



**STATEMENT BY**

**HON. PROF. PETER H KATJAVIVI, MP**

**SPEAKER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

**AT THE**

**OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE 7<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF  
THE 6<sup>th</sup> PARLIAMENT**

**Theme:**

***“Enhancing Partnerships to Strengthen Good  
Governance in Namibia”***

**TUESDAY, 13<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2018**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY  
PARLIAMENT BUILDING  
WINDHOEK**

- **Your Excellency Dr. Hage Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia and First Lady, Madam Monica Geingos**
- **Your Excellency Nangolo Mbumba, Vice-President of the Republic of Namibia, and Madam Sustjie Mbumba**
- **Your Excellency Hifikepunye Pohamba, former President of the Republic of Namibia, and Madam Pohamba**
- **Hon. Margaret Mensah-Williams, Chairperson of the National Council and Mr Williams**
- **Your Lordship Justice Peter Shivute, Chief Justice**
- **Rt. Hon. Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila, Prime Minister**
- **Hon. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for International Relations and Cooperation**
- **Hon. McHenry Venaani, Leader of the Official Opposition in Parliament**
- **Hon. Members of Parliament**
- **Your Lordship Justice Petrus Damaseb, Deputy Chief Justice and Members of the Judiciary**
- **Hon. Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab, Former Speaker of the National Assembly**
- **Hon. Asser Kapere, Former Chairperson of the National Council**
- **Your Worship Mr. Muesee Kazapua, Mayor of the City of Windhoek**
- **Your Excellences Ambassadors, High Commissioners and Members of the Diplomatic Corps**
- **Distinguished Service Chiefs**
- **Mrs. Rosemary Jane Katjavivi, my dear wife**
- **Eminent Invited Guests**

- **Members of the Media**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**

I wish to take this opportunity to thank Honourable Loide Kasingo, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, for presiding over the first phase of the proceedings of the Opening of Parliament.

On my own behalf and that of Hon. Margaret Mensah-Williams, Chairperson of the National Council, let me extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Dr. Hage Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia, and the First Lady, Mrs. Monica Geingos.

This is a very significant occasion in Namibia's annual Calendar, where the Parliament re-commits to strengthening democracy in our country. It is also an opportunity for the three organs of State to come together and demonstrate the complementary role they play, as prescribed in the Constitution, to ensure transparency, accountability, good governance, and the rule of law.

I wish to acknowledge with appreciation that a couple of days ago, the three organs of State had the opportunity to join hands at the Official Opening of the Judicial Year 2018 by His Excellency the President. This close collaboration speaks to the parliamentary theme of this year, *“Enhancing Partnerships to Strengthen Good Governance in Namibia”*.

On a light note, we learned at the opening of the Judicial Year that the secret behind the team spirit in the Judiciary is the fact that they have a Judicial Choir! Both the Chairperson of the National Council and I are looking forward to consulting the

Chief Justice on how to form a Parliamentary Choir with the same purpose.

**Your Excellency,**

**Honourable Members,**

On behalf of the Parliament of the Republic of Namibia, I would like to register that you have made us proud through your proactive role in promoting good governance at home and abroad. This was recently evidenced by the role you played behind the scenes in dealing with some of the critical issues in our region. We are also cognisant of your efforts to place the continent on an important footing on the international stage, by advocating for Africa and the African Union in the United Nations and elsewhere.

Your Excellency, let me thank you for appointing one of our own distinguished members of this august House to the second highest office of the land.

On behalf of the Namibian Parliament, I wish to congratulate His Excellency Nangolo Mbumba for ascending to the position of Vice-President of the Republic of Namibia. The Parliament wishes you, together with your dear wife, Sustjie Mbumba, all the best in this important assignment. Of course, as a former Member of this House, you are the first person to know that we will be at your disposal and ready to work together for the common good of our country.

I am sure that members of this House will agree with me that our former Vice-President, H.E. Dr. Nickey Iyambo, deserves our deep gratitude for the great service he has given this country for so many years before and after Independence. This great son of

Namibia has served his country selflessly, with utmost dedication. We wish Dr. Nickey Iyambo well in his retirement and we hope to continue to call on his wisdom from time to time.

**Your Excellency,**

**Honourable Members,**

During the recent Parliamentary recess, we lost a number of eminent sons and daughters of Namibia, some of whom were our colleagues in Parliament. It has been a difficult period of immense loss and bereavement for their families, and for all of us. May their souls rest in eternal peace! I would like to request that we all rise and observe a minute of silence in their memory.

**Your Excellency,**

**Honourable Members,**

It is with pride and joy that I stand before you once again, on the occasion of the Opening of Parliament. We are gathered here to rededicate ourselves to the task of continuing to serve and improve our nation by ensuring efficient service delivery.

As we officially open this Seventh Session of the Sixth Parliament, allow me to emphasise our core mandate, which is **representation, legislation and oversight.**

As you are no doubt aware, the Electoral Commission of Namibia, the Auditor-General's Office, and the Office of the Ombudsman report to Parliament. These closely linked structures have worked hard since our country attained Independence. The Electoral Commission of Namibia has in recent years earned

international recognition and respect as a non-partisan and professional institution. Both the Auditor-General and the Ombudsman have raised the profiles of their offices and worked effectively with regional and international organisations, bringing pride to our country.

Coming to our theme for our 2018 Legislative Year: “*Enhancing Partnerships to Strengthen Good Governance in Namibia*”, I would like highlight the following.

We have strategically chosen this theme to signify our deepening engagement with the other two organs of State, other institutions in the country, and our regional partners involved in promoting democracy and good governance. We are also enhancing collaboration with continental and global parliamentary institutions and partners.

Amongst others, I would like to highlight the recent visit by the Speaker of the Parliament of Finland and her delegation. This led a number of initiatives being taken that are aimed at strengthening bilateral relations between our two parliamentary institutions and our two countries.

In order for us to strengthen our democracy, we need to network with strategic partners at the national and international levels so as to benchmark and learn from good practices, as we work towards achieving specific parliamentary targets during the year. Among others, these targets will be the development of technical and human capacity as well as assessing the impact of legislation passed since Independence.

**Your Excellency,**

**Honourable Members,**

Our young people are our real assets and the engine of Namibia's growth, and Parliament continues to be dedicated to inculcating a democratic culture within the younger generation. Through a reinvigorated partnership, we aim to strengthen our Youth Parliament. I am therefore glad to note that among our distinguished invited guests here today, there are two representatives of the Youth Parliament.

**Your Excellency,**

**Honourable Members,**

Article 63 (1) of the Constitution states that: *The National Assembly, as the principal legislative authority in and over Namibia, shall have the power, subject to this Constitution, to make and repeal laws for the peace and good government of the country in the best interest of the people of Namibia.*

These functions are, *ipso facto*, also extended to the National Council under Articles 74 and 75 of the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia.

These Constitutional provisions include the oversight function of the two Houses of Parliament, which is an important dimension of our democracy. These, I believe, are the hallmarks of a vibrant democracy that allows room for the separation of powers between the three organs of State, namely: the Executive; the Legislature; and the Judiciary.

It is a Constitutional requirement that the three organs of State are in attendance each year at the Opening of Parliament. Equally, in terms of Rule 15(d) of the Standing Rules and Orders of the National Assembly, the President of the Republic delivers an Opening Address to the Joint Session of Parliament and declares the Legislative Year officially opened. We are here today to re-affirm this tradition.

Without further ado, I therefore have the pleasure and honour to invite you, Your Excellency, to address this august House and declare the Seventh Session of the Sixth Parliament officially open.

**Your Excellency, Mr President, you have the floor!**

*After the Speech by the Head of State, the Hon. Speaker will thank him*

**Your Excellency,**

Thank you for your insightful speech, which has provided this august House and the nation at large with a comprehensive account of various aspects that are close to our hearts. Once again, we wish to thank you very much for the message of hope and aspiration as we face the work of this New Year.

**Your Excellency,**

**Honourable Members,**

Let me now give the floor to Hon. Margaret Mensah-Williams, Chairperson of the National Council, to give a Vote of Thanks.

Hon. Margaret Mensah-Williams, you may take the floor!

*After the Vote of Thanks by the Chairperson, the Hon. Speaker will adjourn the House.*

**Honourable Members,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

May I now request that we all stand and wait in our positions while I escort the President and guests, after which you may leave the Chamber.

The Assembly stands adjourned until Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2018, at 2:30pm.

**I thank you all!**