



STATEMENT BY

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SPEAKER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

DURING THE

MOTIVATION OF THE

BUDGETARY ALLOCATION OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL

(VOTE 11)

FOR THE 2024/2025 FINANCIAL YEAR

FRIDAY, 05 APRIL 2024

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
WINDHOEK
KHOMAS REGION**

**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,**

I am pleased to motivate the budgetary allocation of the National Council for the 2024/2025 Financial Year. I am aware that the theme for the 2024/2025 budget is *“continuing the legacy of His Excellency Dr. Hage G. Geingob by caring for the Namibian child”*.

**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,**

The National Council is committed to ensure that matters of regional concern are included and addressed in national legislation. The National Council’s vision is therefore to build *“a modern House of legislative review that represents the interest of the people of Namibia.”*

This according to the Strategic Plan of the National Council (2023/24 - 2027/28) will be achieved by supporting the Members of Parliament to effectively and efficiently discharge their constitutional mandate of representation, legislative review and oversight. The request for financial resources before this august House is therefore in line with the pursuit of the National Council’s constitutional mandate and defined strategic objectives.

**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,**

In 2023/2024 Financial Year, the National Council received amount of **One Hundred and Twenty-Million Four Hundred and Seven Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$ 120 407 000)** for operational activities.

**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,**

The afore-mentioned allocation was utilized to fund the overall Legislative Support Services Programme which comprises four (4) main components, which are *Strengthen Capacity of Review and Oversight; Parliamentary Coordination and Support Services; Specialized and Support Services and Office of the Secretary*. The following achievements were recorded against the allocation for the period under review.

Activity 1: Strengthen Capacity of Review and Oversight

The National Council as the Second House of Parliament is a member of several multilateral parliamentary organizations, notable amongst them are the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Commonwealth

Parliamentary Association(CPA), and Pan-African Parliament (PAP). During the 2023/2024 financial year, the two Presiding Officers led delegations to conferences and assemblies.

As Vice-Chairperson of the CPA Africa Region, the Chairperson presided over three regional meetings. Reports have been tabled and adopted in the National Council, and recommendations were forwarded to relevant Offices/Ministries/Agencies for implementation.

**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,**

To enhance youth participation in law-making process, the National Council hosted the second session of the Junior National Council (JNC) from 11-13 September 2023. Young leaders got an opportunity to engage in meaningful discussions and exchange diverse perspectives on issues facing pupils and young people in Namibia. Each region was represented by three young members.

**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,
Activity 2: Parliamentary Coordination and Support Services**

The primary purpose of this programme is to provide administrative support services to the National Council; to ensure proper financial management; optimal deployment of resources and capacity building for Members of Parliament and staff members.

In addition, to ensure smooth running of the institution, the programme activity is charged with ancillary responsibilities of acquiring goods and services that are critical to the operations of the National Council. By the same token, the programme activity ensures that Members of Parliament (MPs) are served with timely information and quality research services.

Additionally, the programme activity has the obligation to ensure that the work of the National Council is promoted through civic education and by publishing the work of the Council through reports and activities of Standing Committees. The aim is ultimately to inform and educate the citizens on how to participate in the law-making process.

For the 2023/2024 financial year, the program was allocated an amount of **Thirty Million, Four Hundred and Twenty-Eight Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$30,428,000)** to carry out its operational functions. With the allocated funds, vacancies were filled; Members of Parliament and staff were transported to different regions to carry out their constitutional mandate and necessary goods and services were acquired to support Members.

In addition, Members and staff were capacitated fulfil their functions. This resulted in active and effective participation in topical discussions at local, regional and global level.

**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,**

Under this programme National Council successfully documented, broadcasted and live-streamed engagements of various Standing Committees. In addition, delegations representing the National Council at various parliamentary engagements were comprehensively covered.

Activity 3: Specialized and Support Services

The Sixth (6th) National Council in terms of Article 75(2) of the Namibian Constitution received and considered twenty-two (22) Bills from the National Assembly. All bills with the exception of the Marriage Amendment Bill were passed without amendment. A special session was also convened to review urgent financial related bills and they were passed without amendments.

**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,**

The National Council in line with its mandate has undertaken oversight on the implementation of government projects and programs.

**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,**

The recent discovery of deposits of important minerals such as oil and gas has received significant attention. Parliament therefore, in line with natural resources governance, is required to guarantee the development of relevant legislation which will ensure the optimal beneficiation from the natural resources by the Namibian people. In this regard, the National Council Standing Committee on Agriculture,

Environment and Natural Resources undertook stakeholder engagements nationally and visited Ghana to learn best practices. The Committee will therefore continue to monitor development in these sectors and will further engage stakeholders.

The National Council observed with great concern the high failure rate of learners who sat for the Namibia Senior Secondary Certificate Ordinary (NSSCO) level and the Namibia Senior Secondary Certificate Advance Subsidiary (NSSCAS) level of 2022. About 85% of learners who sat for the examinations failed and this led to a national outcry to investigate what the possible causes are and suggest possible remedies. The National Council therefore resolved to investigate this matter and thus assigned the Standing Committee on Education, Science, ICT and Youth Development to undertake the assignment.

In order to learn best practice, the Standing Committee undertook a benchmark mission to Finland, a country which is considered to have one of the best education systems in the world.

The National Council Standing Committee on Public Accounts and Economy in conjunction with the Office of the Auditor General, Ministry of Finance and Public Enterprises and the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development (MURD) engaged local authorities and Regional Councils regarding their finances and general administration.

Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee and Honourable Members,

The Standing Committee on Home Affairs, Security, Constitutional and Legal Affairs has engaged stakeholders in the constitutional and legal affairs fraternity regarding the tabling of the High Court Amendment Bill and the Magistrate's Amendment Bill.

The Committee also undertook an oversight visit to Namibia's national borders. A number of important observations and recommendations were made.

Following these oversight visits, the border patrols by the Namibian Defence Force has since increased and the communities living along the Namibia-Botswana border in particular noted that the situation is peaceful and harmonious. The Committee will continue to closely

monitor the developments in this area as well as the implementation of the recommendations.

The Standing Committee on Health, Labour and Social Welfare conducted an oversight on the state of Namibia's public health facilities and made a number of recommendations. The oversight exercise drew media and public attention and improvements at some of the facilities were noticed whilst the Committee was on the ground.

The Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Housing conducted oversight of Namibia's road infrastructure networks to determine the extent to which rural roads in particular are promoting or inhibiting socio-economic development and access to social amenities. The exercise included exposure to trans-boundary road infrastructure networks linking Namibia to Botswana and Zambia, respectively.

It is observed that construction of some access roads to schools in parts of the Zambezi region has since commenced with the assistance of the community.

Activity 4: Office of the Secretary

Under this activity the implementation of the objectives of the strategic plan, was realised through the signing of performance

agreements by all heads of directorates for 2023/2024 financial year. Internal auditing, legal and security and safety services were adequately provided to MPs and staff. Staff attended meetings of the Society of Clerks-at-The-Table and Association of Secretaries General Meetings on the side lines of the main organisations' assemblies and conferences.

**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,**

After sharing the past performance of the National Council, permit me to now focus my attention on the 2024/2025 budgetary allocation for the Council which is currently before this august House for consideration. For the 2024/2025 Financial Year, the National Council is allocated an amount of **One Hundred and Thirty-Six Million, Six Hundred and Sixty-Two Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$136 662,000.00)** to cover its operational and developmental activities under the following four (4) main activities:

Strengthening Capacity of Review and Oversight

The National Council Strategic Plan of 2023 to 2027 identifies enhancing public and key stakeholders' participation in the legislative process as one of its key strategic objectives. Seeking to increase public understanding and improve the perception of the public on the work of the National Council and its Members. The

participation in international parliamentary organisations, such as the CPA, IPU, and PAP requires adequate financial resources. To realise these noble objectives, an amount of **Fourteen Million, Seven Hundred and Forty-Five Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$ 14,745,000.00)** is allocated to this activity.

Parliamentary Coordination and Support Services

For the financial year **2024/2025**, the programme activity has been allocated an amount of **Forty Million, Four Hundred and Ten Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$40,410,000)**. This allocation consists of **Thirty Million Four Hundred and Ten Thousand Namibian Dollars (N\$30,410,000)** for the Operational Budget and Ten Million Namibia dollars (**N\$10,000,000**) which is earmarked for the Development Budget. This is to upgrade the outdated Chamber Conference System, as well as to digi-tize the conference board rooms.

Specialized and Support Services

The National Council because of its proximity to regional and constituency development issues highly welcomes the Regional and Constituency Development Fund (RCDF) Bill. The Council, in its review of this important legislation, intends to solicit and include the views and proposals from the regions and constituencies as primary

stakeholders that are directly affected by the Bill. Thus, an amount of **Sixty-Five Million, and One Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$ 65,001,000)** is allocated to this activity.

Office of the Secretary

**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,**

The Secretary is the Accounting Officer and the head of administration of the National Council. Thus, his office provides strategic leadership; oversees the implementation of the institutional strategic plan. In order to deliver on its mandate, an amount of **Sixteen Million, Five Hundred and Six Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$ 16,506,000.00)** is allocated to the Office of the Secretary.

**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,**

Before I conclude, allow me to share with you that the National Council is faced with a serious lack of vehicles which results in the National Council having to rent vehicles from rental companies at exorbitant prices due to shortage of roadworthy vehicles at Government garage. The Moratorium on the purchasing of new vehicles contributed to the current situation which hampered the

oversight mandate of National Council. As a result, members of the National Council are at times left with no other alternative but to use their private vehicles for oversight purposes.

**Honourable Chairperson of the Whole House Committee,
Honourable Members,**

In conclusion, I now present to this august House the request of an amount of **One Hundred and Thirty-Six Million, Six Hundred and Sixty-Two Thousand Namibia Dollars (N\$136 662,000)** for Vote 11, for the National Council to perform its constitutional responsibilities and mandate for the 2024/2025 Financial Year

I thank you.