



**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

**MINISTERIAL RESPONSE TO QUESTION NO. 48**

**BY**

**HONOURABLE MAXIMALLIANT T. KATJIMUNE**

**ON 11 JUNE 2024**

**IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**BY**

**THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE**

**YVONNE DAUSAB, MP**

**4 July 2024**

**– To be checked against delivery –**

**Honourable Speaker,  
Honourable Members,**

1. I rise today to provide a response to the Questions raised by Honourable Maximalliant Katjimune regarding the high number of LLB graduates produced by the University of Namibia and those from other institutions in and outside of Namibia.
2. The right to education is a fundamental right, and our youth have the freedom to pursue courses of their choice, provided they meet the qualifications. Recently, concerns have been raised about the high number of LLB graduates produced over the past five years and whether the market can sustain this influx.
3. Some voices suggest that the University of Namibia should temporarily pause its LLB program to allow the market to absorb the current pool of unemployed graduates. While this suggestion might appear practical, I firmly believe it should not even be a topic of discussion. Limiting individuals in their educational pursuits is not a viable solution as it will result in the infringement of a number of sacred human rights.
4. Instead, we must focus on what we, as the Ministry, as regulators, as the University, and as the private sector, are doing to address this issue. I appreciate that you point out of all these other stakeholders, because it shows that we understand that this is not a task for a single institution. It is crucial to acknowledge that the skills of law graduates are not only valuable to the Ministry of Justice, but across all sectors. Thus, a collaborative effort is essential to ensure that the market can effectively absorb and utilise the varying talents of these graduates.

**Honourable Speaker,  
Honourable Members,**

5. With the emerging sectors such as green hydrogen, oil and gas, competitions and environmental law opportunities are opening up and within our markets there is much room for specialisation. This provides potential for many LLB graduates and can thus ease the burden on Namibia having to import legal skills and expertise from neighbouring countries. Opportunities should therefore be created for LLB graduates to

specialise in relevant fields where there is a scarcity of expertise in Namibia, and which will assist in Namibia becoming an industrialised nation as per our Vision 2030 aspirations. I am aware that few years ago, at the UNAM Law Faculty. Discussions were held to diversify the streams that law graduates can get into after law school, which if not done must be started.

6. In response to question 2, I will highlight some of the efforts undertaken by the Ministry and the Law Society of Namibia (LSN) to mitigate the impact of the growing number of unemployment graduates.
7. Our commitment to empowering the youth is evident in our robust internship program. Over the past financial year, this initiative has provided valuable experience to over 200 young individuals from various disciplines across the different directorates of the Ministry. Approximately 20 of these interns have secured permanent positions within the Ministry, while others have found permanent employment elsewhere. This program not only offers practical training to graduates but also serves as a gateway to sustainable employment for our youth.
8. Notably, the Directorate: Master of the High Court amongst others, is benefiting from this internship programme to ensure we meet the grey listing recommendations to collect and capture beneficial ownership information for the setting up of a beneficial ownership register for registered trusts. Further, we have interns deployed at all Magistrate's Courts across the country to assist prosecutors who are under severe pressure to finalise cases on time. These interns do the research, organising of files/dockets, contacting witnesses, etc. The Prosecutor-General has expressed her satisfaction and appreciation with this assistance as the benefits are invaluable.
9. Recognising the importance of experience, we first employ these graduates in most cases as interns before considering them for legal officer positions and similar roles. This practice extends to other directorates, including Legislative Drafting, Legal Service, Community Courts, and Law Reform, Policy, and Legislation.
10. The Directorate of Civil Litigation continues to absorb a significant number of LLB graduates, attaching them as candidate legal practitioners enrolled with the Justice Training Centre. Successful completion of the programme will render them admissible

in the High Court as legal practitioners. Together with the Board for Legal Education, which is chaired by the Chief Justice and on which the Executive Director for the Ministry of Justice serve, we are constantly employing efforts to reform the Justice Training Centre to provide more practical courses to LLB graduates to better equip them for the employment market. An example of this is the reforms in the field of Conveyancing that was introduced as an initiative of the Board.

**Honourable Speaker,  
Honourable Members,**

11. You would be surprised to know that currently in my office, there are three LLB graduates, with one having been promoted to a permanent position and two serving as interns. These individuals are responsible for attending to correspondence with the support of senior staff from various directorates. I emphasise this to highlight that LLB graduates are capable and should not be overlooked simply because they lack experience.
12. If they lack experience, let us provide them with opportunities both in the Government and in the private sector to obtain it, whether for three to six months or whatever duration is necessary. Some of these graduates are even prepared to work without remuneration, but thankfully our government policy caters for them to be paid N\$2300 p/month. This amount will soon be revised to be commensurate with current needs. This is an outdated amount, and we will soon make a recommendation for the revision of this amount. The work done by the interns justifies a higher amount to be paid.
13. A commendable decision was taken by Cabinet in June this year for the fast-tracking of the finalisation of the Internship Tax Incentive Bill and that donations made by companies towards internship programmes to be tax deductible. This will provide a bigger incentive for the private sector to come onboard and open up internship opportunities for all graduates, not just law graduates, as they are all facing the same calamity. The Ministry of Justice also takes on IT interns, administrative interns, and HR interns. We don't restrict our programme to law graduates.
14. The Ministry will continuously explore avenues to address the plight of unemployed graduates. On 19 June 2024, the Ministry shared an invitation for internship

opportunities for LLB graduates to submit their CVs for placement at various Magistrate's Courts, including Keetmanshoop, Mariental, Walvis Bay, Ondangwa, Oshakati, Grootfontein, and Rundu.

15. On 17 October 2023, the MoJ and the LSN concluded a Memorandum of Understanding to cooperate and collaborate on issues of common interest in various areas such as:
  - 10.1 Promoting access to justice and legal services;
  - 10.2 Enhancing the administration of justice;
  - 10.3 Promoting legal research and advocacy;
  - 10.4 Enhancing public awareness of legal matters; and
  - 10.5 Promoting the development of the legal profession.
16. Furthermore, the LSN will be spearheading a tripartite agreement between the Competition Commission of Namibia and the University of Namibia, to create a framework for skills training and capacity building.
17. In addition, following the recently concluded Johannesburg Arbitration Week in April 2024, the LSN will soon approach the Ministry of Justice to collaborate within the existing MoU framework towards establishing a Commercial Arbitration Centre in Windhoek. The creation of this centre will aim to address issues and challenges in the rapidly evolving field of international commercial arbitration, with a focus on key initiatives shaping dispute resolution in Namibia and across Africa.
18. The discussions will highlight the initiatives that LSN believe are crucial in transforming dispute resolution in Namibia, thereby encouraging investment in our country. There will be a significant need to introduce young lawyers to the fields of commercial arbitration and dispute resolution to achieve the centre's objectives.
19. Another initiative that can be considered to accommodate the LLB graduates is to take them in, even at Parliament, as interns to do research and perform other tasks where their knowledge might be relevant and needed.

**Honourable Speaker,  
Honourable Members,**

20. As I prepare to conclude, I revert to a very important point of all stakeholders, particularly those who benefit from the skills of LLB graduates, to collaborate and put forth efforts to address and mitigate the high number of LLB graduates entering the market. Through working together, universities, government bodies, legal institutions, and private sector employers, we can create a comprehensive strategy to provide valuable opportunities for these graduates. This will ensure their skills are effectively utilised and their transition into the legal profession is smooth. This collective effort will not only benefit the graduates but also strengthen the legal landscape in Namibia and instil confidence in our youth as they will know that we carry their best interest at heart
21. Finally, it is essential to recognise that youth unemployment affects not only law graduates but also various other sectors. We encourage the Ministry of Higher Education to join these efforts and consider sharing their initiatives, as collective action is vital in tackling this issue of youth unemployment effectively.