



*9 February 2022*

**MESSAGE FROM THE SPEAKER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, HON.  
PROF. PETER H. KATJAVIVI ON THE CONSTITUTION DAY**

**Fellow Namibians,**

Today marks 32 years since the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic Namibia by our Founding Fathers and Mothers. The Constituent Assembly drafted the Namibian Constitution in record time, and unanimously adopted it on the 9<sup>th</sup> February 1990, the day annually observed as the Constitution Day.

Under the able Chairmanship of H.E. Dr Hage G. Geingob, the Constituent Assembly agreed to make decisions by consensus and not by majority vote. This was a remarkable achievement, given that the Members of the Constituent Assembly were from different political parties that had fought against each other during the liberation struggle. It created a political culture of respect and a common commitment to national development that served Namibia well, and should be preserved.

Through the protective walls of our Constitution we were able to build a strong nation guided by the principles of UNITY, LIBERTY and JUSTICE. Since the first UN supervised elections were held in November 1989, we have also been able to conduct six more democratic and free elections as prescribed by the Constitution.

Our Constitution and the laws crafted by Parliament since Independence have repealed the discriminatory legal instruments of the apartheid era, to ensure that all people are treated as equal before the law. The Constitution guarantees fundamental human rights and freedoms. These rights are absolute and enjoyed by every citizen of the country.

Based on the principles enshrined in our Constitution, we as a nation have pursued the policy of National Reconciliation, the equality of all races, as well as equality between men and women. Today, gender parity has become a key issue in the National Assembly as we have 46% female MPs and 54% male MPs in the House. The number of young parliamentarians has also increased.

In order to inculcate a culture of democracy and leadership in young people, the National Assembly proudly hosts the Children's Parliament every year, and the National Council has an annual Youth Council. These serve as platforms for Namibian

children to address the challenges they face, to recommend to the government what needs to be done, and to gain experience of democratic parliamentary processes.

It would be good to celebrate this important day in the annals of our history in a more significant way and make our Constitution a living document. As proud citizens we must respect and guard our Constitution to the best of our abilities.

Long live the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia!!!