme projects but many of the Namibian products find it difficult to find Namibian markets as most retailers rely heavily on South African imports. When we invest so much money into projects we should devise policies that would force open Namibian markets for Namibian products.

Honourable Speaker
Honourable Members

Once again a lot of money is allocated to the servicing of land. We have seen that land was serviced in the Otjomuise 7de Laan location and these serviced erven were promised to the landless Namibians living in the peripheries of Windhoek.

For the past 4 years these plots are still not allocated. The City of Windhoek seems to keep the land until the demand increases so that they could rake in huge profits and thereby making it impossible for those people to access land.

Women and children are sleeping in harsh conditions in their corrugated shacks. Only the nail that holds the corrugated sheet to the pole is the only guarantee to their safety and security. Anyone can pull the sheet away anytime. Their children are beaten by snakes and scorpions. They do not have shelter against the rain and the cold. They live like foreigners in their motherland.

I wish to see that our government would see to it that the line ministries would see to it that these women are given the land that they are entitled to and stop the speculation with land.

Honourable Speaker
Honourable Members

I have observed a great developmental imbalance in the allocation of resources to regions in Namibia and this is very evident in the allocations funds per vote per region.

I would highlight only one Vote to substantiate my above statement.

VOTE 25 – Development of Communal Areas: Karas and Hardap Regions received close to 60% less than Kavango, Omusati, Ohangwena etc.

Indigenous People of the South live predominantly on livestock farming. They farm with a very high quality Boergoat which is being exported to South Africa on a large scale. Our people sell this rare high quality product to survive. The livestock totals are diminishing at an alarming rate. If we as lawmakers would not intervene and assist the people of the South to hold on to this product for a little longer we will face a situation of rural urban migration of people in search for employment although not having the right skills.

I therefore wish to see a budgetary will by the line ministries to address the abovementioned dilemma.

Honourable Speaker
Honourable Members

In conclusion, I wish to state that

We have in front of us a well prepared budget but it goes beyond figures as it will only become tangible to the people when implemented.

We have a frustrated nation out there, who became slaves of hope and promises made during election campaigns. A woman hanged herself with her 6 month old Baby on her back, babies are dumbbed because mothers do not see hope for herself and the infant.

We need to put the national interest first and treat all Namibians equal.

People from all regions voted us into our political offices to address their needs and they trust us with the distribution of their resources. They wait on the delivery of our promises.

Remember the pre-independence slogan on the lips of all Namibians: One Namibia, One Nation. This is what kept us going in our quest for independence, each and every black Namibian contributed in his or her own way for us to achieve this objective.

Let us therefore distribute the National resources equally across all sectors of the Namibian economy.

Finally, the 21st century should be a century for women. We should strive to expand the frontiers of political representation for women which in turn will be a gateway for higher social, economic and political achievements nationwide.

The industrial era was made for male domination but the era of information technology and the knowledge based economy should be the era for women to attain equality.

If we refuse to develop together and equally as men and women created equal, then our development agenda is equally defeated.

Let us move from promise to targeted interventions translated into actions for a prosperous Namibia.

I thank you.