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One People, One Aim, One Destiny.



**Contribution to the Motion on the Possibility of Increasing
the Amount Payable in Respect of Maternity Leave,
Extending Maternity Leave Duration up to Five Months with
full Pay, and including Paternity Leave in the Legislative
Framework by Winnie Moongo (PDM) on 19 September
2023**

**By Hon. Dr. Esther Utjiua Muinjangué
NUDO President, MP**

Hon. Speaker, I rise and take the floor to make contribution to the motion on the Possibility of Increasing the Amount Payable in Respect of Maternity Leave, Extending Maternity Leave Duration up to Five Months with full Pay, and including Paternity Leave in the Legislative Framework by Winnie Moongo (PDM).

Given my age, there is no way that I will benefit from maternity protection, by the way I'm a C-Mother of three children. But as a social worker, as a leader, and above-all being woman, I feel I have to make few contributions to this important motion. Special protection is important for pregnant women and women workers who are breastfeeding, to prevent harm to their health or their

cognitive development, depends on a loving bond or attachment relationship with a parent, in most cases the mother. There is increasing evidence from the fields of development psychology, and neurobiology that neglect, parental inconsistency and a lack of love can lead to long-term mental health problems as well as to reduced overall potential and happiness. For instance Winston & Chicot (2016) conclude that the support of babies and their parents in the first two years of life to be a crucial aim of public health in the community. If depriving infants of a loving family environment causes lasting damage to their emotional well-being, their intelligence and their capacity to develop fully, what are the implications for public health in the 21st century? No wonder **Hon Speaker** that countries such as Bulgaria 410 maternity leave accounting for 1 year and one month, while Sweden has 480 days (240 per parent) which is also one year and three months. Well these are developed countries that I would not want to compare with a developing country like Namibia but I want to amplify the importance of time mothers need to spend with their children for well-grounded, healthy future generation.

Longer maternity leave will allow mothers to breastfeed without interruptions. Breastfeeding is one of the most effective ways to ensure child health and survival.

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