

Motivation Statement on the Motion on Climate Change and Mitigation
by Honourable Dr. Tangeni C.K. Iijambo
on 20 September 2023

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members, Fellow Namibians. Climate change impacts are spiralling out of control across the world. The increasing intensity and frequency of extreme weather events are going beyond our ability to adapt, as made crystal clear by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Sixth Assessment Report. Day by day, changes to our seas, ecosystems and weather systems are crippling lives, livelihoods and economies. As the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres put it

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☞ Humanity has opened the gates to hell. Horrendous heat is having horrendous effects. Distraught farmers watching crops carried away by floods. Sweltering temperatures spawning disease. And thousands fleeing in fear as historic fires rage (9/20/2023).

Humanity has opened the gates to hell; humanity must close the gates of hell. At COP28 in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, world leaders and governments signalled their intent to meet the scale of the crises we face, develop solutions to loss and damage and deliver for people suffering climate impacts. To date ~~of~~ of the \$100 billion pledges the worst polluters came through, while estimates suggest that Africa alone would need \$500 billion to cope. The time for national action is therefore, right now.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members, Fellow Namibians. Namibia is among the top five driest countries in the world. That awareness alone obliges us all as nationals (citizens and legal residents) to play our roles as individuals, communities, and regions to rethink, reconsider and realign our priorities with the realities of a drastically and fast changing environment. In 2022 the World Bank estimated that Namibia is only 54% urban, and that percent includes people who live under conditions similar to or worse than the rural conditions they left where they came from. This means that 36% of Namibians live in rural areas or they live rural-like lives and experience the negative effects of climate change daily. Namibians are ready to play their roles, but in this fast-changing era of climate turbulence, the national government, and traditional authorities must provide decisive leadership. Our contribution to this discussion as SWANU of Namibia is that it would be prudent to set up a commission to probe into the totality of climate change and mitigation challenges. All motions should redirect the focus of education, to how we can form a unified system of continuous environmental education. The quality of environmental education is a component of the state's environmental security system. We are aware of the GRN's Namibia's Updated Nationally Determined Contribution (2021) to climate change discussion. Our argument is about whether the update has informed national policy or it was simply produced for foreign consumption. Put differently,

for instance: What is the role of legislative regulation in the professional training and retraining of specialists, whose activities are related to the environment?

Considering, the consecutive years Namibia has suffered from acute to severe drought, mere drought relief cannot be sustainable in these drastic global climate changes. The vulnerability of Namibia in terms of endemic droughts for years, cannot be limited to periodic drought relief efforts. They proved unsustainable beyond reasonable doubt. Making such efforts sustainable would require involving the people affected as providers (givers) of the solutions needed rather than simply hopeless receivers (getters) of aid. Aid, whether foreign or domestic, is not always the best and sustainable solution!

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members, Fellow Namibians, ^S As another example, the dryness and harshness of Namibia warrants that each house or structure being built in this country to have water harvesting facilities. This should preferably be promulgated to trickle down to architects, designers, construction companies and all else having to do with structures and houses. This is an important point because comparatively, structures designed without heating facilities in Europe do not PASS the construction law requirements of that continent, and people will otherwise freeze to death. Why should we expect any differently for our people here in Namibia? *In terms of alleviatory measures, according to our weather patterns*
Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members, Fellow Namibians. For us in Namibia, we cannot continue to subject our people to expensive water and electricity tariffs. Most drops of rainwater that falls on the surface should be considered of extreme high value. This is an old fact based on traditional knowledge as our Khoi-San ancestors will tell us, or study of the Welwitschia mirabilis will reveal. What is new is the use of the old knowledge to create employment, improve nutrition through household gardens and alleviate constant water shortages for communities. Water availability enhances community sanitation. Enhanced sanitation, lowers the probability of disease, increases health, and hence human capital accumulation. Hence, well thought through pre-feasibility, feasibility and factual objective data deserve to be collected, for example as it is no longer 'business-as-usual'. Times are changing and if we are not pro-active to cope with the fast pace, we expose our people to severe destructive disasters.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members, Fellow Namibians. Parliamentarians or Legislators have a huge role to play in addressing climate change, mitigation and adaptation across the world, in developing, scrutinising and passing legislation and holding governments to account, ensuring climate responses are just, equitable and accountable to communities. This means new laws must be passed across the world, both to introduce new forms of raising finance based on the principle of 'polluter-pays' which can also help to drive down emissions, as well as introducing legislation which ensures finance to address losses and damages, gets to affected communities who need it most. Namibia must stake out her role and play it!

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members, Fellow Namibians. The role of parliamentarians is vital in driving forward the level of ambition that this crisis needs and in turning up political ambition beyond the technocratic and incrementalist approaches which often slow down the pace of action required. Sovereign Namibia deserves to introduce policy frameworks to ensure that funding to address climate related losses and damages gets to communities in need as quickly as possible, is locally-led, gender responsive and dependable.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members, Fellow Namibians. I would like to conclude by reiterating the inevitable prevalence of climate change globally and its catastrophic consequences to lives and property. My deep, yet frightening concern, however, is our country's (Namibia's) skewed land policies and practices. Those ~~pre-~~historic^{ely} lumped together by the infamous Odendaal Commission will bear the brunt of weather extremes. Consequently, SWANU urges the government to thoroughly and ethically research climate change mitigatory factors in order^{to} allow for both adaptation and resilience (economic, risk, and supply chain). Such effort should be well managed through strategic policies and measures in accordance with regional capabilities and needs.

I so move, Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members, Fellow Namibians.