



PARLIAMENT *Journal*

Publication of the Parliament of Namibia Vol 20 No 3 September - December 2023



Parliament Journal is a peer-reviewed distinctly informative journal published quarterly by the Parliament of Namibia. The journal publishes stories/articles of newsworthy meetings, conferences, and workshops, well researched in-depth feature articles on the Speaker and Deputy Speaker, Chamber proceedings, and oversight visits. Stories/articles about courtesy calls on presiding officers and international meetings/engagements and events such as Pan-African Parliament (PAP), Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU), Southern African Development Community Forum (SADC-PF), and Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) are also considered for publication.

Stories/articles on other important events normally fixed on the calendar of Parliament such as the Official Opening of Parliament, State of the Nation Address (SONA), and the tabling of the national budget are also published.

Editor(s)

Mr Vincent Sinalumbu
Mr Immanuel Kooper

Editorial Board

Mr George Sanzila
Ms Momley Amushendje
Mr Sakeus Kadhikwa
Mr Raphael Hangula
Ms Noreen Sitali
Mr Sakeus Iikela

Consulting Editor

Dr Moses E.D Magadza

@ Parliament of Namibia

Postal

The Editor
Parliament Journal
Love Street
Private Bag 13323
Windhoek
Namibia

Telephone

(+ 264) 61 288 2603 or

Fax

(+ 264) 61 231 687
(+ 264) 61 202 8048

E-Mail

v.sinalumbu@parliament.na
i.kooper@parliament.na

Website

www.parliament.na

Facebook: Parliament of the Republic of Namibia

Twitter: @parliament_nam

Instagram: parliamentnamibia

YouTube: Parliament of the Republic of Namibia

Layout

Silke Kotze

Printing

John Meinert (Pty) Ltd



A partner of the
Parliament of Namibia

Konrad Adenauer Foundation

Tel: 061- 225568

P.O. Box 1145

Windhoek

info.namibia@kas.de

www.kas.de/namibia



PARLIAMENT *Journal*

Publication of the Parliament of Namibia
Vol 20 No 3 September - December 2023

CONTENTS

Parliament calls for more patrols along border with Botswana	5
Committee on Economics visits Namibia	6
Committee on Natural Resources wants reversal of counter-productive policies	7
Navachab spends N\$1 billion on local companies in 2022	9
SADC-PF signs MOU with SARDC to access research	10
Parliament seeks EDs presence at the mining and energy workshop	11
Speaker pays tribute to Ahtisaari	12
Namibia to benefit from BRICS membership	13
Namibia addresses inequality through law	14
Japan committed to helping in Namibia's development efforts	15
Speaker become trustee of the SADC-PF and its Successors Trust	16
Speaker wants Namibia-Turkey investment cooperation enhanced	17
Telecom Namibia wants law amended to curb copper theft	18
Muteka calls for youth quota in Parliament	19

PARLIAMENT CALLS FOR MORE *patrols along border with Botswana*

· George Sanzila

Windhoek - The Namibian Parliament has recommended that the Ministry of Defence and Veterans' Affairs increase patrols along the border with neighboring Botswana, to prevent the wanton killings of innocent Namibian civilians by the Botswana Defence Force (BDF).

Parliament further called for a diplomatic intervention through appealing to President Hage Geingob (now late) to address the Zambezi security issue through the Namibia-Botswana Joint Commission and the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation, to establish a consulate office in Kasane, Botswana to provide swift consular services and improve relations between the two countries.

These recommendations are contained in a comprehensive report by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Security that was tabled in the National Assembly towards the end of December 2023..

The tabling of the report in the National Assembly, came after a fact-finding mission by the committee, to the Zambezi region in 2022. This was prompted by an increase in the number of shootings and harassments by the BDF, of Namibian citizens living along the border, on suspicion of being poachers. It is estimated that more

than 30 Namibians lost their lives at the hands of the BDF since independence.

The indigenous people from both countries, who live alongside each other, depend on the shared river system for their livelihood. For Namibians however, this has turned out to be a death trap.

Boling point

The situation reached boiling point in November 2020 when three fishermen - two brothers and their cousin, a Zambian national - were shot dead by BDF members after they were suspected of being poachers. The incident attracted regional and international attention and pitted citizens of the two countries against each other.

The shooting also brought to the fore, the controversial Boundary Treaty signed between the two countries in 2018. The treaty, has been heavily criticized by Zambezi residents, including traditional authorities, for not having been subjected to thorough consultations.

During the standing committee's visit to the region, Zambezi Governor Honourable Lawrence Sampofu said the most affected communities were from the Kabbe South, Linyanti and Judea Lyabboloma constituencies.

"There are reports of brutality including harassment, intimidation and shootings by the BDF officers. People are not happy with the Boundary Treaty as it does not affirm the existing border but creates new borders with invisible coordinates on the Namibian side," said Sampofu.

Similar sentiments were echoed by traditional authorities as well as the Namibia Lives Matter (NLM) pressure group, which argues that the 2018 border treaty was largely to blame for the hostilities and that it should be reversed, and a consulate office also opened to improve relations.

"The treaty gave birth to brute intimidation experienced by the inhabitants today. We further believe all these incidents could be avoided if the government opens a consular office

in Kasane, Botswana as was done in Ondjiva, Angola.

"This can be a point of contact to receive, record and respond to panic alerts," suggested NLM. Zambezi residents also complained that families of victims of BDF shootings did not get any assistance from the Namibian government.

The intricacies of the Boundary treaty of 2018

During consultations, the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation was adamant that despite the criticisms, the treaty has not come into effect because of a number of pending issues.

According to the Ministry, the treaty can only be enforceable once the original copy of the treaty has been deposited with the Secretary General of the United Nations, the African Union and the Southern African Development Community.

The Ministry added that although Botswana appears to be implementing the treaty, Namibia has not deposited its instruments because it still has to finalise a number of bilateral and stand-alone agreements including the Standard Operating Procedures and the delimitation of the Kazungula Tri-Point, that also involves Zambia.

The committee further revealed that according to evidence it has uncovered, the Boundary Treaty, did not create new borders but confirmed the boundary that already existed.

During the consultations, community members and law enforcement agencies highlighted that the non-visibility of beacons along the borderline, also contributed to incidences of arbitrary arrests, harassments and shooting of Namibian civilians. They implored the government to sensitise community members about the borderline about the dangers that lurks there. ■



Members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Security during one of their meetings at parliament.

COMMITTEE ON ECONOMICS *visits Namdia*

· George Sanzila

WINDHOEK - Members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Economics and Public Administration visited Namibia Desert Diamonds (Namdia) in October 2023, to familiarise themselves with the operations of the company, as part of the committee's oversight function.

Namdia is wholly owned by the government of Namibia, which has a 15% entitlement agreement to sort, value, sell and market Namibian diamonds extracted from the land and the sea by Namdeb Holdings (Namdeb and Debmarine), a venture jointly owned by the Namibian government and De Beers Group of Companies.

Previously, this function was done by De Beers with only 10% reserved for local sight holders (local diamond factories).

According to Namdia chief executive officer Alisa Amupolo, the creation of the company enabled Namibia to sell and market its diamonds directly to the market without going through the De Beers system that groups all diamonds regardless of origin, thus opening up opportunities for price discovery and promotion of the unique Namibian diamond story to the global market.

Namibian diamonds are regarded as of high quality and value, comparable to those from other high-grade countries.

From 2016 to 2022, Namdia adopted a hybrid selling model where 60% are for direct sales while the remaining 40% is sold through competitive bidding.



Members of the Parliamentary Committee are taken on a tour of the diamond sorting facility at Namdia.



The chairperson of the committee, Hon. Natangwe Ithete inspects a diamond gem at Namdia.

This method, according to Namdia, has helped the company to discover prices and best methods and intend selling all of its diamonds through a competitive bidding process from 2023 to 2026.

Namdia says challenges such as the impact of synthetic (lab grown) diamonds, the Russia-Ukraine conflict and sanctions imposed on Russia, among others, continue to negatively impact on prices. The export of more raw diamonds with low local beneficiation is another concern.

The company appealed to the parliamentarians to speed up the passing of the Diamond Bill, that is currently in its draft stage, to increase beneficiation, skills and technology transfer and employment creation.

For the period 2022 to 2025, Namdia has had more than 36 clients, mostly from Belgium, United Arab Emirates, India, Israel and the United States of America.

In 2022, the company generated more than N\$3 billion in revenue, paid income tax and export levies of more than N\$230 million while declaring dividends of N\$300 million to the Namibian government.

Through its foundation, the company has to date, invested more than N\$41



Diamonds that have been sorted are classified according to their standards.

million in areas such as education, health and sports.

The committee was headed by its chairperson, Honourable Natangwe Ithete. Other MPs included, Hon. Maria Elago, Hon. Gotthard Kasuto, Hon. Sebastian Karupu, Hon. Kennedy Shekupakela, Hon. Maria Kamutali, Hon. Reggie Diergaardt, Hon. Johanna Kandjimi, Hon. Elifas Dingara and Hon. Bertha Dinyando.



COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES WANTS

reversal of counter-productive policies

· George Sanzila



Members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Natural Resources with staff of Swakop Uranium mine.

SWAKOPMUND - The chairperson of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Natural Resources, Honourable Tjekero Tweya, says there is need to reverse government policies that are found to stifle economic activities and progress.

Hon Tweya said this during a familiarisation tour of one of the mining companies in the Erongo region in October last year.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee visited mining companies to ensure they are complying with labour and environmental laws, the fulfillment of corporate social responsibility and to ascertain government shareholding and beneficiation.

A sub-committee on Mines and Energy under the umbrella of the Natural Resources committee has been created for this purpose. So far, the four mining companies - Rossing Uranium, Swakop Uranium, Langer Heinrich Uranium and

Symphonie Stone Processing - have been visited as part of the committee's oversight function.

According to the committee, some government policies tend to be counter-productive and have serious implications on the operational activities of the mines.

This became apparent after both the general manager for operations at Rossing Uranium, Martin Tjipita and executive vice president at Swakop Uranium, Irvinne Simataa cited water and energy costs as too exorbitant and therefore affecting profits and operations.

This situation, according to the mining companies is exacerbated by regulations that limits own generation even when mining companies have the capacity to establish their own water and energy plants.

Simataa said the mine, which gobbles up over 70% of the Erongo region's

total water consumption to keep its operations afloat, faces the risk of water shortages going forward unless an urgent solution is found.

"Water is a challenge. The mine uses between 65% to 70% of the total water consumption in Erongo at 9 million cubic meters per annum. This is a huge risk. Equally, the Electricity Control Board (ECB) requires entities to produce renewable power of up to a maximum of 30%. We have the capacity to develop our own water and power sources if given the chance but we are limited by these restrictions," said Simataa.

He however praised government's liberalisation policy that allowed NamWater to enter partnerships with private investors to develop an additional desalination plant that would help lessen the burden.

see Natural Resources on page 8...

...Natural Resources from page 7

He said the company currently produces up to 12 megawatts of its own energy requirements from solar power and plans to increase this generation capacity to 17 megawatts, to sustain its activities, were underway.

Hon. Tweya who was leading the delegation of MPs, was not happy with the latter policies labelling them restrictive, adding that they were stunting progress.

“Namibia is one of those countries in Africa with the highest water and energy costs. Some of these policies are making the situation worse for companies, slowing economic activities and encroaching on their profit that would have otherwise helped to uplift our economy and our people. If companies have the capacity to generate their own electricity and water, why not let them?”, he asked.

As an alternative, the general manager at Langer Heinrich Uranium, Johan Roux noted that the company had started to recycle its water and had also obtained an extraction permit to draw some of its water from the Swakop river.

Lack of empowerment for SMEs and exploitation

The parliamentarians were not happy that mining companies continued to outsource what they termed “mundane” tasks to foreign owned companies at

the expense of locals. This came after it was revealed that the metal drums used to store uranium ore for export were imported from South Africa. The MPs accused some investors of exploitation and extracting Namibia’s resources without benefiting the citizens in return.

“It cannot be correct that up to now, only South Africans can manufacture drums. Why don’t you give SMEs those specifications. Give them a chance so that they get experience. If there are still investors out there who still want to exploit us, those days are gone. This is no longer about standards, we know these games,” warned Hon. Tweya

“We cannot allow our people to continue to suffer like this when we have so much resources. In the past we had a few mines but they built schools, clinics and other infrastructure. Now that we have many, you only hear of few donations here and there”, complained Hon. Kennedy Shakupakela, another MP on the delegation.

During a meeting with MPs before their visits, Erongo Regional Governor, Neville Andre, bemoaned lack of coordination among stakeholders in the mining sector, adding that this affected the relationship between mining companies and the local leadership, resulting in the exploitation of mine workers.

Hon. Andre noted that although he was pleased with the proliferation of

mining activities in the region and their contribution to the country’s gross domestic product (GDP), there was an urgent need for coordination.

“The regional leadership is not aware of so many mining activities taking place in the region. We also lack inspectors and have engaged the responsible ministry to monitor and assess and make sure the law is followed.

“Local companies are not capacitated to take part in mining activities. Even though training institutions are imparting skills to young people, mining companies are not collaborating with these institutions so that they can have job opportunities,” the governor said.

The Standing Committee is mandated by the Constitution and the Standing Rules and Orders of the National Assembly to conduct oversight visits, to ensure accountability.

The visits will culminate in the production of a comprehensive report that will be tabled in Parliament for discussions and adoption before it is presented to the relevant ministry for implementation.

Other members of Parliament on the oversight visit were Hon. Kletus Karondo who chairs the sub-committee on Mines and Energy within the Natural Resources Committee, Hon Maria Kamutali, Hon Diederik Vries and Hon. Maria Elago.



Open pit mining at Swakop Uranium

NAVACHAB SPENDS N\$1 BILLION *on local companies in 2022*

· George Sanzila

KARIBIB - The Navachab Gold Mine located 10 kilometres west of Karibib spent more than N\$2 billion on procurement in 2022, with more than half of that amount spent on local companies.

This information was revealed by the mine's Managing Director, George Botshiwe, to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Natural Resources that was visiting mining companies in the Erongo region in October last year.

Botshiwe further said the blast hole drilling function was being fully outsourced to local contractors.

The committee was in the region to satisfy itself that mining companies were complying with environmental and labour laws, corporate social responsibilities were being honoured, establishing government shareholding in mining companies and the status of beneficiation.

According to Botshiwe, the company believes in empowering citizens either through the outsourcing of jobs to local companies with expertise, provision of employment or internships for mining trainee graduates.

"We have given so many jobs to locals and small contractors and we have been very happy with the outcomes. Kodo was awarded a four-year blasthole drilling contract for N\$125 million, NU

Trading at N\$43 million, Landsberg N\$15 million, Stewardship Drilling N\$30 million and Oshikoto Transport N\$13 million. The only time we procure from outside the country is when we acquire explosives, major equipment and spare parts," said Botshiwe.

He further said the mine, which employs more than 1 000 permanent and temporal workers, has created more than 600 jobs in the last three years. It offers internships to graduates as part of efforts to impart the necessary skills to enable them to get permanent employment.

According to the managing director, the company has taken a deliberate decision to accommodate mining engineering students in internships to lessen the unemployment burden in the country.

"We have so many unemployed mining engineers who graduated from our institutions of higher learning. We have taken a deliberate decision to get these graduates off the street and train them through internships instead of continuously sending them to school and only ending up adding to the number of the unemployed," noted Botshiwe.

He said as part of its corporate social responsibility, Navachab gold mine has drilled more 12 boreholes in Kavango

West, Zambezi, Kunene and Omaheke regions at a combined cost of more than N\$5 million. There boreholes were benefiting more than 700 households and over 15 000 livestock.

The company further took the initiative to construct a medical centre in Karibib. The medical centre which is envisaged to help the local community to have easy access to medical care, will be constructed in phases over a period of five years and at a cost of N\$180 million.

Members of Parliament commended the company for taking the lead in considering local companies for outsourcing contracts.

However, IHon Maria Kamutali decried the tendency by big companies to contract foreign owned companies for work that can be performed by local contractors.

"We have heard how your company is giving work to local contractors and how well they have been performing. I want to commend you for that but we still have so many companies, not only in the mining sector, sub-contracting work to foreign companies at the expense of locals. Until when are we going to rely on foreign companies to perform work

see Navachab on page 10...



Members of Parliament tour an open mining pit at the Navachab Gold mine.

...Navachab from page 9

that we can do?" asked Hon. Kamutali rhetorically.

Botshiwe mentioned high water and energy costs as the two biggest challenges affecting the mine's profit, adding that innovation was at the centre of its operations and that plans were afoot to construct a solar plant to help reduce the cost of production.

"We are a low-grade mine and one has to be very innovative to reduce costs. We are the first mine in the

world to use the XRT technology in gold processing in order to reduce our costs. Water is a challenge and electricity from NamPower is quite exorbitant", said Botshiwe.

Navachab mines gold and silver as a by-product. It is owned by QKR that has a 92.5% shareholding, with the remaining 7.5% owned by the Government of Namibia through Epangelo Mining Company. The parliamentary committee further

visited Erongo Marble and Granite and African Granite mines.

Other Members of Parliament on the oversight visit Hons. Tjekero Tweya who chairs the Natural Resources Standing Committee, Kletus Karondo, chair of sub-committee on Mines and Energy within the Natural Resources Committee, Kennedy Shakupakela, Diederik Vries and Maria Elago.

SADC-PF SIGNS MOU WITH SARDC to access research

• George Sanzila

Windhoek - The Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC) has formalised its partnership with the Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC-PF) through signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at the conclusion of the former's board meeting held in Windhoek from 30 - 31 October 2023.

The MOU was signed by SADC-PF Secretary General, Boemo Sekgoma and SARDC Executive Director, Munetsi Madakufamba, who both pledged to collaborate to enhance development in the SADC Region.

SARDC produces research and information that aids development policies in Southern Africa, focusing on 15 SADC member states in partnership with several member research institutes. Regional research initiatives range from Infrastructure, Energy, Industrialisation, Water Resources, Gender, and issues relating to Environment and Climate.

Speaker of the National Assembly, Honourable Professor Peter Katjavivi, who is also the chairperson of SARDC, reiterated the importance of the partnership noting that a formal collaboration between the SARDC and SADC as the executive arm of the region, has already been established with the SADC-PF, which is a regional parliament, having been the only missing link.

"We have already signed an MOU with the SADC secretariat and it was

important that we sign with the SADC-PF as a regional parliament to collaborate formally and ensure that there are enough resources for the forum to continue performing its function," noted Katjavivi.

It was the first time the board was meeting physically since 2019 due to restrictions imposed by Covid 19 pandemic. Among the issues that enjoyed priority during the meeting were climate change, water and youth unemployment.

The Speaker further revealed that there were currently board openings and that the organisation was considering including young people as part of the board.

Even though the organization has made progress as a go-to centre for informed research within the SADC region, many challenges continue to affect its operations, according to Katjavivi.

"It is not a secret that current geopolitical issues continue to impact on the well-being of most organisations around the world. Starting with the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021, we have witnessed a shift in funding priorities for most donors. The situation has worsened since 2022 following the outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine war which has seen most traditional donors moving their support towards Ukraine," moaned Katjavivi.

SARDC which has a rich historical archive that is being digitized for online access is based at Julius K. Nyerere House in Harare, Zimbabwe, and works throughout the 16 member states of SADC. Board members are drawn from various countries and disciplines in SADC region and has over 35 staff members who make up the secretariat.

Two board members, Chazile Magongo from Eswatini and Remy Makumbe from Zimbabwe were introduced as new members during the meeting.



SADC-PF Secretary General Boemo Sekgoma (left) and SARDC Executive Director, Munetsi Madakufamba sign the MOU. In the background is Speaker of the National Assembly, Honourable Professor Peter Katjavivi.

PARLIAMENT SEEKS EDS PRESENCE *at the mining and energy workshop*

· Sakeus Kadhikwa

HONOURABLE Tjekero Tweya says committees are guided by the Rules of Procedure Committees and Standing Orders as well as the Namibian Constitution to subpoena persons to appear before it to give evidence on oath and to produce any documents required by it.

He was speaking at the six-day joint Parliamentary Oversight workshop on maximising the potentials of the mining and energy sectors in Namibia that was held in Swakopmund from 29 May-03 June 2023.

The workshop was necessitated by the oversight consultations the Parliamentary Standing Committees had with the stakeholders in the mining and energy sectors, which brought together a diverse group of stakeholders, including members of the Parliamentary Standing Committees on Economics and Natural Resources, representatives of Government agencies responsible for the energy, mining, and oil sectors, officials or representatives of the O/M/As and organisations.

The aim was to seek more dialogue, mutual respect and common understanding, specifically with Executive Directors and other captains of industries in the mining and energy sector, such as Ministry of Mines and Energy and Namcor, as a step towards understanding the governance, government shareholding and state of the mining sector, from the custodians of mines and energy sector in Namibia.

Of the ministries being represented by senior government officials, only two out of seven EDs (National Planning Commission and Ministry of Industrialisation, Trade and SME Development) attended the workshop. This resulted in the MPs being taken aback at not obtaining clarification and detailed accounts from the accounting officers.

This came to light after a number of Government Executive Directors (EDs from the Ministry of Mines and Energy; Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform; Ministry of Finance; Ministry of Urban and rural Development and Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism) were among those failed to show up at the workshop despite having been invited.

"Government officials provide committees with first-hand knowledge of each administrative programme and details which lie behind the overall picture of the policy area and the aggregate figures" stressed Hon. Tweya, adding that as a result, the Parliamentary standing committees sought the need for accounting officers, who are the overall administrative head of the Ministries, to attend the workshop.

The workshop brought together a diverse group of stakeholders, including: Bank of Namibia, Namdia, NamRA, NamPower, Electricity Control Board, Small Miners Association, Economic Advisor in the Presidency and Green Hydrogen Commissioner in Namibia, NTDC, Epangelo, Chamber of Mines, Namibia Chamber of Environment, Development Bank of Namibia and Environmental Investment Fund.



Chairperson of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Natural Resources, Hon. Tjekero Tweya

"Committees are guided by the Rules of Procedure Committees and Standing Orders as well as the Namibian Constitution to subpoena persons to appear before it to give evidence on oath and to produce any documents required by it."

SPEAKER PAYS TRIBUTE *to Ahtisaari*

• *George Sanzila*

Windhoek - Speaker of the National Assembly, Honourable Professor Peter Katjavivi has described the late revered statesman and former President of Finland, Martti Ahtisaari an international civil servant who played a pivotal role in Namibia's struggle for independence.

Ahtisaari died on 16 October 2023 at the age of 86 after battling Alzheimer's disease.

In his tribute, Hon Katjavivi noted that Namibia's independence could not have been attained without Ahtisaari's unwavering commitment and efforts.

"The success of the UN mission in Namibia is inextricably linked to Martti Ahtisaari and his dedicated team. Ahtisaari was a tireless advocate for global peace and stability. As a United Nations special representative for Namibia from 1977 to 1990, his leadership was instrumental in our journey to independence. On behalf of

the Namibian parliament and its people, I express our heartfelt condolences to his wife Eeva, his son Marco, and the entire family", said the Speaker.

Namibia awarded Ahtisaari with an honorary citizenship due to his immense contribution to the country's independence. A school in Windhoek is also named in his honour.

The Speaker met the late diplomat in 2017 when he paid him a courtesy call on his way to a meeting of the IPU General Assembly that was held in Russia that year.

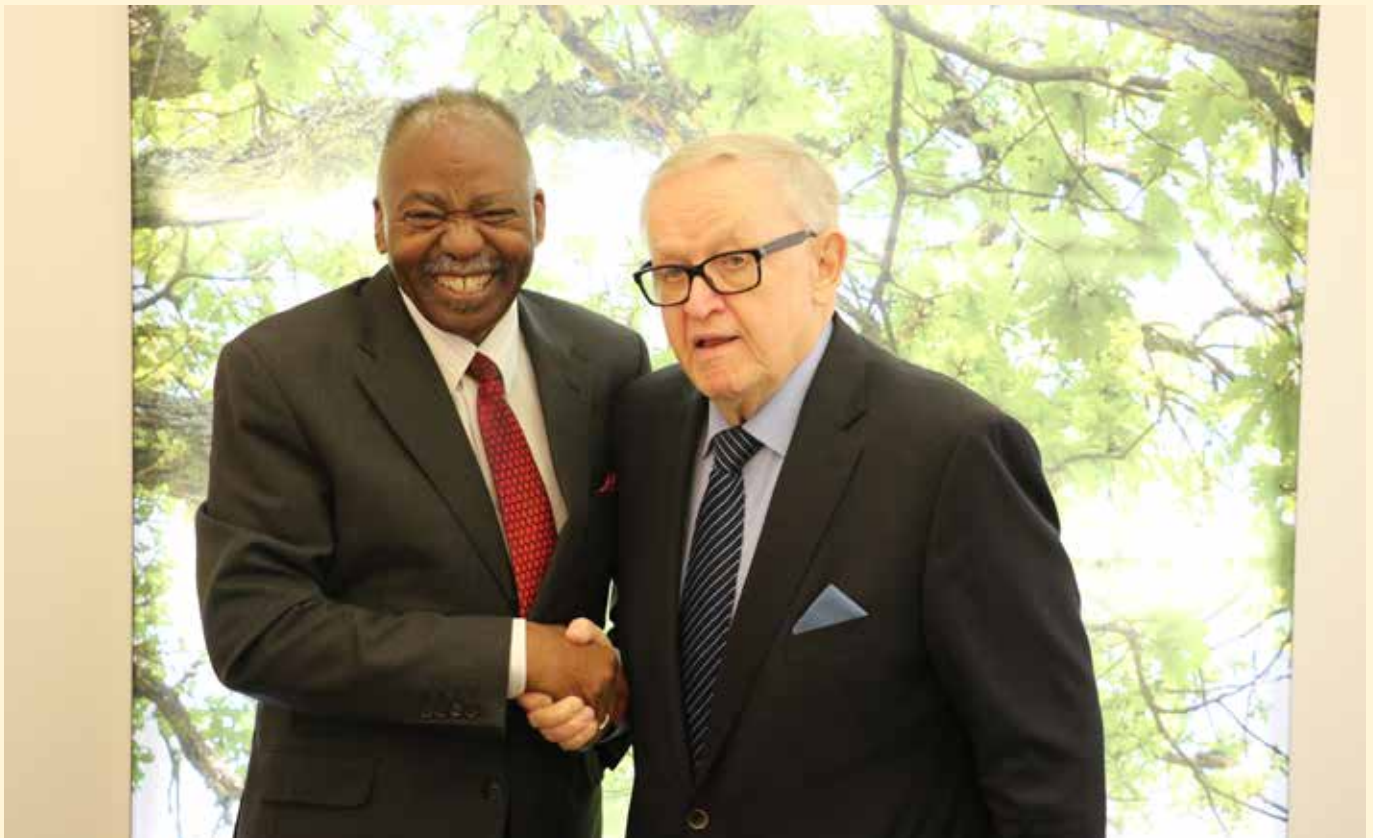
Ahtisaari pledged to continue supporting Namibia and added that he was impressed with some of the developments in the country, particularly parliamentary equal gender representation.

"As an honorary citizen of Namibia, you can always count on my support. There is no country as important to me

as Namibia. We serve the same values of decent healthcare, education and overall, a fair society.

"I have heard many good stories including equal gender representation. It's good that we can use Namibia as an example. Keep up the good work," Ahtisaari urged Hon Katjavivi.

A renowned politician, diplomat and Nobel peace prize laureate, Ahtisaari played a key role in Namibia's struggle for independence. He was the UN's special envoy who oversaw the decolonisation of Namibia. He is often known for his international peace work and has also intervened in Aceh, Kosovo and Iraq among many other crises ridden countries. He was President of Finland from 1994-2000. ■



Speaker of the National Assembly, Professor Peter Katjavivi with the late Martti Ahtisaari during the Speaker's visit to Finland.

NAMIBIA TO BENEFIT FROM *BRICS membership*

• George Sanzila

Windhoek – The Speaker of the National Assembly, Honourable Professor Peter Katjavivi says Namibia stands to benefit immensely from being a member of the BRICS group of countries.

Hon Katjavivi made these remarks recently during the 9th BRICS Parliamentary Forum held Johannesburg, South Africa. He was invited to attend the forum by his South African counterpart, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula.

He told the meeting that even though Namibia was not yet a member of the bloc, its level of trade with current member countries has considerably improved.

“I am happy that as of 2022, Namibia’s trade volume with BRICS countries has significantly increased. Therefore, Namibia already benefits immensely from BRICS countries and joining the bloc would amplify and even provide more growth and expansion,” said Katjavivi.

According to Hon Katjavivi, the expected expansion of the bloc which currently accounts for more than 40% of the world population and over 25% of the global GDP, would result in immeasurable economic activities.

He implored African countries to capitalise on the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) in order to increase economic activities and achieve sustainable development for the continent to liberate itself economically.

The Hon Speaker further reminded fellow lawmakers on the importance of collaboration and the role of the legislature in fostering economic growth and expansion.

“This forum presents an opportunity for us as parliamentarians in the developing world to connect with each other and establish linkages. Such linkages will hopefully mutually benefit our quest to represent, enact and oversee financial and economic legislation that are responsive to the needs and aspirations of our people



Speaker of the National Assembly, Honourable Professor Peter Katjavivi during the forum.

cognizant of the ongoing expansion of the bloc,” Hon Katjavivi stated.

The BRICS Parliamentary Forum was held under the theme “Harnessing Multilateralism and Parliamentary Diplomacy to Deepen BRICS and Africa partnership for Accelerated Implementation of the Africa Free-Trade Agreement”.

BRICS is a group of five major economies focusing on economic cooperation and increasing multilateral trade and development among the bloc. Member countries include Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. Over 40 countries have so far expressed interest in joining the bloc. ■

“I am happy that as of 2022, Namibia’s trade volume with BRICS countries has significantly increased. Therefore, Namibia already benefits immensely from BRICS countries and joining the bloc would amplify and even provide more growth and expansion,” said Katjavivi.

NAMIBIA ADDRESSES *inequality through law*

• George Sanzila



Speaker of the National Assembly, Professor Peter Katjavivi during the general debate at the IPU General Assembly held in Luanda, Angola.

LUANDA (Angola) - Speaker of the National Assembly, Honourable Professor Peter Katjavivi told hundreds of Members of Parliament gathered at the 147th Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in Luanda in October last year that despite Namibia inheriting inequality from the brutal apartheid regime policies, it has since adopted many initiatives to address this anomaly.

Hon Katjavivi made these remarks during a general debate on the theme “Parliamentary Action for Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions”. According to the Speaker, numerous laws have been passed to promote peace, justice and strong institutions.

“From social protection grants to affirmative action, we have made strides in gender representation with 47% of our parliament consisting of women. We strive to promote free primary education and have enacted the Protection of Whistleblowers’ law.

“Our commitment to justice is evident through Acts combating domestic violence, rape and amendments to promote access to justice for all. Our

Access to Information Act enhances transparency and accountability,” noted Katjavivi at the event that was held in October last year.

The Speaker further said the Sustainable Development Goals have been integrated into national development plans to ease implementation and review, with Parliament playing a critical role in holding the Executive to account.

He commended Angola for hosting the prestigious event adding that Namibia would remain indebted to its northern neighbour for its selflessness in providing refuge to countless Namibians during the bitter struggle for independence.

“I acknowledge the pivotal role the government and the people of Angola played during the struggle for Namibia’s independence and freedom and particularly the historic battle of Cuito Cuanavale in Angola between 1987 and 1989,” said Katjavivi.

Katjavivi implored fellow lawmakers to work towards maintaining peace and justice for all, adding that Namibia was

deeply concerned about the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas that has resulted in the loss of many human lives.

“We are particularly concerned about the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas. The escalation of this conflict is raising particular humanitarian challenges and we appeal for de-escalation. We fundamentally support a permanent two-state solution to be found within the relevant United Nations resolutions,” said the Speaker.

Hon Katjavivi is also the Vice President of the IPU task force on Russia-Ukraine conflict whose activities were discussed during the plenary. During the official opening that preceded the plenary, President of Angola, João Lourenço emphasized the importance of parliamentary diplomacy and the need for peaceful resolution to conflicts.

All IPU statutory bodies such as the Governing Council, Standing Committees, Committees on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians and on the Middle East Questions as well as the Forum of Women Parliamentarians and the Forum for Young MPs, will meet during the assembly.

The Governing Council is also expected to elect a new IPU president and the assembly will culminate in the adoption of a final document on the overall theme of the General debate.

Hon. Katjavivi is leading the delegation of Namibian parliamentarians that include National Assembly members Hons Lukas Hamata, Fenni Nanyeni, Bernadus Swartbooi and vice chairperson Hon. Victoria Kauma, Hon. Emma Muteka, Elder Felipe and Nicodemus Motinga from the National Council.

The IPU is an organisation of global Parliaments that brings together lawmakers to identify international challenges and make recommendations for remedial action.



JAPAN COMMITTED TO *helping* in Namibia's development efforts

• George Sanzila

WINDHOEK - Japan is among the biggest donor countries for Namibia, having contributed more than US\$271 million to Namibia's development efforts since independence.

This was said by Japan Ambassador to Namibia, His Excellence Nishimaki Hisao when he paid a courtesy call on the Speaker of the National Assembly, Honourable Prof. Peter Katjavivi on the 05th of September 2023.

The diplomat noted that Namibia has so far received assistance in the areas of human resources development, agriculture and emergency response by providing food to vulnerable citizens affected by the drought.

Medical assistance is also among the aid provided by the Asian country.

Ambassador Hisao noted that Japan and Namibia continue to cooperate in other critical areas of the economy through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

Japan has also been responsible for the construction of classrooms and the provision of volunteer teachers for mathematics, physics and chemistry who have been deployed to teach in all Namibia's 14 regions.

The Asian country has also offered scholarships to many Namibians to study different fields in Japan. JICA has also been a strategic partner of the Walvis Bay Corridor Group (WBCG) since 2013 and has provided technical expertise for the formulation of Namibia's logistics masterplan.

Ambassador Hisao also told Hon Katjavivi that the joint Japan-Namibia Rice and Mahangu Project which was launched at the University of Namibia's Ogongo campus in 2012, has scientifically proven that rice can be grown successfully in northern Namibia.

The Speaker commended the initiative noting that it was important that the project is replicated in many parts of Namibia, given the country's susceptibility to drought.

"We commend this project and hope it can be replicated in other parts of the



Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Prof. Peter Katjavivi (right) with Japan Ambassador to Namibia, H.E. Nishimaki Hisao with a package of rice produced at the Ogongo Unam campus.

country in order to alleviate hunger. This is a major step and its important that our Members of Parliament pay attention to these kinds of projects," said Hon. Katjavivi.

He noted that the Namibian parliament was looking at creating linkages with its Japanese counterpart.

"Japan has been a consistent development partner and as Parliament we are exploring developing a partnership with the Parliament of Japan and we look forward to the upcoming IPU General Assembly in Angola in October to engage our colleagues and begin the steps for that friendship," stated the Speaker. ■

"We commend this project and hope it can be replicated in other parts of the country in order to alleviate hunger. This is a major step and its important that our Members of Parliament pay attention to these kinds of projects," said Hon. Katjavivi.

SPEAKER BECOMES TRUSTEE *of the SADC-PF and its Successors Trust*

• Sakeus Kadhikwa



Professor Peter Katjavivi exchanges documents with Hon. Andre Leon Tumba Mukendi, MP and Trustee from the DRC

THE Speaker of the National Assembly, Honourable Professor Peter Katjavivi, and Honourable Andre Leon Tumba Mukendi, MP and Trustee representing the DRC, signed the Trust Deed for the establishment of the SADC Parliamentary Forum and Its Successors Trust.

This momentous occasion which represents a collective commitment of fostering the democratic and socio-economic development in SADC Region, took place at the National Assembly in Windhoek on 19 May 2023.

In November 2021, the SADC Parliamentary Forum resolved to establish the Trust with the aim of providing a platform for interested donors and parties to fund developmental projects and initiatives compatible with the Forum's objectives.

The Trust is intended to be a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) that provides a flexible route for donors to invest in developmental projects, programmes or initiatives under the Forum. The Trust was established as an organ of the SADC-PF, within the institutional framework of the Forum, through an amendment of the forum's constitution in July 2022 and is to be governed by a

notarised Trust Deed registered with the Master of the High Court in Windhoek.

The Fund's establishment with three trustees - Honourable Professor Peter Katjavivi, Namibia; Hon. Aia-Era Nacilia Gomes de Silva, Angola and Hon Andre Leon Tumba Mukendi, DRC) symbolises member states' desire to catalyse transformative process of its regional parliamentary forum, a mission that necessitates the pooling of resources from all member states and beyond.

In this spirit, the trustees' role is not only administrative, but also fundamentally strategic and visionary.



Professor Peter Katjavivi and Hon. Andre Leon Tumba Mukendi, with other members after the signing

Hon Katjavivi gave assurances that the signing ceremony is testament to shared dedication in advancing the Forum's strategic objectives. This commitment is echoed in the diligent work of ENS Africa Namibia, whose concerted efforts and expertise have to ensured the Trust's foundation is both legally sound and strategically positioned.

"It is my fervent hope that this Trust will flourish, attracting meaningful and lasting partnerships that will fund our programmes and initiatives. With the combined commitment of our member Parliaments and the guidance of our esteemed Trustees, I have no doubt that we are poised for success.

"As we embark on this remarkable journey, let us remember the spirit of unity, cooperation, and dedication that brought us here today. Together, we will foster democratic and socio-economic progress that benefits all the nations and peoples of our beloved SADC region," said the Speaker.

The success of the Trust depends on judicious governance and management. The stability, efficiency, and integrity of the Trust are paramount to its success and, ultimately, the betterment of the SADC region in general and the SADC-PF in particular, the veteran legislator said. ■

SPEAKER WANTS NAMIBIA-TURKEY *investment cooperation enhanced*

· George Sanzila

WINDHOEK – The Speaker of the National Assembly, Honourable Prof. Peter Katjavivi and Turkey ambassador to Namibia H.E. Feral Çekerek Oruçkaptan want investment cooperation between the two countries enhanced.

This was revealed when the Turkish ambassador, in the company of Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) country coordinator, Anydin Apaydin, paid a courtesy call on the Speaker on the 29th of August 2023.

According to Oruçkaptan, trade and investment between the two countries were negligible and there was need for promotion of investment initiatives.

“Investment between our two countries is very low. Many Turkish business people do not have sufficient knowledge about SACU requirements. They do not have competitive advantage and therefore are reluctant to invest.

“There is need to create awareness and I will make sure there are exchanges at both business and parliament level during my tenure to

promote cooperation,” the ambassador promised.

Hon. Katjavivi echoed the sentiments that there was need to devise a strategy to exploit potential areas of cooperation.

“We need to promote exchange visits to connect the leadership of both parliaments to see areas of possible cooperation. We could also make use of our consuls to promote investment,” proposed Hon Katjavivi.

The Speaker commended Turkey for rendering support to Namibia through TIKA, an agency of the Turkish government focusing on development cooperation.

TIKA is assisting the National Assembly in its programme to digitalise its conference rooms, through the recently launched e-parliament initiative.

“We are extremely grateful that Turkey, despite having gone through the devastation of an earthquake, is able to help us to digitalise our conference rooms,” said Katjavivi.

According to TIKA, the digitalization of conference rooms and the parliament chamber, is expected to be completed in two months.

TIKA has also been involved in plans to set up a parliament museum that would play a critical role in showcasing and preserving Namibia’s democratic heritage.

Early this year, the Speaker announced plans to set up a Namibia-Turkey parliamentary friendship group to facilitate the exchange knowledge and skills between the two institutions, when he met Ambassador Oruçkaptan.

Turkey-Namibia relations date back to the time before Namibia gained independence. Turkey was one of the countries that sponsored the UN General Assembly Resolution of 1966 that paved the way for the end of apartheid rule in Namibia. In 2022, the two countries celebrated the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations.



Speaker of the National Assembly, Honourable Prof. Peter Katjavivi (right) with Turkey Ambassador to Namibia, H.E. Feral Çekerek Oruçkaptan.

TELECOM NAMIBIA WANTS *law amended to curb copper theft*

• George Sanzila

WINDHOEK - Telecom Namibia Chief Executive Officer Dr. Stanley Shanapinda has called for the amendment of the Second-Hand Goods Act 23 of 1998, to curtail the increasing theft and vandalism of telecommunications infrastructure.

The theft and vandalism to the infrastructure, is hampering the company's operations, resulting in the interruption of service delivery and loss of revenue.

Shanapinda said this during a tour of Telecom Namibia facility by the Speaker of the National Assembly, Honourable Professor Peter Katjavivi in November last year, to familiarize himself with the company's latest developments.

Shanapinda, described the theft of copper cables and other critical infrastructure a national crisis, and said the Act in its current form, was not punitive enough to deter would-be perpetrators, especially considering the cost of the crimes to both the company and the public in general.

"Our infrastructure is widespread and accessible to the public. The Second-Hand Goods Act of 1998 is left to the police who have the discretion to issue and withdraw trading certificates to scrap dealers and to inspect the premises.

"Prosecution under this act is not punitive enough considering costs involved. Cases are thrown out or



Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon Professor Peter Katjavivi second left), Deputy Chairperson of Parliamentary committee on ICT, Hon Maria Elago (third from left) with Telecom Namibia CEO, Dr. Stanley Shanapinda (fourth from left) and staff of Telecom Namibia and Parliament.

withdrawn due to lack of evidence as there is limited understanding of the impact of the crime. Bail is set so low between N\$500 and N\$1000," noted Shanapinda.

According to statistics provided during the briefing, the company has so far reported a total of 45 cases of copper theft to the Police from 2022. The Khomas region accounts for the biggest number with 22, followed by Oshana and Omaheke regions with six cases each and Hardap, //Kharas and

Erongo with five, four and two cases respectively.

The company said it spent more than N\$2 million to replace the stolen copper cables to restore network availability. Measures such as calls to the general public to act as a watchdog and appeals to scrap metal dealers to stop buying stolen copper wires have all fallen on deaf ears, according to Shanapinda.

He further said it was impractical for Telecom to protect its infrastructure because it was spread throughout the country.

Hon Katjavivi commended Telecom Namibia for its efforts in the transition to digital telecommunication in Namibia in line with the fourth industrial revolution, through its turnaround strategy, despite the impediments.

He urged the management to engage the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information, Communication, Technology and Innovation on how the challenge of copper cable theft and vandalism of ICT infrastructure can be resolved through legislation.

Hon Katjavivi was accompanied by the Deputy Chairperson of the Committee, Hon Maria Elago. ■



Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon Professor Peter Katjavivi on a tour of one of Telecom Namibia's critical sites.

MUTEKA CALLS FOR *youth quota in Parliament*

• George Sanzila

LUANDA (Angola) – Member of parliament Emma Muteka, has called for the introduction of a youth quota in parliament to address the challenge of youth under representation.

She said even though the number of young members of parliament in Namibia had increased steadily, it was still negligible and concerted efforts were needed to improve youth participation.

She was speaking during the recently concluded 147th Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) General Assembly that took place in Luanda, Angola in October 2023.

According to Muteka, who is also a member of the IPU Forum for Young parliamentarians, there was need for parliaments to introduce youth quotas including the Namibian parliament, so that more young people can actively participate in the democratic process.

“I dream of a Namibia that can introduce a youth quota so that young people can get a chance to represent themselves. It’s always good to hear from the horse’s mouth. Who is better placed to advocate youth matters than the youth themselves?” asked Muteka speaking on the sidelines of the meeting.

When launching the 2023 IPU Report on Youth Participation to the governing council of the IPU, Muteka highlighted some of the concerns regarding low numbers of young people in parliament, despite young people under the age of 30 making up half the world’s population but are paradoxically represented by only 3% of MPs globally.

“Levels of youth participation in national parliaments is too low. A mere 2.8% of MPs are under 30. 39% of parliaments have zero MPs under 30. Only 18% of parliaments have caucuses of young MPs. We talk about achieving SDG 16, how can we when youth are still sidelined?” Muteka asked.

Youth representation in the Namibia currently stands at about 8% with young MPs under the age of 30 constituting a mere 3.96% of that figure according to



Member of Parliament, Hon Emma Muteka chairs one of the sessions at the 147th IPU General Assembly in Luanda, Angola.

statistics provided by the IPU. The rest of the young MPs are under the age of 45.

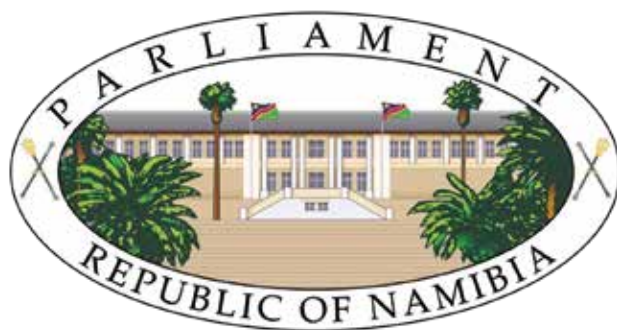
The figures further show that young people under the age of 30 in parliaments around the world only make up an insignificant 3% with Nordic countries such as Norway, Sweden and Finland leading in electing younger MPs.

Speaker of the National Assembly Honourable Professor Peter Katjavivi has reiterated that Namibia has been making steady progress in spite of the low figure, adding that as part of efforts to encourage young people to enter politics, parliament had initiated the Children’s Parliament as a platform to give young people a voice to discuss issues that are pertinent to their welfare.

The IPU Forum for Young Parliamentarians has also initiated

discussions to establish a target for youth participation in parliament and other parliaments have already started adopting a youth quota system and caucuses intended to discuss youth issues.

“I dream of a Namibia that can introduce a youth quota so that young people can get a chance to represent themselves. It’s always good to hear from the horse’s mouth. Who is better placed to advocate youth matters than the youth themselves?”



PARLIAMENT

Journal

ISSN 2026 8793



Konrad Adenauer Foundation
Tel: 061- 225568
P.O. Box 1145
Windhoek
info.namibia@kas.de
www.kas.de/namibia