



NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

MAIDEN SPEECH BY THE HONORABLE FRANS JOSEPH BERTOLINI
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2023

Thank you Hon. Speaker, Hon. Members,

I would like to greet you all Honorable members of Parliament in the Mighty name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

**Hon. Speaker,
Hon. Members,**

Allow me to introduce myself, my name is Frans Joseph Bertolini, I hail from the Mighty Hardap Region, specifically Rehoboth my hometown of which I am born and bred.

I am representing the UPM under the Leadership of Member of Parliament Honorable Jan van Wyk, President of the United People's Movement (UPM), under the Alliance agreement of the UPM/PDM of which I also recognize the Leader of the Official Opposition, Honorable McHenry Venaani.

I would like to thank my leadership and more importantly the electorate for the opportunity granted to me to make a difference in this August House.

**Hon. Speaker,
Hon. Members,**

It is my hope that after 33 years of Independence, and the challenges that we still face in our country, that there will still continue to be robust debate in this house concerning matters of development and growth for the ever increasing population of our great Namibia.

Some of those issues that should be tackled are poverty eradication, free education, unemployment, lack of affordable housing, boosting the agricultural sector, inequality of various marginalized communities, high inflation and return on investment in Mining activities. In my tenure here I would like to see these and many more areas vigorously addressed.

**Hon. Speaker,
Hon. Members,**

This country is a vast land of various opportunities, from gold to diamonds, from fish to beef, from abundant sunlight and vast tracks of land, to now the potential of oil. This country has natural resources that should be one of the answers to many of the challenges we face and we should seize opportunities when they arise for the betterment of our people. We even face the possibility of becoming the bread basket of the SADC region, if we prudently manage our resources and extract what is rightfully ours, demanding proper value addition to all areas of mining and agriculture.

**Hon. Speaker,
Hon. Members,**

Thank you once again for the warm welcome and the privilege to stand before you all to serve as a leader of this great nation. Let us concentrate on what we can do versus pointing out what someone else has not or cannot do. Let us use our energy, knowledge and resources constructively. Let us respect the people of our communities enough to tell them the truth: they can handle. Let us look beyond the next election in our decision-making and be authentic, decent and genuine in our intent. Let us be the change that our peoples past, present and future want to see. My greatest wish is that at the end of my time in this House, I shall have contributed towards making Namibia a better place than it is today for its people to live in.

I thank you.