



MOTIVATION FOR THE ESTIMATES FOR VOTE 11

FOR THE

2014/2015 FINANCIAL YEAR

BY

HON. DR THEO-BEN GURIRAB, MP

SPEAKER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 24 MARCH 2014

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
WINDHOEK
KHOMAS REGION**

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,

Honourable Members,

I rise before this August House to motivate Vote 11 of the National Council, which outlines the House of Review's expenditure estimates for the Financial Year 2014/2015.

The Namibian Constitution in Articles 74 and 75 empowers the National Council to investigate and report to the National Assembly any subordinate legislation, reports and documents referred to it by the National Assembly. The Constitution further mandates the House of Review to recommend legislation on matters of regional concern for consideration by this very August House.

Since 2013/14 financial year, the National Council had one programme” Legislative Support Services” which has two main activities namely; Strengthened Capacity of Review and Oversight, and Parliamentary Coordination and Support Services.

During the year under review, under the programme “**Legislative Support Services**”, the Chairperson of the National Council conducted outreach programmes to Omusati, Oshana and Oshikoto regions, where he shared with the citizens information on how the citizens can

participate in the lawmaking process. He also explained the socio economic benefits of various Acts of Parliament and sensitised the communities on the disadvantages of the continuous scourge of Gender Based Violence which has gripped our country with severe brutality especially in 2014.

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,

Honourable Members,

During the year under review, National Council reviewed eleven (11) Bills, of which eight (8) were confirmed without amendments and three (3) with amendments.

Furthermore the National Council Standing Committees increased their oversight function on the execution of the national programmes by comparing the development budget execution against the actual delivery of projects. The National Council convened a special session which considered nine (9) Committee reports. The recommendations emanated from this special session were communicated to the relevant Offices, Ministries and Agencies for possible implementation.

Under the leadership of the Vice-Chairperson of the National Council, the National Council Women Caucus conducted the Second Rural Women with male partners Conference which was in compliance with the 56th UN Commission on the Status of Women Conference of 2011. This session was convened under the theme, **“Empowering Women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges”**. The conference equips our rural people with the knowledge on how laws are made and it also generates issues of concern that the delegates can further discuss with their elected leaders in order to strengthen the lawmaking process. That event was very unique as male partners participated fully for the 1st time and all our regions were represented.

Over the years the National Council has requested this August house to fund its membership obligations to regional and international parliamentary organisations for purposes of benchmarking on best parliamentary practices and to participate in forums that sets parliamentary agendas to contribute to strengthened principles of parliamentary democracy.

The Honourable Chairperson attended the Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth held in Wellington, New

Zealand. Hon. Kapere was elected to serve on the Standing Committee as a representative of the Southern Africa region for a period of two years.

In July 2013, under the leadership of the Chairperson, the National Council successfully hosted The 44th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Africa Region Conference under the leadership of Chairman Kapere as the outgoing President for this organisation. During this conference, Namibia's leadership capacity at parliamentary international fora was once again acknowledge with the election of our own Honourable Lucia Witbooi as the Chairperson of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians for Africa.

Furthermore the National Council continues to equip its members and staff members with the requisite skills to enhance their legislative and oversight roles by conducting training in diverse areas which include budget execution, oversight effectives and public relations skills. The National Council in order to enhance the well-being of its workforce conducted a team building exercise workshop for both; members and secretariat and has since established a Wellness Centre.

The National Council also prepares people, particularly the youth; to carry out their roles as citizens and enhance public participation in the

legislative process by conducting civic education activities which includes; visiting different schools, participation at trade fairs and various educational exhibitions.

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,

Honorable Members,

In 2014/2015 financial year the National Council activities under the Legislative Support Services" focuses on two main activities: firstly, that of **"Strengthened Capacity of Review and Oversight"**, and secondly **Parliamentary Coordination and Support Services."**

The activity related to **"Strengthened Capacity of Review and Oversight"** entails the conduct of outreach programmes that the Presiding Officers undertake annually to educate the public on the lawmaking process.

The other activities under this programme include:

- To honour regional and international parliamentary obligations.
- To Print the Witness Guide in Braille.

- To strengthen the lawmaking process through the referral of Bills to Standing or Select Committees for further consultations with citizenry.
- The conducting of investigative activities by Standing and Select Committees in line with the oversight function of Parliament.

In order to fulfill the above mentioned activities the National Council needs **Twelve Million One Hundred and Forty Nine Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$12 149 000.00)**.

Under the second main activity; **“Parliamentary Coordination and Support Services”** the National Council will focus on the following issues:-

- Improve citizens’ understanding and participation in the law-making process, through the conduct of civic education programmes and the sharing of information through all means of various forms of media.
- The National Council will continue to promote the concept of taking Parliament closer to the people. Hence it will conduct its second regional session at Keetmanshoop in the //Karas Region, during the beginning of the 2014/15 financial year.
- Create opportunities for Members of the House and staff regarding their regional and international obligations and to

conduct capacity and competency building programs for Members of the National Council and staff.

- Start with the physical preparatory work for the construction of additional office space for the National Council.

The total amount of **Ninety One Million, Three Hundred and Forty Seven Thousand Namibian Dollars (NS91,347,000.00)** is needed to implement the above mentioned activities.

In total, to cover the National Council's operational and developmental commitments during the 2014/2015 Financial Year, an amount of **One Hundred and Three Million, Four Hundred, Ninety Six Thousand Namibian Dollars (NS 103, 496, 000)** is required.

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,

Honourable Members,

I request this August House to approve the sum of **One Hundred and Three Million, Four Hundred, Ninety Six Thousand Namibian Dollars (NS103 496 000)** for both the operational and development budget of the National Council, for the financial year 2014/2015.

I thank you