



MEDIA RELEASE

21 September, 2017

For Immediate release

RE: 'MPs MUST LIVE UP TO EXPECTATIONS'

The editorial published on page six of Tuesday 19 September 2017, edition of *The Namibian Sun* newspaper under the heading '**MPs must live up to expectations**', has reference. The said editorial contains inaccuracies and insinuations, thus, from a parliamentary perspective, MISLEADING.

1. The editorial seemed to suggest that, the National Assembly and its MPs are not doing anything to minimise or resolve the issue of teenage pregnancies. This is not a fact. The fact is that, the National Assembly, already in 2010 created a new Standing Committee on Gender Equality, Social Development and Family Affairs. This committee deals with, amongst others, the issue of teenage pregnancies. Together with the Standing Committee on Human Resources and Public Administration, these Committees have conducted a number of public hearings and produced several reports on the subjects. These reports have been adopted by the House and forwarded to the respective Ministries for implementation.

Three weeks ago, the Committee visited Omaheke and Otjozondjupa Regions where the same issue was investigated. A Google search of "12-year-old impregnated by own grandparent" or "Too many police cases withdrawn, MPs say" as published by the *New Era Newspaper* are proof enough that the National Assembly and its Committees take the issue of teenage pregnancies very serious. On the 18 September 2017, the Hon Elma Dienda moved a Motion in the House to discuss the worrying high rate of teenage pregnancies amongst school-going children. These are just some of the recent examples.

2. The National Assembly debates matters that are brought before it. The RCC issue has not reached Parliament yet, thus Parliament can only deal with this topic once it is tabled in its plenary.
3. Your editorial also made inferences to Parliament as “a sleeping corner for MPs” and “one wonders if our leaders do indeed make time and occasionally organise meetings to better understand the plight of those who elected them into office”. These insinuations sound like premeditated thoughts of whomever compiled the said editorial. During the past two recesses, the National Assembly Standing Committees visited all the regions of Namibia where meetings were held with citizens. This shows that, from time to time, the Assembly consult with the citizenry. Invitations and detailed programmes for these events are always shared with the media.

The Parliament of Namibia does not operate in a vacuum. Its work is guided by the provisions of the Namibian Constitution; the Standing Rules and Orders as well as the Code of Conduct for Members of Parliament. These are procedural guidelines in place.

ENDS

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