



NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

CONTRIBUTION BY ELMA DIENDA, MP, (PDM) ON THE APPOINTMENT OF THE MEMBERS OF THE BOUNDARIES DELIMITATION AND DEMARCATION COMMISSION

05 MARCH 2024

**Honourable Speaker
Honourable Members**

The duties of the Boundaries Delimitation and Demarcation Commission are extremely important in the context of national and regional elections as they affect the following:

1. The registration of voters,
2. The size of the Regional Councils, and
3. The location and size of the various constituencies in Namibia.

Additionally, the decisions of the Commission about constituency boundaries can influence how well a political party performs in an election. The independence of this important Commission is therefore very critical and the appointment of its members should be done diligently to ensure impartiality and integrity.

Honourable Members, it is therefore very important to appoint impartial, competent, honest, and knowledgeable individuals to serve on this Commission. The overall performance of the Boundaries Delimitation and Demarcation Commission will be influenced by the following:

1. The skills of the appointed members of the Commission
2. The qualifications and knowledge of the appointed members of the Commission
3. The competencies of the appointed members

Honourable Speaker
Honourable Members

There are 5 CVs for the National Assembly's consideration. By virtue of Article 104 subsection 3 of the Namibian Constitution states that "An Act of Parliament may further regulate any matter not expressly provided for by this Constitution, including the method of arriving at a decision"

My Question therefore is, in the absence of such an Act, what was the procedure used by the Office of the President to shortlist the current candidates?

I further ask, were these candidates handpicked and were there any interviews held?

The method of arriving at the current shortlist must be explained in full to this August House.

Honourable Speaker
Honourable Members

Allow me to share with you that all four male candidates, namely:

- Justice (Rtd) Petrus Uneng,
- Mr. Gerhardt Gurirab,
- Mr. Penias Topnaar,
- Prof. Phanael Kaapama,

Have not indicated their competencies in their CVs. I have thoroughly scrutinised their CVs, but have not seen any of their competencies. It is only **Mrs. Prisca Anyolo** who is the only female candidate by the way, that has indicated her competencies in her CV. This makes me very worried about whether these members will deliver on their mandated duties. I therefore wish to ask; on what basis are we actually appointing these candidates if we overlook their competencies?

Honourable Members

Allow me to share with you that having a qualification is not a 100 percent guarantee of effective job performance. An employee can have all the qualifications, experience and skills in the world, but they may not be able to translate those qualifications, experiences and skills into actual job success.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members; competency is the ability of an employee to properly implement their qualifications, skills and experiences in the workplace environment and this is what we need to be sure of from these members.

Furthermore, competencies combine qualifications, skills, behaviours, knowledge and abilities that enable the individual to effectively perform his or her job. Competencies therefore describe exactly how an individual performs and succeeds in his or her position.

I therefore ask, what confidence do we have in the four male candidates about the expected job performances, specific to the Boundaries Delimitation and Demarcation Commission?

Honourable Speaker Honourable Members

Additionally, what are the operational guidelines that govern the Commission's activities?

It is my belief that there should be clear and explicit legislative provisions guiding the commission on the criteria for regional demarcation or the creation of new constituencies. Such guidelines are essential for ensuring transparency, accountability, and adherence to constitutional principles.

Honourable Members

Due to the above stated lack of operational guidelines, the Boundaries Delimitation and Demarcation Commission has in the past been accused of fixing boundaries in a discriminatory manner, giving certain political parties an advantage. Currently, some towns and constituencies still feel affected by the previous boundary-setting decisions by this Commission. A clear example is Khomasdal, which was thrown in together with

Katutura's Single Quarters to silence that area's voice. A repetition of these situations can only be avoided by competent, impartial and honest members of the Commission.

Honourable Speaker
Honourable Members

While I acknowledge the important role of the Boundaries Delimitation and Demarcation Commission, I call for a deeper review of the competencies and general capabilities of the suggested candidates.

I so move Honourable Speaker