

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

NOTICE OF QUESTION

BY

Hon. Henny H. Seibeb

Signature: 

I hereby give notice that on Thursday, 15 June 2023, I shall ask the Minister of Urban and Rural Development the following administrative and political question:

It is our understanding that the Chairperson of the Ongwediva Town Council's Management Committee, Dr Fabiam George, is employed full-time in Okakarara as a Trainee Support at the Okakarara Vocational Training Centre, 560 kilometres away from Ongwediva, where he is a councillor. This councillor is compromised under Section 13 (1) (h). There is a similar case of Councillor Kanelombe, Chairperson of the Management Committee of Karibib Town Council, who has fulltime employment in Swakopmund but remains as a Councillor in Karibib. These are both SWAPO Councillors. According to Section 13 (1) (h), Ongwediva CEO Damian Egumbo must then immediately announce the vacancy in the government gazette, the date on which the vacancy has occurred and the cause of this vacancy-that the member no longer resides or only temporarily resides within the local authority area to which they were elected. The same ought to happen in the Karibib case. CEO Lesley Goreseb was supposed to announce the vacancy and let the processes of filling the vacancy take place.

The Minister, you and Executive Director Daniel Nghidinua have audacity to perpetually write letters harassing LPM governed local authorities' bout less worrisome things like an appointment of a Personal Assistant in Karasburg based on rumours but you are breaking the Local Authorities Act by not acting and removing those SWAPO Councillors.

Questions:

- 1) How long have you been aware that Councillor Fabiam George is the Chairperson of the Management Committee of Ongwediva but works fulltime in Okakarara thus not able to discharge his duties meaningfully?
- 2) Have you received any communication, Minutes of the Council meetings from Ongwediva CEO since 2020-2021 about the predicament of Councillor Fabiam George not being every

day in Ongwediva but yet being a fulltime trainee support at Okakarara Vocational Training Centre?

- 3) How many councillors of local authorities in Namibia are facing similar challenges such as that being faced by Councillors Kanelombe and George?
- 4) In terms of breaking the Local Authorities Act by ignoring, or sweeping under the carpet wrongdoings committed by SWAPO councillors, what steps have you taken to rectify such anomalies?
- 5) Will you report the Executive Director to the Prime Minister for not adhering to the relevant laws pertaining to local authorities in Namibia?
- 6) Why did you ignore the legal advice dated January 2021 by the Attorney-General Festus Mbandeka informing you to remove Councillor George?
- 7) Why don't you comply with what the Attorney-General advised you about that removing a councillor who does not reside within their elected local authority is absolute and not discretionary?
- 8) He added that the minister, in fact, has recourse to effect the removal of non-resident councillors, and "does not have to wait for a political party" to withdraw its member.
- 9) The Attorney-General advised you that you have legal recourse to effect the removal of non-resident councillors, and "does not have to wait for a political party" to withdraw its member. Why do you have to wait for us to ask you questions in Parliament before you exercise your powers?

I so submit!

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Hon. Henny H. Seibeb

Signatures



I hereby give notice that on Thursday, 15 June 2023, I shall ask the Minister of Urban and Rural Development few questions with regards to the importance of securing adequate and sustainable sanitation provision for many Namibians living in the municipalities, towns and village councils in this country;

Recently, Namibia ranked the worst in terms of sanitation provision in southern Africa. Recalling history, the Millennium Development Goals for Namibia highlighted this need with the ambition that half of those lacking adequate sanitation would be reached by 2015. This was never achieved and today, above million Namibians, half of the country, lack adequate access to toilets. In 2007, the National Demographic Health Survey indicated that 67% of the population in the country lacked access to decent sanitation and practiced open defecation. This amounts to some 1,411,000 people who are living mainly in rural areas and informal settlements that are peripheral to urban areas. This group is also amongst the lowest-income sector of the Namibian population.

The Namibia Sanitation Situational Report of 2009 indicated that those with access to sanitation facilities are primarily served with water-borne sewage. Sewage connections are estimated to be available to 58% of the urban population and 13% of the rural population. We are sitting on the time-bomb since 2009 when initial research showed that the country is not doing enough and should implement relevant policies and programmes to close the gap and ensure that all Namibians have better water, better sewerage and sanitation facilities and improve their health. We are living in a crisis right now and the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development is the only weak link-no plan, no leadership, no programmes, more fights with local authorities and fear of implementing government and United Nations programmes. The National Sanitation Strategy (2009) provided some background we could have used as a benchmark study but there seems to be no seriousness at the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development.

Questions:

- 1) What are your plans to reverse the current state of concerns with regards to provision of sanitation services to all Namibians?
- 2) What is the budget allocated to MURD annually to address the sanitation crisis in Namibia?

- 3) A 2021 research conducted on poverty has expressed that 68.9% of Namibians face a sanitation crisis, has MURD, begun addressing this figure, and how?
- 4) Kavango East and Kavango West, are the highest areas that have Multidimensional poverty, with a percentage of 70% and 79% respectfully, yet Kavango East has the 3rd least allocation of funds for sanitation with N\$961 000, whilst areas such as Omusati and Ohangwena are getting 2 million plus for sanitation each, even though these places are lower in Multidimensional poverty. How did MURD, decide these allocations when it comes to sanitation to not prioritize the areas who need it the most.
- 5) What policies and programmes do you have in place to collaborate with other Ministries such as the Ministry of Health, Education, Land Reform etc. for implementation?
- 6) Do you have collaborative projects with United Nations and other development agencies in Namibia in terms of research, project funding, project implementation, coordination, supervision, monitoring and evaluation? Elaborate on such partnership, joint projects etc.

I so submit!

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

NOTICE OF QUESTION

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Hon. Henny H. Seibeb

Signature:



I hereby give notice that on Thursday, 15 June 2023, I shall ask the Minister of Urban and Rural Development few questions with regards to the Capital Projects Budget 2023. Apartheid was built on creating a divide between the included and the excluded. The transition to democracy, manifested by democratic elections in 1990, was therefore accompanied by optimism that income poverty and inequality would be eliminated. We believed that the social contract was to enfranchise the impoverished and unemployed underclass, elect a pro-poor and pro-growth political establishment into office, and deracialize and detribalize public policies and private practices in favour of an all-inclusive economic growth path, with a focus on economic diversification and rapid industrialization.

Further, the coming into force of the Decentralisation Enabling Act 33 of 2000 raised our expectations that the Treasury would gradually increase funding for capital projects in regional councils and local authorities. But to our shock, in 2023, Apartheid did not die, as the Capital Projects Budget 2023 distribution depicts. Apartheid did not die but transformed into autopoiesis. The legacy of Apartheid has transformed into a self-sustaining system, and Namibia is facing mounting infrastructure challenges.

After the 2020 regional council and local authority elections in the Hardap and //Kharas regions, there was a significant change in the understanding and definition of development. This marked a departure from Swapo's patronage system that had been in place for three decades, and resulted in the Landless People's Movement (LPM) receiving a strong mandate to govern. This shift led to a major transformation in the structure of regional and local government.

A cursory analysis of the comparative figures under the Capital Projects Budget 2023 reveals a clear implementation of passive economic sanctions by central government authorities against regional councils and local authorities not directly under Swapo's control. For example, under massive land servicing programme, the total allocation is N\$297 266 million.

From this, the local authorities falling directly under LPM administration in Hardap and //Kharas regions are allocated the following meagre amounts: Mariental, N\$1.4 million; Gibeon, N\$3 000; Kalkrand, N\$9 000; Stampriet, N\$2.4 million; Gochas, N\$946 000; Aranos, N\$1.1 million; Maltahohe, N\$9 000; and Hoachanas, N\$946 000. In //Kharas the allocations are for Keetmanshoop, N\$9 000; Koës, N\$6 000; and Karasburg, N\$35 000.

Comparatively, where SWAPO is in charge, with almost the same size and population, they receive generous amounts: Okahao, N\$15 million; Okalongo, N\$16.7 million; Oshikuku, N\$10.8 million; Katima Mulilo, N\$8 million; Ondangwa, N\$4 million; Omuthiya, N\$3 million; Tsumeb, N\$20 million; Helao Nafidi, N\$2.67 million; Omungwelume, N\$2.5 million; and Ongenga, N\$1.7 million. It is saddening to note that local authorities across Namibia, with similar size and population, are allocated differently notwithstanding claims of different phases of project implementation over a certain period of time.

Questions

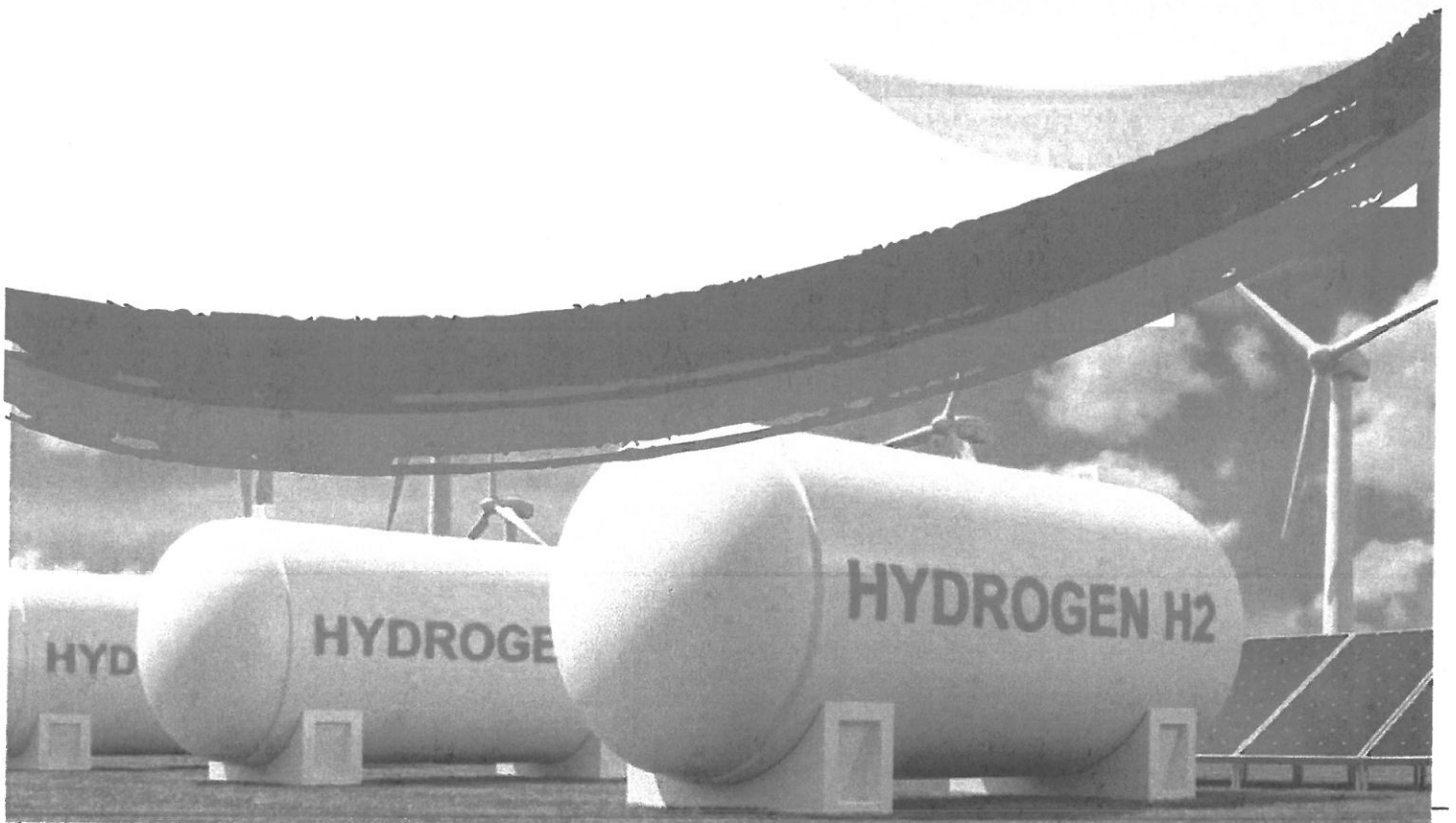
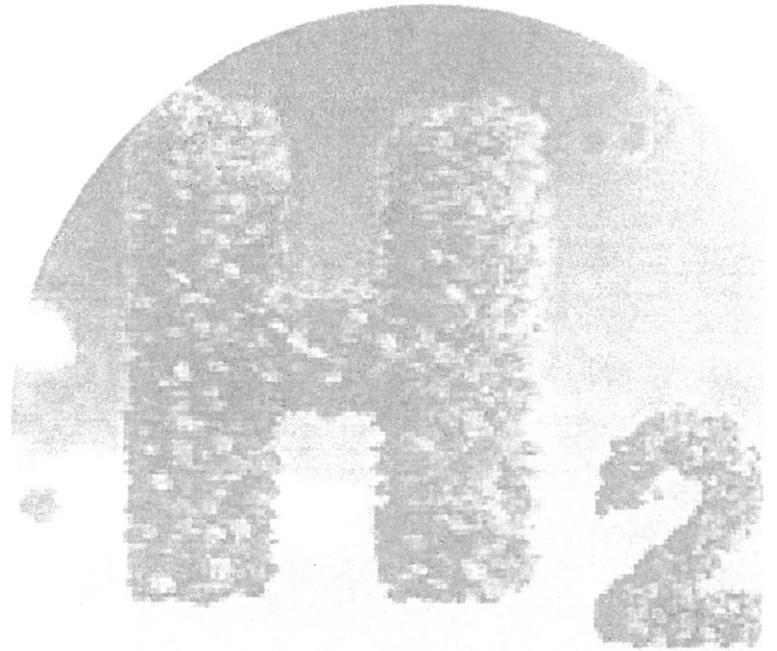
1. What is the rationale of MURD submissions to the Ministry of Finance and Public Enterprises with regards to the bulk municipal servicing and sanitation to local authorities?
2. What is the purpose of allocating a mere N\$9000 to a municipality such as Keetmanshoop? To do what with N\$9000?
3. Is it not shameful to allocate figures below N\$100 000 to local authorities? Do you really need to term such Capital Budget Projects?
4. Why do you continue to cut capital projects budget for local authorities' south of the Red Line?
5. Why do you have a divide and rule policy when it comes to allocation of budgets for certain municipality's thereby increasing inequality, poverty and unemployment?
6. Do you consult local authorities when deciding unilaterally on such figures as depicted in the paragraphs?
7. Have you ever complaint to the Minister of Finance and Public Enterprises and the Director-General of the National Planning Commission?
8. Will you submit a revised budget to rectify this underfunding of the local authorities south of the Red Line which amounts to early warning signs of ethnic cleansing?

I so submit!



Hon. Henny H. Seibeb
LPM Party Chief Whip

6 JUNE 2023



Hon. Speaker of the National Assembly,

Hon. Bernadus Swartbooï, LPM LCCC and Attorney-At-Law,

Hon. Members of Parliament,

1. Namibia faces extreme climatic conditions. Namibia also faces extreme economic conditions. Despite all the apparent good figures that our economy was in some fine form, the gains have simply not trickled down. These have manifested in social protests, increasing civil disobedience and erosion of citizens trust in government e.g. recent police cadet recruitments, which has caused an eyesore in certain communities.
2. Therefore, if any serious dent was to be made on poverty, unemployment and inequality, there must be massive radical government economic intervention. For sure, a massive, both public and private sector led intervention, otherwise, we should all be in agreement that poverty, unemployment and inequality will remain a triple blemish on our democratic planetary. Any anti-poverty strategy should be linked directly to our natural resource management, beneficiation and value-addition, and place the creation of economic opportunities at its centre.
3. I argue that unemployment and the absence of earned income are essentially the major causes of poverty. Poverty, unemployment and inequality are dealt with like some other minor projects in Namibia, despite massive natural resource wealth in many forms: minerals below our soil; uranium, sun and wind above land, which could be transformed into affordable renewable energy to meet our energy needs; oil and gas on land, and in the ocean, and the marine resources; a land mass large enough both to accommodate and feed our population, and also to secure food sovereignty; a largely young population; a developed infrastructure and emerging manufacturing base; a growing research and development capacity.

4. Alongside all this wealth is enormous, unmet need, for virtually every basic requirement: employment, housing, schools, hospitals, universal household connections to the electricity grid and food production. We ought to be using our wealth to meet our unmet basic needs. In the process, we would eliminate unemployment and poverty.
5. This brings me to the discussion of today. Is Green Hydrogen a padlock to poverty, or key to prosperity? This is so because despite the signing of the Feasibility Implementation Agreement (FIA) between Hyphen Hydrogen Energy (Hyphen) and the Namibian Government, regrettably, the progress made by the government in promoting the Green Hydrogen industry has been sluggish at best, moving at a snail's pace. We need bold and decisive action to unlock the full potential of green hydrogen and catapult Namibia into a new era of sustainable growth and prosperity.
6. Our awareness of the government's efforts towards adopting green hydrogen has been shaped by mainstream media coverage. One noteworthy realisation worth mentioning is the issuance of a notice of award in 2021, designating Hyphen Hydrogen Energy as the preferred bidder for Namibia's first large-scale vertically integrated green hydrogen project in the Tsau//Khaeb National Park. Moreover, we followed over the mainstream media, the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Namibia and Germany, signalling international cooperation in the green hydrogen sector.
7. Again, we have learned through the mainstream media and grapevine that scholarships have been awarded to Namibians to pursue studies in this field, and smaller-scale green hydrogen pilot projects have been launched to refine and test the technology. Furthermore, it is good to know that grant funding from the European Union has provided much-needed support to advance our green hydrogen initiatives.

Hon. Speaker,

Hon. Members of Parliament,

8. On the scholarships, I must admit that this was done in total media blackout as I am reliably informed that such information was not widely distributed, especially in the //Kharas region and did not reach the intended beneficiaries. During the SONA, President Hage Geingob mentioned that 93 Namibians received scholarships worth more than N\$34 million to pursue Masters and TVET studies in areas related to Synthetic Fuels industry. We are curious to see the list of the chosen scholarship beneficiaries. It was mentioned that new scholarships would be announced in this month (June). This time we demand transparency and openness and I am hoping to see "Call for Green Hydrogen" scholarships in both the print and electronic media. This thing of hiding information and only passing it through families, friends and acquaintances must stop. Nepotism must stop in this country!

9. As recently as the end of April 2023, it was difficult to obtain information about the Green Hydrogen Project in Namibia. Imagine the fate for //Kharas Regional Council, Local Authorities, Traditional Authorities and communities. There was exclusion and information blockade. Nonetheless, as the regional government in //Kharas region, we appreciate the fact that our role as the Regional Government has been officially recognised by the Head of State, President Dr. Hage Geingob as he had opened up the net and included //Kharas Regional Council Chairperson, revolutionary BK Joseph Kilo Isaacks in the Green Hydrogen Council. This is a good democratic signal, as President Geingob advanced to the rear for us to enter the Green Hydrogen Council.

10. Again, some sort of a realisation was attained, which has been the development and launch of the Namibian Green Hydrogen Strategy, which purports to outline

the country's roadmap for harnessing the full potential of this renewable energy source.

11. These signals in the right path but it is not still durable and does not provide a firm commitment to drive the project beyond 2025, when the incumbents time in office is due. Should we still continue with the Green Hydrogen Project beyond 2025? Should we consider the whole energy mix and begin plans for the export of enriched uranium to South Africa, and in turn source cheap and subsidized energy from ESKOM to fulfil our growing electricity needs considering that NAMPOWER cannot develop and generate its own energy needs for the domestic market?
12. Nonetheless, our assertion is that judging from the above, it is evident that Government does not have a Stakeholder Engagement Plan, or a Communications Plan! For example, how do you expect do implement such large scale projects which has the potential to transform our society without having a well-designed Stakeholder Engagement Plan? At this point communities and leaders at local levels should be engaged by the Green Hydrogen Council, countrywide, in order to build a sense of ownership at grassroots level. We can no longer expect to be receiving second hand information from media outlets and grapevines.
13. In the absence of an aggressive Communication Strategy, explaining the whole project and how in practical terms ordinary citizens would benefit, there would always be scepticism. We are of an understanding that apart from the Tsau//Khaeb National Park Southern Corridor Development Initiative (SCDI), similar concept has been applied in the Dâures constituency in the Erongo region, and will be replicated in the Kunene region. The //Kharas region is deemed to be one of the top locations in the world for low-cost hydrogen production. The Green Hydrogen Strategy states that the Hyphen project will be developed in phases, eventually targeting 300,000 metric tonnes per annum of green hydrogen production by 2030. Once fully ramped up, it will employ an

estimated 3,000 people and generate 15,000 construction jobs over four years, over 90% of which are expected to be filled by Namibians, *ceteris paribus*.

14. Now, while we cautiously take note of the headway made so far about the green hydrogen initiative, we equally feel that it is the right time we start asking some tough questions. Are we truly building an industry or just another project? This is a critical question that demands careful consideration.

15. **Honourable Speaker**, let me elaborate on the rationale behind this question. According to the information derived from Namibia's Green Hydrogen Strategy, the ambitious goal is to achieve a production capacity of two million metric tons per annum by 2030. However, if we look at the current progress of Hyphen, the government's preferred bidder for the Tsau//Khaeb project, they are only projected to produce 300,000 metric tons by 2030, assuming construction begins in 2025. This means we would need to replicate the equivalent of eight Hyphen projects and commence construction by 2025 to meet the targets set in the Strategy.

16. Therefore, it is imperative that we critically assess the pace and scale of governments efforts to ensure that we are not just pursuing individual projects, but truly building a sustainable and thriving green hydrogen industry that can drive our nation's energy transition and economic growth in a meaningful and impactful way. Our hopes, interests and aspirations are bold, and we must therefore ensure as Parliament that government's actions align with the magnitude of the vision of the citizens of this country. Hence, we urgently implore all Members of Parliament and The Executive to re-evaluate our approach to this transformative opportunity that has the potential to positively impact the lives of our people. The stakes are high, as we risk falling behind other nations, both on the continent and beyond, that are making rapid progress in the green hydrogen sector, such as Morocco, Egypt, Chile, and others. Chile, part of the lithium-triangle with Argentina and Bolivia, is leading on all fronts, in lithium mining,

green hydrogen production and value addition thus accelerating its industrialisation and reducing its unemployment rate.

17. It is important to emphasize that we cannot build a sustainable industry if we continue with the same approach we have taken with Hyphen. It has already taken the Government two long years of negotiations. Do the Ministers who sit in the Green Hydrogen Council recall the announcement made by the Head of State on 6th June 2022, after the Davos World Economic Forum meeting, about a strong proposal received for a 50/50 joint venture to establish a green hydrogen valley in the Southern Corridor Development Initiative Number Two Area? A whole year has passed, and we have not seen any tangible progress on that front.
18. The world is moving fast, and we cannot afford to lag behind in this rapidly evolving industry. It is time for us to reassess our approach, expedite our efforts, and ensure that our actions align with the urgency and significance of this opportunity. The future of our country and our people depends on it.
19. Another issue is: How does the Green Hydrogen Council expect to have a Synthetic Fuels Bill to be introduced, discussed and legislation passed, when we as Parliamentarians, specifically the relevant clusters on economic affairs and natural resources have not been properly engaged or workshopped. Our understanding is that according to the Feasibility Implementation Agreement (FIA) signed with Hyphen, government may be held liable in the event that the legislative frameworks are not in place that can hinder Hyphen operations. We continue to offer our free advice here that the best way to always avoid committing errors is to discuss all national programmes and initiatives in Parliament.
20. It is a national priority that demands lawmakers to craft a mutually beneficial scenario for the deployment of Green Hydrogen (GH) as a thriving industry in

Namibia. The urgency of our intervention stems from the fact that we cannot afford to lag behind other nations in the race to ramp up production by 2030. We have witnessed lacklustre progress in the implementation of similar mega projects in Namibia, such as the Kudus Gas project and others, which started with momentum but have not made substantial progress.

21. In practical terms, we demand feedback on the status of the Green Hydrogen 50/50 Joint Venture proposal submitted to government and announced by the Head of State a year ago. It is evident that the route of going through tender or bidding processes leaves Namibia at the backfoot as it takes too long to conclude negotiations and ultimately Namibia is left having to purchase 24% shareholding. This is while you are sitting with a proposal that provides the Namibian government or people with 50% equity from the beginning. That is how you build an industry, not through tenders/bids. Therefore, we want to know the reasons for the delay in assessing the Joint venture proposal and when we can expect negotiations to be concluded. We, the people, deserve transparency and accountability in this critical endeavour that holds immense potential for our nation's economic growth and sustainable development.

22. **Honourable Members**, you may be wondering how this Motion differs from the efforts of the Green Hydrogen Council, the proposed Synthetic Fuels Bill, and other discussion documents. Simply put, mere tenders or bids will not suffice to build a profitable and mutually beneficial Green Hydrogen industry. We believe that we must expand our focus and form strategic partnerships with a larger base of international capital to achieve our goal of producing two million tonnes per annum by 2030.

23. Hence, I would like to ask once more - are we genuinely dedicated to building a sustainable Green Hydrogen industry or are we solely focused on one project? As a nation, we are grappling with the grave challenges such as hunger, homelessness, and unemployment. However, it has been two years since the

Green Hydrogen Council has been in negotiations without prioritizing solid proposals that could secure a 50% equity stake for Namibia in the future of the Green Hydrogen Industry in our country.

24. We call upon the Ministers in the Green Hydrogen Council to take decisive action, prioritize the welfare of our people, and avoid being bogged down by bureaucracy. In light of this, I strongly suggest that the relevant Standing Committee engage with carefully identified stakeholders and provide feedback within the next two months. We expect the Green Hydrogen Council to be responsible for the feedback requested by Parliament and held accountable for their actions. The time for half-measures is over. Our future depends on seizing this opportunity and embracing the transformative power of green hydrogen with unwavering resolve.

25. In conclusion, I present this Motion for your deliberation and action. Rule 63 of the Standing Rules and Orders and Internal Arrangements of the National Assembly highlights the importance of addressing poverty in Namibia. It is imperative that Standing Committees uphold this responsibility and make every effort to alleviate poverty among the people of Namibia, as mandated by this rule. This rule, appropriately named "Duty of Standing Committees to promote the reduction of poverty," emphasizes the obligation of Standing Committees to prioritize poverty reduction in the execution of their duties.

26. I so submit!