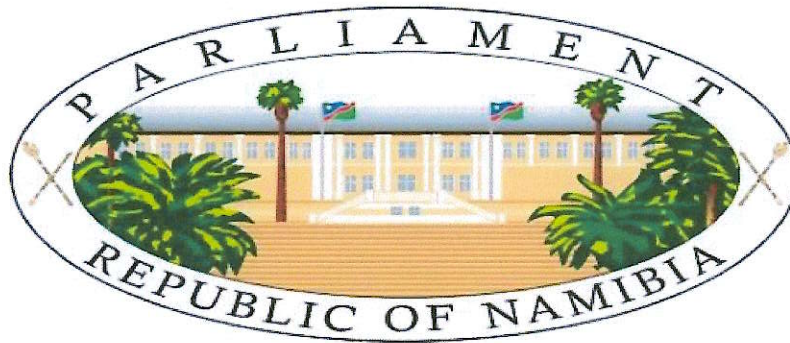




NAMIBIA COUNCIL

REPORT:

**WORKING VISIT BY THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FRIENDSHIP GROUP ON THE
INTER-PARLIAMENTARY COOPERATION WITH THE FEDERATION COUNCIL
OF THE FEDERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION IN MOSCOW,
RUSSIA, FROM 16 TO 23 MAY 2025**

June 2025

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1. Background

- 1.1 The National Council signed an Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation Agreement with the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation in March 2023.
- 1.2 The Cooperation Agreement emanated from the bilateral meeting which was held, during the visit to Namibia in February 2023 by Her Excellency Mrs. Valentina Matvienko, Chairperson of the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation.
- 1.3 Subsequently, the respective Friendship Groups were established with objective of fostering political, economic, scientific, and cultural cooperation between the two nations. Accordingly, the Russian Friendship Group visited the National Council in June 2024, where they interacted with Members of the National Council Namibia-Russia Friendship Group on key issues in the development of the bilateral relations and regional policy.
- 1.4 This was thus, a reciprocal invitation for a working visit in Moscow by the National Council Friendship Group. The working visit is part of the continuous interactions aimed at consolidating efforts to ensure the successful implementation of the cooperation agreement for the benefit of the people of the two great countries, Namibia and Russia Federation.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The Friendship Group undertook a working visit to the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation from 17 to 23 May 2025.
- 2.2 The visit aimed to strengthen inter-parliamentary relations and explore avenues for enhanced bilateral cooperation across various sectors, including political, economic, educational, and cultural domains.
- 2.3 The delegation which was led by Hon. Abner Shikongo, included the following Members and Officials:
- a) Hon. Olivia Hanghuwo, Member of the Friendship Group;
 - b) Hon. Paulus Mbangu, Member of the Friendship Group;
 - c) Hon. Anseline Beukes, Member of the Friendship Group;
 - d) Advocate. Tousy Namiseb, Secretary to the National Council;
 - e) Mr. Petrus Kavhura, Director: Office of the Chairperson;
 - f) Ms. Moono Matengu, Secretariat – Support Staff; and
 - g) Mr. Bonifatius Amadhila, Secretariat – Support Staff.

Key Engagements

3. **Meeting with the Counterpart Friendship Group Led by Hon. Elena Perminova, Chairperson of the Federation Council on Social Policy and Head of the Friendship Group**
- 3.1 Hon. Elena Perminova welcomed the Namibian delegation, expressing enthusiasm for the continued collaboration between the two nations. Inter-parliamentary collaboration was identified as a crucial component of bilateral relations. The 2023 agreement between the Federation Council and Namibia's National Council has paved the way for intensified legislative interactions. Both nations have established Friendship Groups within their parliaments to facilitate regular and meaningful dialogue.

- 3.2 She congratulated President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah on her recent election victory, viewing it as a guarantee for the continuity of the course of the Namibian leadership to further deepen the time-tested friendly relations between the two countries. In addition, it has undoubtedly become an important incentive for women around the world. Likewise, Hon. Perminova expressed sadness on the unfortunate news regarding the tragic passing of the spouse of Hon. Lukas Sinimbo Muha, Chairperson of the National Council of Namibia. She requested the group to formally convey their condolences to Hon. Muha as a gesture of solidarity and compassion.
- 3.3 The meeting emphasized the importance of mutual delegation exchanges, stating that the timing of the delegation's visit coincided with the 35th anniversary of formal diplomatic relations (since March 1990), which was described as symbolically important. Russia places significant value on its longstanding friendship with Namibia, rooted in the latter's struggle for independence. The Group recalled the Soviet Union's early, steadfast support for the liberation movement led by SWAPO, and acknowledged the late founding President of Namibia, Sam Nujoma, who passed away on February 8, 2025, praising his crucial role in Namibian independence and affirming Russia's intention to preserve his memory.
- 3.4 In addition, the meeting highlighted the consistently high level of political dialogue between Russia and Namibia, emphasizing that their relationship remains unaffected by global geopolitical fluctuations. Namibia is described as a reliable partner for Russia on the African continent.
- 3.5 Discussions further included enhancing economic cooperation, particularly in sectors such as geology, energy, agriculture, and oil industries. A significant project highlighted was the uranium mining initiative in Namibia's Omaheke region, undertaken by Rosatom through its subsidiary, Headspring Investment. Upon successful launch, the project aims to extract up to 3,000 tons of uranium oxide annually, potentially increasing Namibia's GDP by 2% with a total investment of approximately \$500 million. However, the project has faced challenges in obtaining necessary permits for test drilling, and a swift resolution is hoped for.

- 3.6 Despite challenges posed by anti-Russian restrictive measures, bilateral trade between Russia and Namibia continues to grow. There has been an increase in Russian fertilizer supplies and Namibian exports of fruits and seafood. The Intergovernmental Russian-Namibian Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation (IPC) is viewed as a key mechanism for furthering business ties, with its next session anticipated in Windhoek in 2025.
- 3.7 The recent increase in interdepartmental delegation exchanges was seen as a positive development. Notably, meetings between the health and justice ministers, as well as heads of national penitentiary services in 2024, have contributed to strengthening cooperation in these areas. The practice of sending election observers was also commended, with Namibia's participation in observing the Russian presidential election in March 2024 being particularly appreciated.
- 3.6 The importance of expanding scientific and educational ties between Namibia and Russia was highlighted. The meeting revealed the plans to increase the scholarship quota for Namibian students studying in Russia from 25 to 30 per year, with a focus on fields such as mining and medicine. Additionally, it was outlined that approximately 2,000 Namibians speak Russian and there was a suggestion of introducing Russian language center in Namibian to further cultural exchange.
- 3.7 The Russian government provided humanitarian aid amounting to USD 1.5 million through the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) to assist Namibia during the 2024 drought period. Hon. Perminova expressed gratitude for Namibia's continued support of Russian initiatives at high-level platforms such as the United Nations. Namibia is commended for its independent foreign policy stance, particularly its constructive approach to the Russia-Ukraine issue, which she viewed as an indication of authentic sovereignty and increased authority in the international community.
- 3.8 Likewise, the discussion underscored the continued importance of conducting systematic and substantive efforts to update the contractual and legal framework governing bilateral

relations. The meeting expressed satisfaction with the recent progress in improving the bilateral legal framework, viewing it as a positive signal for future collaboration. Despite recent advancements, several critically important projects remain under negotiation, including:

- a) A bilateral agreement on extradition
- b) Intergovernmental agreements on:
 - Cooperation in customs matters
 - Mutual recognition of education, qualifications, and academic degrees
- c) Interdepartmental memorandums involving:
 - Russia's Ministry of Culture, Education, Justice and the corresponding Ministries on the Namibian side.

The Russian side expressed hope for an expedited response from Namibian partners regarding the pending agreements to facilitate timely finalization.

3.9 Hon. Abner Shikongo, serving as Head of Delegation, conveyed appreciation for the hospitality received and expressed gratitude for the courtesy shown to the delegation, particularly the opportunity to engage in discussions with their counterparts on areas of mutual interest, including tourism, agriculture, energy and other key sectors of cooperation. He took note of the outstanding bilateral initiatives awaiting urgent finalization and highlighted the importance of addressing them promptly.

3.10 The Namibian delegation reiterated its commitment to utilizing the parliamentary friendship platform to strengthen not only political cooperation but also economic and cultural ties. Plans were discussed to welcome the Russian friendship group to Namibia during the Regional and Local Authority Elections scheduled for November 2025, further solidifying the collaborative relationship.

4. Meeting with the head of State Duma Deputy Group for relations with the Republic of Namibia and Member of the State Duma Committee on Competition protection Ms Irina FILATOVA

- 4.1 Ms. Filatova, on behalf of the State Duma, extended a heartfelt welcome to the Namibian delegation, urging them to “feel at home,” as Russia is considered a “second home” for Namibians. She recalled Russia’s historic support during Namibia’s liberation struggle and reaffirmed that bond of friendship. Ms. Filatova also highlighted Russia’s \$1.5 million humanitarian contribution to the UN WFP in response to Namibia’s 2024 drought as a gesture grounded in solidarity.
- 4.2 Ms. Filatova congratulated President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah on her new leadership role and on the success of the recent elections. She expressed confidence in Namibia's economic recovery, pointing out improved inflation control, and lauded efforts to boost citizen welfare and strengthen local governance structures.
- 4.3 Likewise, she extended gratitude to the Namibian people for their steadfast support of Russia amid global geopolitical challenges. Noted Namibia’s presence in the Victory Day celebration (May 9, 2025) marking WWII’s end over Nazi Germany, attended in person by Namibian Ambassador Hon. Kashupulwa and community members in Windhoek, symbolizing mutual respect and shared history.
- 4.4 Ms. Filatova noted that the State Duma comprises of five political parties, all committed to fostering ties with Namibia and implementing cooperation initiatives. Hon. Dmitri Savelev (State Duma, International Affairs) extended an invitation to the Namibian delegation to attend the regional tech forum taking place each August, fostering tech cooperation.

5. Meeting with Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation.

5.1 The Deputy Minister extended a warm welcome to Moscow, inviting the Namibian delegation to feel at home. He recalled the 2016 Intergovernmental Agreement on Cooperation in subsoil use and geology, noting the formation of a working group in 2018. Unfortunately, the group's activities were stalled due to COVID-19. To revive collaboration, he stressed the need for a second working group meeting to reaffirm past achievements and plan future cooperation.

5.2 It was noted that the Russian Parliament had proposed scheduling gathering in early 2025, but had not received confirmation from Namibia. They remain hopeful for a positive reply soon. He highlighted Russia's expertise in geophysical data collection and analysis, suggesting a regional upgrade as key foundation for effective geological cooperation. Spotlighted Uranium One (Rosatom's subsidiary) currently exploring uranium deposits in Namibia's Omaheke region. Rosatom also discussed the potential introduction of floating nuclear power plants to enhance Namibia's energy security and reduce reliance on electricity imports.

5.3 The meeting explored opportunities for economic collaboration with Russian companies such as Rosgeo and Uranium One. Discussions centered on investments in Namibia's mining sector, particularly uranium exploration and extraction, as well as potential partnerships in other sectors like agriculture and infrastructure development.

6. Meeting with the Deputy Director of the Department of Africa States (Sub-Saharan Africa) of the Russian Foreign Ministry Nikolay VARICH

6.1 The meeting was held in a cordial and constructive atmosphere, reinforcing the longstanding historical ties and future potential of the Namibia-Russia partnership. Both sides expressed optimism about the continued development of bilateral relations and agreed to sustain momentum through active collaboration. The meeting expressed shared interest in deepening engagement at the technical and ministerial levels to follow up on key sectors. Furthermore, the meeting reaffirmed their commitment to enhancing relations between

Namibia and Russia, with a shared interest in expanding cooperation across political, economic, and socio-cultural fields.

7. Visit to Yaroslavl Region and a Meeting with Hon. Natalia KOSIKHINA, Member of the Federation Council Committee on Social Policy

- 7.1 The delegation conducted an official visit to the Yaroslavl Region, where they engaged in a series of meetings and cultural activities aimed at fostering mutual understanding and exploring avenues for bilateral cooperation.
- 7.2 One of the key highlights of the visit was a formal meeting with Hon. Natalia Kosikhina, Member of the Federation Council Committee on Social Policy and her team. Discussions centered on current social development initiatives, regional policy frameworks, and opportunities for international cooperation in areas such as public health, education, and community welfare. She thanked the delegation for accepting the invitation and hoped that the friendship between Russia and Namibia would last forever to drive and to address the issue of mutual concern between the two nations.
- 7.3 The delegation enjoyed a scenic walk along the Volga River, offering an opportunity to appreciate the natural beauty and historical significance of the region. The walk also provided a platform for informal engagement between local officials and visiting delegates.
- 7.4 A visit to the Yaroslavl Museum located at Volzhskaya Embankment 23 was organised. The museum offered rich historical exhibits and artifacts that narrated the region's vibrant past and cultural evolution.
- 7.5 The delegation concluded with a guided tour of the Yaroslavl Distillery, showcasing traditional production methods blended with modern technologies. Delegates learned about the distillery's role in the local economy and its efforts to preserve cultural heritage.

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8. Cultural and Educational Activities in Moscow (Excursion)

8.1 As part of the visit to Moscow, the delegation participated in a comprehensive cultural and educational program designed to highlight the historical, artistic, and technological achievements of the Russian Federation. The itinerary included guided excursions to some of Moscow's most prominent landmarks and cultural centers.

8.2 Key Activities and Visits:

- a) **Visit to the Diamond Fund:** The delegation visited the prestigious **Diamond Fund**, housed within the Kremlin Armoury. The exhibition showcases Russia's most valuable gems, including rare diamonds, historical regalia, and state treasures. This visit offered an exclusive look into the wealth and craftsmanship of Russia's imperial heritage.
- b) **Walk Around Red Square and Kremlin Excursion:** The group enjoyed a walk around **Red Square**, taking in its iconic landmarks, followed by an in-depth guided **excursion of the Kremlin**, the historic fortified complex that serves as the political and spiritual heart of Moscow.
- c) **Visit to Zaryadye Park and Media Center:** The delegation visited **Zaryadye Park**, an innovative urban park located near Red Square. Highlights included:
 - A visit to the **Zaryadye Park Media Center**, showcasing multimedia exhibits on Moscow's history and development.
 - Viewing of the 3D film "**Flight Over Moscow**", offering a dynamic aerial tour of the city's most famous sights through immersive technology.
 - A visit to the **Multifunctional Media Hall 360**, where the group watched the 3D film "**Russia: Virtual Journey**", providing a panoramic, virtual exploration of Russia's diverse landscapes and cultural landmarks.
- d) **Visit to VDNKH Exhibition Center:** The delegation toured the **VDNKH Exhibition Center**, a vast cultural and exhibition complex representing the achievements of Russian science, industry, and agriculture. The site features impressive Soviet-era architecture and remains a symbol of Russia's innovation and progress.

e) **Visit to the Central Museum of the Great Patriotic War (1941–1945):** The program concluded with a moving visit to the **Central Museum of the Great Patriotic War**, located at Victory Park. The museum documents the history and heroism of the Soviet people during World War II through detailed exhibits, archival materials, and artistic representations.

8.3 The delegation's cultural itinerary in Moscow provided a multifaceted experience, blending history, innovation, and remembrance. The visits served to deepen mutual understanding and appreciation for Russian heritage, and the group expressed sincere gratitude for the informative and well-coordinated program.

9. **Recommendations**

9.1 Organise a meeting of the Friendship Group with key stakeholders from the education, health, mining, and tourism sectors, as well as representatives from the Namibia Investment Promotion NIPDB, NYC, and the Directorate of International Relations to explore new areas of cooperation and strengthen existing bilateral relations.

9.2 Engage the Ministry of Education, Innovation, Youth, Sports, Arts and Culture to facilitate an increase in the number of Russian scholarships available to Namibian students and expedite the establishment of a Russian Language and Cultural Centre in Namibia.

9.6 Prepare for election observation activities by coordinating with Russian counterparts to enable their participation as observers in Namibia's upcoming elections, thereby promoting transparency and strengthening democratic practices.

6. Conclusion

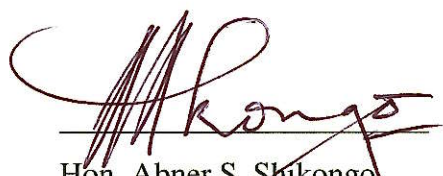
The working visit of the National Council Friendship Group on the Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation to Moscow marked a significant step in reinforcing the longstanding relationship between the two nations. Through high-level engagements and sector-specific discussions, both parties demonstrated a shared commitment to deepening cooperation across various domains. The outlined recommendations aim to translate these commitments into tangible outcomes that will benefit both countries. The visit to Yaroslavl Region was marked by productive dialogue, cultural enrichment, and strengthened ties between regional and international stakeholders.

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SIGNING OFF THE REPORT

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'A. Shikongo', written over a horizontal line.

Hon. Abner S. Shikongo

Chairperson: Friendship Group

A handwritten date '7/10/2025' in dark ink, written over a horizontal line.

Date