



Electoral Commission of Namibia

MOTIVATION FOR BUDGET VOTE 28
ELECTORAL COMMISSION OF NAMIBIA
2014/2015 FINANCIAL YEAR
INTRODUCED BY
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SPEAKER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WINDHOEK

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Check against delivery

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,

Honourable Members,

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the budget for Vote 28, Electoral Commission of Namibia (ECN) for the 2014/2015 financial year.

A total amount of **Three Hundred and Seventy Four Million, Six Hundred and Eighty Thousand Namibian Dollars** (N\$374,680,000.00) is being requested for consideration and approval by Parliament.

As the Honourable Members of this august House are well aware, the Electoral Commission of Namibia (ECN) was established by an Act of parliament in this very august House. The Electoral Act, Act 24 of 1994, sets out a clear mandate for the ECN - to be the exclusive body to direct, supervise, manage and control the conduct of elections in Namibia in a fair, transparent and impartial manner with the aim of delivering credible elections, subject to the Act and the Namibian Constitution.

In the fulfillment of this statutory mandate, ECN has just concluded the 3rd General Registration of Voters (GRV), and I may add the word 'SUCCESSFULLY'. I am reliably informed that

ECN has excelled beyond expectations by registering over **ONE MILLION** eligible Namibian voters, both in-country and abroad, with the Supplementary Registration of Voters still to come. In this regard, we must congratulate the Commission for a job well done.

Furthermore, the Honourable Members of the august House also ought to know, by now, that **2014** is the year when the 4th General Elections, the Presidential and National Assembly Elections will take place. Therefore, in my motivation for Vote 28, I am very much mindful of the mandate bestowed upon the ECN, which invariably must reflect the financial implications of conducting a national undertaking of this magnitude.

In this year of General Elections, the ECN has three crucial programmes under its budget namely (1) Voter Education and Information Dissemination (2) Administration of Elections and (3) Supervision and Support Services. In turn, these three programmes have three major objectives, namely to:

1. Increase awareness of the democratic process;
2. Ensure transparent, free, fair and credible elections; and
3. Ensure participation in the electoral process.

The breakdown of the budget for the three programmes of the Electoral Commission is as follows:

1. Voter Education and Information Dissemination

Voter Education is one of the core functions of the ECN and normally precedes all other electoral activities; therefore, the ECN has designed a comprehensive voter education campaign aimed at informing all eligible voters about these important events on the election calendar. With the envisaged introduction of the Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), extensive advertising activities will be conducted whereby adverts will not only be focused on the elections but also on the use of EVMs. The voter education sessions together with advertisements will complement each other to help give required information to the public in order to make the public aware of the EVMs, as well as to do away with misconceptions about the machines that some people may have, since effective advertising campaigns will provide maximum awareness of the EVMs and elections.

An amount of **Eighty Two Million, Six Hundred and Ten Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$ 82,610,000.00)** has been allocated for voter education. The purpose of this programme is

(1) to conduct voter education and disseminate voter information, (2) to promote democratic culture and good governance so as to ensure credible election processes, (3) raising public awareness on elections, democracy building and political tolerance during elections.

The main activities to be carried out under this programme include (1) Voter Education Publications, Production and Publicity, (2) Regional Voter Education, (3) Research, Monitoring and Evaluation and (4) Regional Voter Education Capacity Building.

2. Administration of elections

In terms of the provision of Section 49 (2) of the Electoral Act, 1992 (Act No. 24 of 1992) as amended, the ECN is mandated to hold elections, be it national, regional, local authority or by-elections and to ensure good governance and the consolidation of democracy. During the forthcoming financial year, the ECN is thus obliged to hold Presidential and National Assembly Elections. Voting under this sub-activity will take place in all political regions countrywide and at all Foreign Embassies and these processes are separately costed. In addition, the ECN is planning to hold Otjinene and Bukalo Local Authority Elections during the

course of 2014/2015 financial year, in these newly proclaimed local authorities.

Furthermore, during the course of 2014/2015 financial year, the ECN will hold any **By-election** that may emerge in case of a vacancy as a result of the resignation or death of any of the councilors of any Regional Council. Budget estimates have been based on a projection of three (3) By-elections for the entire financial year.

An amount of **Two Hundred and Eleven Million, Two Hundred and Ninety Five Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$211,295,000.00)** is being requested for the successfully carrying out all the planned electoral operations as highlighted under the activities of (1) Registration of Voters, (2) Holding of Elections, (3) Update of Voters Register, (4) Computerisation, Management and Maintenance of ECN Logistics, (5) Resource Centre Management, (6) Legal Challenges, and (7) Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs).

These EVMs are intended to replace the use of paperwork based system during the forthcoming National Elections (Presidential and National Assembly Elections) and any preceding or subsequent elections to these national elections in 2014. However, the current

number of EVM sets acquired during 2011/2012 financial year is no longer adequate to run Presidential and National Assembly Elections scheduled to take place towards the end of 2014, as the number of EVM sets will equally and proportionally increase in response to the increased number of election teams needed in 2014 and beyond.

3. Supervision and Support Services

The purpose of this programme is to provide administrative support to all the ECN's programmes to ensure the proper financial management, optimal utilisation of the allocated resources and other administrative issues. Therefore, an amount of **Eighty Million, Seven Hundred and Seventy Five Thousand Namibia Dollars** (N\$ 80,775,000.00) has been allocated to ensure the smooth running of the day-to-day activities of the Electoral Commission of Namibia.

The major activities carried out under this programme include (1) Minor renovation and maintenance of the ECN Head Office, (2) Training & Development, Gender and Capacity Building, (3) Acquisition and Maintenance of Information Technology (IT) Equipment and Systems, (4) General Administration Costs, (5) Construction of Regional Offices, (6) International fees and

subscription and (7) Wellness Promotion, Prevention and Mitigation of HIV/AIDS.

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,

Honourable Members,

4. Conclusion

In keeping with its mandate, the ECN is obliged by law to conduct General Elections during this financial year. This presentation makes a case for the activities and programmes that the ECN wishes to undertake during the year. In order to discharge these duties successfully and thereby uphold the democratic principles and tenets of democracy enshrined in our Constitution and the Electoral Law of the Republic of Namibia, I urge all Honourable Members of this August House to support these motivations and approve the budget of **Three Hundred and Seventy Four Million, Six Hundred and Eighty Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$374,680,000.00)** for the Electoral Commission of Namibia for the 2014/2015 financial year.

I THANK YOU