



VOTE OF THANKS
BY HONOURABLE LUKAS MUHA
CHAIRPERSON OF THE
NATIONAL COUNCIL
AT THE OCCASION OF THE
OFFICIAL OPENING
OF PARLIAMENT
ON TUESDAY, 09 FEBRUARY 2021
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY CHAMBER,
PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS
WINDHOEK

- *Hon. Professor Peter Katjavivi, Speaker of the National Assembly, and Madame Jane Katjavivi,*
- *Your Excellency, Dr Hage Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia, and Madame Monica Geingos, First Lady of the Republic of Namibia,*
- *Your Excellency, Dr Nangolo Mbumba, Vice-President of the Republic of Namibia,*
- *Right Hon. Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila, Prime Minister of the Republic of Namibia,*
- *Hon. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of International Relations and Cooperation,*
- *Your Lordship, Chief Justice Peter Shivute,*
- *Hon. McHenry Venaani, Leader of the Official Opposition,*
- *Hon. Members of Parliament,*
- *Distinguished Service Chiefs,*
- *Members of the Media,*
- *Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Good afternoon

I feel singularly honoured to deliver a Vote of Thanks on behalf of my fellow Parliamentarians at this official opening of Parliament, specifically because I am doing so for the first time in my capacity as Chairperson of the National Council. Allow me to take this opportunity to thank the Namibian people, and in particular, fellow Members of Parliament in the National Council for granting me an opportunity to serve this nation as Chairperson of the sixth National Council.

Honourable Speaker,

It is imperative to observe that the political make-up of both Houses has changed after the elections held in 2019 and 2020 respectively. We now have representatives in Parliament from SWAPO, PDM, LPM, UDF, IPC, NUDO, APP, RP, NEFF, RDP, CDV, SWANU and one Independent Candidate. I firmly believe that such diverse representation should enrich the debates on issues, specifically bills, which will be tabled before Parliament. The people of this country have placed high expectations on our shoulders as their representatives and therefore we

should strive to meet their expectations to the best of our abilities, despite the fact that we are faced with Covid-19 pandemic. Thus, we need to continue devising strategies and new ways to ensure that our people are included in the legislative processes.

Honourable Speaker,

We draw inspiration in the theme of His Excellency, The President, namely "*The Year of Resilience*". Let us not forget, we are living in *The Land of the Brave*, therefore we are men and women of *resilience* since time immemorial. Our Constitutional mandate is to represent the people, make and review proposed legislation, and exercise oversight over the work of Government Offices, Ministries and Agencies mainly through Parliamentary Committees. Hence, as the legislative branch of the State we should demonstrate resilience through rigorous scrutiny of bills and policies tabled before Parliament by the executive branch.

We must therefore continue to deepen the existing cordial relations between the Assembly and Council both at political and administrative levels so that jointly we deliver on our overall constitutional mandate.

Honourable Speaker,

As Parliament, we have successfully enacted several laws that still requires to be fully implemented in order to speed-up socio-economic development in the regions and in so doing curtail the massive rural-to-urban drift to our cities and towns, especially by the youth. Against this reality, I am appealing that, we, together as Members of Parliament should push for the total implementation of the **Decentralisation Enabling Act**, (Act No. 33 of 2000).

Honourable Speaker, Your Excellency,

Let me now turn my attention to the task of expressing our gratitude to those who have made it to this occasion.

We *extend* our utmost appreciation to His Excellency, Dr Hage Gottfried Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia for his inspirational and unifying speech; and we wish him strength and good health for leading our Nation during these turbulent times;

moreover, we *acknowledge* the efforts of the NBC and other media institutions in disseminating important

information to the public on the work of Parliament and covering this event.

We *acknowledge* the excellent arrangements done by the Parliament Secretariat, under the guidance of the Secretaries of the two Houses of Parliament, for ensuring a smooth official opening under the new normal.

Furthermore, we *applaud* the work of the VIPP NamPol Parliament Unit, for maintaining appropriate safety and security measures on the premises of Parliament.

President John F Kennedy once said: ‘As we *express our gratitude*, we *must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.*” With that, we *recognise* the sterling work of our medical and health workers and professionals across the length and breadth of our country for their immense commitment and sacrifice in providing health services to our Nation in these trying times of Covid-19 pandemic;

As I am concluding, Hon. Speaker, join me in *applauding* the teachers, the Class of 2020 and of course the entire Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture for achieving great results against all odds.

Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members,

I thank you all for your kind attention.

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