



MAIDEN SPEECH APPROPRIATION BILL 2016/2017

BY

HON TD MURORUA

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Hon Speaker,

Hon Members,

Allow me to first and foremost thank the Namibian electorate and specifically the UDF Members and supporters for having elected me to represent them in this August House.

Hon Speaking, Hon Members,

Let me also use this opportunity to express my gratitude and that of my party the UDF towards His Excellency Dr. Hage Geingob the President of the Republic of Namibia for promoting right from the onset the policy of inclusivity for all Namibians regardless of their political affiliation, race, sex, religion or social-economic status in society.

Hon Speaker Sir, Hon Members,

I wish to thank the Minister of Finance Hon Calle Schlettwein for a very well-articulated and timeous budget that he has presented with the fundamental objectives to;

1. Reassert and re-establish a path for public Finance to maintain macro-economic stability as an enabler for future sustainable and socio-economic development and
2. To redirect scarce financial resources to priority areas of National Development to unlock potential economic growth, job creation and prosperity for all.

Hon Speaker, Hon Members,

The statement by His Excellency the President at the opening of the Third Session of the Sixth Parliament, that this is the time to implement and therefore that this is the year of implementation, is telling the Namibian Nation and specifically everybody in any National leadership position and public service, that there is no room for business as usual anymore.

Hon Speaker,

The above words coupled with what the Hon Minister of Finance has stated on page 4 in paragraph 8 in his budget statement for 2016/2017 financial year, that this budget gives scope for the implementation of National priorities to commensurate with the available resource envelope, tells the Nation in a very subtle way, whether we like it or not, that money is very scarce. Hence your caution to do more with less. So thank you very much Hon Schlettwein for your boldness to reiterate that to the Nation.

Hon Speaker Sir,

Hon Members,

Mention is also made of the Harambee Prosperity Plan by His Excellency Dr. Hage Geingob, our President and the creation of a new ministry for Poverty Eradication. All of them are very good ideas, but requiring boldness to bring the understanding that, yes, we need to work together as a Nation to build a prosperous Namibia and not just believe that we must queue up for allowances, grants and food aid.

Hon Speaker, it is important to say it, because Harambee must in reality be the establishment of a national culture for hard work, for the sake of National development and prosperity for all and by all.

That the real vulnerable groups of people should be assisted through this allowances, grants and food aid is true and acceptable, but we need to watch as policy makers and public servants against developing policies that are advancing party political mileage.

Hon Speaker Sir, Hon Members,

We cannot as leaders boast with good governance, peace stability and rule of law on the one hand and on the other hand claim that there are still marginalized communities. This, in essence, if it is true, means that there are still people or authorities marginalizing communities, and that should then, if it is true be dealt with by a competent court of law.

Because reality is having it that poor people are among all the groups all over Namibia and not only among those whom we can easily convince to follow us. In any event Government has got the legal and moral obligation to care for everybody within the Country.

Hon Speaker,

Poverty is a reality and I am not in the slightest sense trying to understate that, but we need to let everybody understand that regardless of poverty, any able bodied person need to work to build his/her prosperity and that of the Nation.

Hon Speaker, Hon Members,

Free primary and secondary education has been long overdue in Namibia and it is very good that we are having it now implemented, but it is a pity that government does not realize what fatal contribution it is making towards the unwanted promotion of poverty by letting young grade 10 and 12 dropouts in the streets or direct them towards the unaffordable NAMCOL by not letting them repeat their grades which they have failed regardless of their ages, because, the eventual objective to have them as future leaders sharpened by our tertiary educational institutions.

I am stating this, because nowhere in the entire world and also in Namibia, is there a restriction for enrollment at these institutions, so they can, to the honest opinion of the UDF Party repeat until they have passed and then enter University to become our future leaders who will help build the Nation instead of us allowing the perishable talents of our own Namibian youthful talents in our streets and corridors.

Hon Speaker, Hon Members,

The priority funding for road, rail, water, energy and ICT infrastructure are all very welcome, but the nation needs to be informed why we are not utilizing the new railway line to the North, is it because it is too wide for our trains, and that the foundations are not that stable enough to carry heavy loads?

On Water, Hon Speaker, who, in this Country is not aware of the very strong water resource at Kombat. And is any water resource not the property of Government, that we don't plan good infrastructure to expand the use of the water to other dry areas.

On Energy Hon Speaker, why is the development of Kudu and Xarries taking us as a Nation very long, or is the suspicion true, that it is because some elites have invested in Kudu, while others have their pie in Xarries and that the fight is about which one is to be developed to benefit these elites. While in the meantime our Nation is suffering without efficient electricity supply all over Namibia and we are spending more and more to buy electricity for RSA.

Hon Speaker, Hon Members,

On ICT infrastructure development I still don't understand the logic we are trying to apply. Namibia Post and Telecommunication Holdings own all infrastructures in Telecom, Nampost and MTC on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Namibia. In all honesty it's a 2-3 billion government fully owned Company.

But we are as a Nation now doing our level best for the past two years to liquid it ate, just to create another one. But It is the very company that is in a position to build all these ICT infrastructures we are taking about. And mind you some infrastructures in the form of towers are already built in Kunene and elsewhere, but are not equipped because we as leaders do not even understand whether our mandate is to rollout ICT infrastructure on behalf of Government or to operate on the basis of Return on Investment.

Yet we are trying to bring in ICT in the national education curriculum mainstream.

The question is, are the rural schools ever going to benefit, and are we ever going to be able to curb the rural urban immigration and thus spread development equitably allover Namibia.

Our Government of Namibia is having a 64 percent share in MTC, yet Government has mandated the minority foreign shareholders to run the company as it deem fit and the Board Members of MTC, who are mostly Namibians, are in no position to direct the company to try and meet the National socio-demographic segment needs all over Namibia.

Hon Speaker, Hon Members,

UDF is humbly of the opinion that the entry point to start addressing the high inequality in the promotion of wealth creation and shared prosperity should start with provision of real affordable housing to the poor so that they can also become credit worthy with the conventional financial institutions in Namibia.

Hon Speaker, Sir,

It is the UDF view that we have a very good vehicle to tackle this, but we only use it when it fits us and that is the alienation scheme, which as policymakers,

we always say that it is over, but when we, the executive and public servants want to buy a Government house, than that house is offered to these groups on an affirmative Action Alienation basis. The offer from Government to them is so low while the market price is skyrocketing and makes the beneficiary immediately creditworthy.

1. Now why can't we do the same with the old houses in our town's that belongs to the Local Authorities to create wealth for our own poor people?
2. Servicing of Land in towns and cities

Hon Speaker, Hon Members

There is hardly any Local Authority that is servicing Land with monies derived from their own revenue.

Instead, it is the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development who provides these monies, which the Ministry, via the appropriation process received indirectly as revenue from the very people who are in need of houses yet when the pricing of houses are made up, the monies for servicing of land is again derived from these poor people and that makes the prices of erven and thus of houses very high in Namibia.

Hon Speaker, Hon Members,

I am pleading with you all as leaders, since housing is a constitutional right for every Namibian and on top of that Namibia has ratified the UN Convention on Habitat more than 15 years ago as a Government. So, let us please make life easy for our own people and use our money to uplift them.

Hon Speaker, Hon Members,

It is high time that we need to also shift gears when it comes to the Land issue.

We are all happy with the resettlement program, but if we really want to address the issue of wealth creation and prosperity for our people, we need to introduce a system where beneficiaries could graduate from the 99 year leasehold system to a title deed system at a cost and coupled with stringent conditions, and training so as to enable them and create real wealth for the Namibian people.

Hon Speaker, Hon Members,

I must state that I am very hesitant to agree totally with my Hon Minister of Finance on the 0,9 percent economic growth rate for RSA as opposed to the 4,3 percent projected for Namibia.

Yes, we will in Namibia grow in the mining sectors of Uranium and Gold, but the variance is too big between 0,9 and 4,3 percent for South Africa and Namibia respectively.

Yes I agree that the climate for investment in South Africa might not be that favorable, but South Africa whether we like it or not is and will remain for a long period a giant regardless of other trading partners that might be increasing.

It is true that we no longer do observe the South African cements since Ohorongo has started operating on a fully fledged basis, but for quality steel, and corrugated iron sheets, South Africa is the place to go. The Rosh Pinah Mine is producing flat iron sheets, but dispatched them to South Africa just to come back as corrugated for IBR sheets. So far infrastructure elopement we will go to South Africa time and again.

Hon Speaker, Hon Members,

Besides all these we are very dependent on South Africa for our food supplies and this current budget does not at all prioritize the production of food for our own needs as a Nation.

And that while our industrialized mechanization within our manufacturing sectors is mostly depending form South African suppliers

Hon Speaker, Hon Members,

I would also like to state of this point in time that I am happy with the allocations made so far although I would like to see an increase for the Health and Agriculture sectors; and would thus prefer to wait and see how everything is going to work out on the long run.

In conclusion, Hon Speaker, Hon Members I would like to remind this August House that fiscal consolidation to curtail negative effects of budgetary expansion and fiscal austerity will only be achieved if our Finance Minister would boldly tell the implementers and other executive Members of our Government that we are indeed running short of fiscal resources and that we all should therefore abide by our planning.

I THANK YOU

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