



# PARLIAMENT *Journal*

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*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.*

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# SPEAKER SIGNS MOU WITH TURKISH COUNTERPART *to enhance parliamentary cooperation*

• George Sanzila

Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Prof. Peter Katjavivi and his Turkish counterpart, H.E. Prof. Dr. Numan Kurtulmuş reinforced the two countries long-standing bilateral relations by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on 31 March 2024. The MOU, aimed at enhancing parliamentary cooperation between the two legislatures, was signed in Istanbul following Katjavivi's official visit to Turkey at the invitation of Kurtulmuş.

The agreement, will among other issues cover joint meetings between the two legislatures' standing committees and exchange visits by administrative staff for the purpose of exchange of experience and information on legislation and other parliamentary activities.

Katjavivi noted that Turkey and Namibia shared a common bond that dated back to the time of the struggle for independence. He added that the two countries continued to abide by the same values of respect for human rights

and world peace. "Our bond comes a long way dating back to the difficult times of the struggle for independence. We continue to work together today because we share a lot in common and our countries were born out of struggle hence our identical position on issues such as the plight of the Palestinian people and that of Western Sahara. This visit is intended to cement our relationship", stated the Speaker.

He noted that the recently created parliamentary friendship group between the two parliaments could serve as a transmission belt between the two institutions. He further implored the group to look at pertinent issues such as Namibia's ambitious green hydrogen project. "The MOU will concretize the friendship group and allow them to engage on issues of mutual interest. I urge them to concentrate more on value addition. Over 8 billion has been invested in the green hydrogen project but we never hear of capacity building. Therefore,

we need cooperation to boost our infrastructure, technology, and training. The friendship group could also look at relevant legislation and coordinate partnerships with institutions of higher learning", pleaded Katjavivi.

## Capacity building and Value addition

Speaker further added that the recently announced directive to halt the export of natural resources in raw form, by cabinet, could only be applied when Namibia prioritized capacity building initiatives. At the moment, Namibia's economy was still heavily dependent on the primary industry without much value addition. This reliance had resulted in the lack of job creation because raw materials were exported in raw form and refined and processed elsewhere.

"There was a decision recently in Namibia that, we should not be exporting our resources in raw form. We have also discovered oil and gas and have embarked upon green hydrogen with big investments. This presents a challenge for universities in terms of training. We therefore need collaboration, in order to stop the tendency of exporting our resources in raw form and actually add value", stated Katjavivi.

At a meeting with the Rector of the Istanbul Technical University (ITU), Prof. Dr. Ismail Koyuncu and his management, that preceded his talks with Kurtulmuş, Katjavivi reiterated the need for cooperation between the institutions of higher learning, in order to build capacities. Hon. Katjavivi noted during the meeting that the recent discovery of oil and gas in Namibia also required Namibians to be equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge



Hon. Prof. Peter Katjavivi and his Turkish counterpart, H.E. Prof. Dr. Numan Kurtulmuş.

see Turkey on page 6...



...Turkey from page 5

to add value to their own resources. The Speaker further stated that the development of solar energy could alleviate high energy and water costs for farmers and help improve food self-sufficiency.

### Bilateral relations

The Turkish Speaker who offered his condolences to the Namibian people on the passing on of late President Dr. Hage Geingob, expressed his parliament's willingness to collaborate more with Namibia adding that his country had been on a path to deepen relations with Namibia in particular and Africa in general.

"Namibia and Turkey relations go back to the 1960's during the struggle for independence. Turkey having being one of the UN member countries that served on the UN Council for Namibia. Bilateral relations were further boosted during your tenure as Ambassador, including the role you played in facilitating TIKA to go to Namibia in 2014. We have deepened our relations with Africa, through our Africa partnership programme based on mutually beneficial relations. We have been insisting on the opening of

a Namibian embassy in Turkey", said Kurtulmuş.

TIKA, an agency of the Turkish government focusing on development cooperation, recently assisted the National Assembly at a critical time during the Covid 19 pandemic, by digitalizing its conference rooms, through its e-parliament strategy.

In addition to the assistance offered through TIKA, the Turkish government has over the years sponsored over 15 000 African students, including Namibians by providing them with scholarships to pursue different fields of study at the country's universities.

The Turkish Speaker bemoaned trade and investment volumes between the two countries. He said that these were negligible and that there was an urgent need for investment promotion. "Trade relations between the two countries is not so good but there could be improvements and opportunities particularly in the areas of tourism. This is something we can explore through this cooperation", pleaded Kurtulmuş. Both Speakers were joined by newly appointed Honorary Consul for Namibia in Istanbul Gunnur Diker who is expected to champion economic cooperation between the two countries.

Diker was also expected to visit Namibia soon.

The Turkish Speaker commended Namibia for its commitment to world peace and its desire to see an end to the killings of Palestinians in Gaza by Israel and the self determination of the people of the Western Sahara. Namibia recently made a presentation at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in the Hague, Netherlands, in the case of Israeli occupation of Palestine. Kurtulmuş further commended Katjavivi for his active involvement in the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Task Force for the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine and progress made so far. Speaker Katjavivi reassured his host that the opening of the Namibian embassy in Turkey was a priority matter and continued to enjoy the attention of the Namibian government.

Speaker Katjavivi who was accompanied on the mission by fellow lawmakers who make up the Namibia/Turkey parliamentary friendship group, Tobie Aupindi, Stanley Mareka, and Winnie Moongo was also expected to meet the President of Turkey, Recep Erdogan. ■



*Hon. Prof. Peter Katjavivi, Speaker of the National Assembly (left) and his Turkish counterpart, Numan Kurtulmuş (right), hold the signed cooperation agreement between the two parliaments aloft, after signing in Turkey.*

# MUHA MEETS CUBA COUNTERPART AHEAD OF *President Geingob's burial*

· Rafael Hangula

**Windhoek-** H.E Esteban Lazo Hernández, the President of the National Assembly and Council of the State of the Republic of Cuba, led the Cuban delegation to attend the state memorial service and burial of the late President Geingob. During this visit, he paid a courtesy call to the Chairperson of the National Council, Hon Lukas Muha.

The purpose of this meeting was for the leader of the Cuban delegation to convey the sincere condolences of the government and people of Cuba to the people of Namibia. Hernández expressed to the Chairperson that, following the passing of Dr. Hage Geingob, Namibia's third president, the people of Cuba stand in solidarity with Namibia.

Namibia's late president Hage Geingob, who died in hospital on Feb. 4, was buried at the Heroes Acre on Sunday 25 February 2024 with thousands of mourners, including 25 heads of state and former presidents in attendance.

"We are here to make a profound acknowledgment of our friend Geingob and that not only Namibia has lost a valuable son, but Cuba has also lost a brother of the liberation struggle," said Cuban head of delegation.

On his part, the Chairperson said "Namibia is under a dark cloud, Africa is mourning the loss of the great man and the world is in a sad moment. Your coming here signifies the tie political and economic relationship that Namibia has established before and after independence."

"It is therefore befitting for Cuba to be part of us during this time of sorrow. Your coming here, especially at this moment shows the strong relationship enjoyed by the two nations." He added.

## Parliamentary cooperation

The two presiding officers also engaged in discussions on topics of shared interest. The Cuban National Assembly President said that there are a lot of areas of collaboration that the two countries can work on concerning legislation, biotechnology, pharmaceutical industry, education, sport, and social politics.

"We are also here to strengthen the bond between the two parliaments, starting with the principle that parliaments have the responsibility to represent our people and also the obligation of supporting and strengthening the bilateral relationships," said Hernández.

Prior to his engagement with the Chairperson, Hernandez had a meeting with the Speaker of the National Assembly, Prof Peter Katjavivi. During this meeting, Hernandez informed Hon Muha about the proposal he had presented to Prof. Katjavivi. The proposal suggested that the two parliaments should sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to foster collaboration on various areas such as housing, agriculture, and health, among others.

The Chairperson also emphasized the significant contribution made by the Cuban political and military forces in the fight for Namibia's political liberation.

"We are who are as Namibians today because of Cuba. Cuba's political and military role during the dark days of Namibia's political struggle has been recorded and will never be erased in the history books of Namibia," said the Chairperson.

He further stated that Cuba's intervention in Africa, more particularly in Angola, during the civil war in that country has greatly assisted Namibia.



*The Chairperson of the National Council Hon. Lukas Muha (right) with the President of the National Assembly and Council of the State of the Republic of Cuba Esteban Lazo Hernández (left).*

The Cuban Speaker further expressed gratitude to Namibia for consistently urging the removal of the prolonged embargo, which has had a detrimental impact on Cuba's economy, leading to persistent scarcities of food and vital goods.

In his response the Chairperson said "Namibia has been and shall continue to stand in solidarity with Cuba by calling for the lifting of the embargo that has for years threatened the political and economic stability of Cuba," said Muha.

*"Namibia is under a dark cloud, Africa is mourning the loss of the great man and the world is in a sad moment. Your coming here signifies the tie political and economic relationship that Namibia has established before and after independence."*



Source: MICT

## MPS' TRIBUTES TO THE LATE DR HAGE G GEINGOB

In a somber but respectful atmosphere, Members of Parliament (MPs) were given dedicated time to share their reflections and honour the Late President Hage Geingob's profound contributions to the country. Dr Geingob passed on in Lady Pohamba Private hospital, on 4 February 2024. The tribute session was a testament to Geingob's enduring legacy. MPs took the floor to recount his achievements and express their gratitude for his visionary leadership. Throughout the sitting days in February, heartfelt eulogies highlighted Dr Geingob's role as a transformative figure in Namibia's history, emphasising his commitment to democracy, unity, and development.

### Hon. Prof. Peter Katjavivi, MP, Speaker of the National Assembly

"His monumental contribution to the crafting of our Constitution was driven by a deep commitment to inclusivity, dialogue, and national unity. His leadership was instrumental in guiding the Assembly through a critical process of confidence-building among members. This process laid the groundwork for national reconciliation, which eventually became a cornerstone of government policy under his Chairmanship. Geingob's efforts ensured that the constitution was crafted in a spirit of consensus, embodying the principles of unity, democracy, and human rights that have guided Namibia since its independence. His legacy as a unifying figure and a champion of democracy and development continues to inspire us".



### Saara Kuugongelwa Amadhila, MP, Prime Minister

"It is with a heavy heart that I extend my heartfelt condolences to Ms. Monica Geingos, the widow of our departed president, his children and his extended family during this difficult period of his sudden departure and mourning. The Namibian nation has lost in the death of Dr. Geingob, a visionary and revolutionary leader who dedicated his life to serving others. His contribution to the liberation of our country and the development of our country after independence is immeasurable. We remember Dr. Geingob's work as Swapo's representative to the United Nation and the Americas. Together with others, their efforts resulted in the UN General Assembly recognizing SWAPO as the sole and authentic representative of the people of Namibia, which galvanized the international community's support to our national independence struggle, which also greatly helped to bring about our independence".



### Hon. Victoria Kauma, MP, Deputy Chairperson of National Council

"Honourable Members, the 11th Session of the 6th National Council is going to be conducted under unprecedented circumstances. The Namibian nation, joined by the international community is mourning the untimely departure of our Late Dr Hage Gottfried Geingob. He will be remembered for giving up both his youthful and adult life to serving the Namibian people and the world".



### Hon. Jeremias Goeieman, MP

"The Late Dr. Hage Geingob traversed the globe but always remembered his roots. Dr. Geingob was a man of strong convictions. His recent stance at the International Court of Justice highlighted his bravery and dedication to justice, even if it was unpopular. He sacrificed his life for the benefit of Namibia. His bravery, patriotism, and humanity are exemplified in his decision to undergo treatment for the greater good".





**McHenry Veenani, MP, Leader of Official opposition**

"In our nation's darkest hour, I stand to say a few words to a man I had the privilege to oppose. He was a tactical politician of note. To oppose and to be relevant to Hage's politics, one had to up their standards because Hage was standard. He was class and style. I am a man who came here in my 20's. As the youngest Member of Parliament, when I came here, the politics of our country was very different from what we have today. There were leaders in the House, that we could only learn from. One of them was President Hage Geingob, a jovial man, an intellectual and a Namibian at heart".



**Hon. John Mutorwa, MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Works and Transport**

"As a public servant, Public office bearer or politician, I have worked under the overall guidance, tutelage and supervision of Presidents Sam Nujoma, Hifikepunye Pohamba and Hage Geingob in the different political positions or portfolios in which I served for more than 34 years. In this honourable House, H.E. Dr. Hage Geingob was our Prime Minister and Leader of government business. I benefited tremendously from his guidance and leadership. May the soul of president Geingob rest in perfect and eternal peace".



**Hon. Paulus N. Mbangu, MP**

"His Excellency Dr Hage Gottfried Geingob was a patriot, freedom fighter, Pan Africanist, and academic giant. And as a Chairperson of the Constituent Assembly, overseeing the drafting of the Namibian Constitution, he laid a strong foundation that paved the smooth transition of power that we witnessed on Sunday, the 4th of February 2024. President Hage's legacy should be a standard to all of us. President Hage Geingob always advocated for building a Namibian house



His Excellency was like a mirage in the sun, yet unimposing and mallow in character. He ruled under difficult time, but he did his best".

**Hon. Peter C. Kazongominja, MP**

"Today, we pay tribute to a leader who was more than a president—he was a guiding light for Namibia. Dr. Hage Geingob's legacy is one of unity and transparency. His unwavering commitment to his nation was evident from his early days, as he stood firm for Namibia's liberation and continued to build upon that foundation as President. His efforts to promote peace, inclusivity, and equitable access to resources are a testament to his vision for a harmonious Namibia. As we reflect on his contributions, we are reminded of his profound impact on our country and his embodiment of the ideals of unity, democracy, and transparency. In his memory, we reaffirm our dedication to his legacy and pledge to continue his work for the betterment of our nation".



*A book of condolences for the late President, H.E. Dr Hage Geingob was opened at Parliament*

# COMMONWEALTH DAY

• George Sanzila



Presiding officers of Commonwealth Parliament gathered in the UK for the celebration of 75th Commonwealth Day.

Commonwealth Day was celebrated on 11 March 2024, at parliament under the theme “One Resilient Common future: Transforming our Commonwealth”.

The Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Loide Kasingo, Members of Parliament and High Commissioners of some of the 56 countries that make up the association graced the occasion

to observe the annual celebration that included cultural performances and a display of the different traditional cuisines.

Speaker, Prof. Peter Katjavivi represented Namibia at 75th Commonwealth Day in UK, at the invitation of the Speaker of House of Commons in the UK, Hon. Lindsay Hoyle. The event brought together

35 Speakers and Presiding Officers from the Commonwealth to deliberate on this year’s theme ‘One Resilient Common Future: Transforming our Commonwealth.’

Speaker Katjavivi further addressed the gathering, highlighting Parliament’s collective efforts towards resilience and transformation. ■



Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly Hon. Loide Kasingo with Heads of Mission during the commemoration of Commonwealth Day



Speaker of the National Assembly Hon. Prof. Peter Katjavivi with the Speaker of the House of Commons in the UK Hon. Lindsay Hoyle.



A Cultural performance during the commemoration at the Parliament of Namibia.



# MUHA SUPPORTS THE CONVERSION OF CPA *into global inter-parliamentary organization*

· Rafael Hangula

The Chairperson of the National Council, Honourable Lukas Muha, has urged for the transformation of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) from a charitable organization to an international inter-parliamentary organization.

He said this call aligns with the CPA Strategic Plan of 2022-2025, which aims to persuade the UK government to pass legislation recognizing the CPA as an international inter-parliamentary organization.

The Chairperson said this on 25 January 2024, when he officiated over a meeting of the budget committee of CPA-Africa region, which was hosted by the parliament of Namibia from 23 to 26 January 2024 in Windhoek.

"The objective further seeks to persuade the UK Government to enact a legislation that would change the CPA legal status from a UK charity organization, governed by British charity laws to an International

Parliamentary Organization," said the Chairperson.

"As the CPA Africa region, we have to ensure that our call for a meaningful CPA is realized before the end of the current strategic plan," he added.

The plan will conclude within one year.

The CPA is an international community comprising Commonwealth Parliaments and Legislatures. It focuses on advancing parliamentary democracy by enhancing knowledge and understanding of democratic governance. With 52 member states, CPA Africa is the largest region, divided into four sub-regions.

In his address to the CPA-Africa budget committee, the Chairperson underscored the significance of the committee's role in setting the financial roadmap for future initiatives and activities of the Association.

He urged the committee to expedite the implementation of various

investment projects, emphasizing the committee's responsibility in ensuring financial independence and sustainable funding for the programs outlined in the Region's Strategic Plan.

"The Budget Committee of the CPA Africa is central to ensuring financial independence as well as sustainable funding of various programmes as contained in the Region's Strategic Plan," he emphasised.

The CPA Africa Region aims to promote and protect the interests and perspectives of CPA Africa Regional Parliaments and countries, into the Commonwealth and beyond. In addition, it promotes gender equality, emancipation of women, and respect for human rights, freedoms, democracy and good governance.

The committee meeting brought together delegates from Botswana, Mauritius, Nigeria, South Africa and Tanzania.



*"As the CPA Africa region, we have to ensure that our call for a meaningful CPA is realized before the end of the current strategic plan."*

*The Chairperson of the National Council Hon. Lukas Muha (fourth from L), with Regional Treasurer of CPA-Africa Region Hon Ntombi Mekgwe (fifth from L), Members and Secretariat of the CPA Africa Region Budget Committee.*

# KATJAVIVI MEETS DEPUTY SPEAKER *of Swedish Parliament at 148th IPU*

• George Sanzila



Speaker Katjavivi (left) with third Deputy Speaker of the Swedish Parliament, Hon. Kerstin Lundgren.

Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Prof. Peter Katjavivi met the Third Deputy Speaker of the Swedish Parliament, Hon. Kerstin Lundgren on the margins of the 148<sup>th</sup> IPU General Assembly that took place in Geneva, Switzerland. He was joined in the meeting by Hons. Henny Seibeb and Nono Katjingsiua.

Both Hon. Katjavivi and Hon. Lundgren highlighted Sweden's long-standing friendship with Namibia

dating back to the time of the struggle for independence and the need to continue to strengthen ties.

Issues of mutual concern are being discussed including parliament to parliament cooperation and capacity building. The Speaker noted that Namibia's parliament which is still seeking reforms to make it a fully autonomous institution could draw on the experience of the Swedish parliament. "We want to use the Swedish experience. We are busy with reforms to make our parliament a fully-fledged institution that represents the aspirations of the Namibian people. Most our constitutional bodies report indirectly to parliament through the Executive. The National Assembly is also not properly equipped to scrutinize these constitutional bodies. This could be strengthened through the creation of a budget office. Our women parliamentary caucus has also faced challenges", noted Katjavivi.

Katjavivi further revealed to the Swedish Speaker that the Namibian parliament has reached a 50% gender representation and that youth representation has been increasing with initiatives such as the Children's Parliament serving as another platform that has improved their representation. ■



Members of Parliament, Hons. Henny Seibeb (4<sup>th</sup> from right) and Nono Katjingsiua (2<sup>nd</sup> from left) also joined Speaker Katjavivi and his Swedish counterpart, Kerstin Lundgren. On the right is Secretary of National Assembly, Lydia Kandetu.

## ASGP MEETING HELD

The Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASGP) met at the 148<sup>th</sup> IPU General Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland to look at topics such as innovations at parliament, parenthood and parliament and time management among many other issues. The Namibian parliament was represented at these sessions by the Secretary of National Assembly, Lydia Kandetu, Secretary of the National Council, Adv. Tousy Namiseb and Deputy Secretary, Ephraim Jane.

ASGP brings together heads of administration and other senior officials in charge of parliamentary services to study the law, procedure, practice



Secretaries of Parliament from fltr, Tousy Namiseb (NC), Lydia Kandetu (NA) & Deputy Secretary of NC, Ephraim Jane during ASGP meeting in Geneva, Switzerland.

and working methods of different parliaments and proposes measures for improvement. ■



# NAMIBIA REACHES 50/50 GENDER PARITY IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY - *Women representation in parliament improving globally*

• George Sanzila and Sakeus Kadhikwa

Namibia prides itself among countries ranked high in terms of women representation in national decision-making positions. This is a milestone toward the ultimate objective of a 50/50 percent gender representation in the National Assembly which the Speaker of the National Assembly, Professor Peter Katjavivi recently announced. He stated that the lower chamber of Namibia's bicameral parliament (National Assembly), had reached 50 % women representation from 46 % in (2023). The Speaker stated then that, Namibia's experience would serve as a yardstick for other sister parliaments. However, the National Council had remained low at just over 14%.

Not only had Namibia reached the gender parity, but had also overtaken the Nordic Regions (Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland) amongst others in the world. Namibia's stride towards equitable gender representation in its National Assembly marked a significant

achievement in its political landscape. In this endeavour, Namibia had joined Rwanda, Cuba, Nicaragua, Mexico, New Zealand, and the United Arab Emirates. To have reached or surpassed the 50/50 women representation in the unicameral or lower houses of parliament (Inter-Parliamentary Union and UN Women report 2023) was commendable.

Women representation in parliament worldwide has increased slightly from 26.5 % to 26.9 in 2023. These statistics were collated after over 60 parliaments in 52 countries held their parliamentary elections in 2023. The sub-Saharan Africa region accounts for the third highest; at over 27 %.

According to the Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU), electoral quotas had been instrumental in improving women's representation with over 28% of women elected, having come from electoral gender quota systems. Statistics further revealed that 23% of the women were

elected as Speakers of parliament around the world. For the first time in their history, countries such as Cambodia and Ivory Coast have women Speakers.

This came to light in a report during the meeting of the Forum of Women parliamentarians at the 148th IPU Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland. According to the IPU, there were several impediments that had contributed to slow progress according to the IPU. These included women being targeted with violence and disinformation resulting in them withdrawing from participating in politics. To avoid the status quo, key recommendations that were made at a previous engagement of the Forum of women parliamentarians included peer to peer support for building resilience among politicians and the need for unity across party lines and borders.



Namibian women parliamentarians during the meeting of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians at the 148<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly, fltr, Hon. Charmaine Tjirare, Hon. Emma Muteka and the vice chairperson of NC, Hon. Victoria Kauma.

# ENERGY CRISIS COULD BE AVERTED *by Turkey – Namibia collaboration*

• George Sanzila

Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Professor Peter Katjavivi stressed the importance of partnership between Namibian institutions and those of Turkey as the panacea for some of the pressing challenges the country faced today. Hon. Katjavivi said this when he held meetings with private companies and institutions of higher learning during his official visit to Turkey on invitation by his Turkish counterpart, Numan Kurtulmuş.

One particular challenge that enjoyed prominence during the talks was the power crisis. This was during a meeting with Karpowership, a unique Turkish company that builds and operates power plants on ships; colloquially referred to as powerships. According to the company's Chief Commercial Officer, Zeynep Harezi Yilmaz, powerships were reliable and affordable and could dispatch clean and sustainable power from Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) of between 30 to 470 Mega Watts. She noted that developing a partnership could make Namibia become energy self-sufficient.

"Namibia's dependency will be minimized and it can become a net exporter of electricity. Namibia needs to increase its dispatchable generation capacity for self-sufficiency and to become an exporter of electricity due to the current load shedding in South Africa and the dire need for electricity in neighboring countries", said Yilmaz.

Currently, Namibia imports over 60% of its energy needs from neighboring countries, mainly South Africa. Peak demand for electricity in Namibia is over 600 MW per annum. Despite the success of government's rural electrification programme, only over 50% of Namibian citizens have access to power. Yilmaz stated that the innovation was convenient and affordable as it required no acquisition or clearing of land nor construction thus averting unnecessary impending bureaucracy.



*The Namibian delegation in the company of Kapowership staff in front of some of the modified powerships that can supply power of up to 470 Mega Watts*

"Once the country has gotten into a partnership with us, we can deploy our ships in a matter of 1 to 3 months depending on site availability. There is no construction risk or any land requirement. Our assets are already built on the ship, therefore cutting any red tape. Our ships could be deployed to Walvis Bay or Oranjemund and create a number of jobs for locals and the country can export any access power. Our power is way cheaper than what is being sold on the market currently", boasted Yilmaz.

She further stated that the company was fully aware of Namibia's ambitious green hydrogen project meant to alleviate the energy crisis and the country's plans to adopt renewable sources of energy and to de-carbonise. As a result, Karpowership believed it can offer a short-term solution to power shortages and could in a way contribute to renewable energy integration on the Namibian grid through its thermal

power generation ships. According to the company, its technology had no environmental footprint after decommissioning. It provided the latter information, after one of the members of parliament who accompanied Speaker Katjavivi on the visit, Tobie Aupindi, enquired as to whether it was harmful to the environment, particularly to marine life. Kapowership is currently operational in 10 countries around the world with plans to supply power in countries such as Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, and South Africa; at an advanced stage.

Speaker who further paid a visit to Sultanlar Holdings that specialized in manufacturing a variety of consumer products including detergents, personal care and food products expressed the need for a reciprocal arrangement between the two countries that could enable Turkish products to be easily available in Namibia and vice versa,

*see Energy Crisis on page 15...*



including that country's famous wool woven fabrics.

"I am looking at this broadly. If we can create sort of a centre where one can easily find all these products in Namibia and equally Namibian products in Turkey. Our relevant authorities need to create close collaboration so that we can boost trade between the two countries", said Katjavivi. The Turkish Speaker in an early meeting held by the two Speakers, decried trade and investment volumes between the two countries he said were negligible and needed to be improved. The same sentiments were repeated during a meeting with both the Turkiye-Namibia Business Council and Turkish members of parliament belonging to the Turkiye-Namibia friendship group. The former, was set up to promote trade and cross border investment between Namibia and Turkey following the signing of a trade cooperation agreement in 2016.

### Educational collaboration

During a meeting with the Council of Higher education, responsible for higher education institutions in Turkey, its President, Erol Özvar revealed that only five Namibian students were sponsored at institutions of higher learning in that country through its scholarship for Foreign Students programme. He stated that he hoped the meeting could culminate in concrete cooperation between institutions of higher learning to increase the number of Namibian students. He further noted that the council was still waiting for feedback on a draft cooperation agreement it had shared with its Namibian counterpart since last year. He appealed to Katjavivi to intervene in order to expedite the process.



Speaker of the National Assembly Hon. Prof Peter Katjavivi (4th from left) and President of the Council of Higher Education in Turkey, Erol Ozvar (5th from left) pose for a group photo together with staff and Namibian MPs.

Katjavivi too was not happy with the low number of Namibian students studying at universities in Turkey adding that he would urgently engage the Ministry of Education to ensure that more Namibians were enrolled. He noted that training and research was a necessity in Namibia in the light of the discovery of new energy sources. He said this would require Namibians to be equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to improve value addition. Speaker suggested a multifaceted educational cooperation. "We would want an increase in scholarships for Namibian students in Turkey particularly in areas of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, tourism, and agriculture. We could encourage academic exchanges and joint research projects and expand

cooperation in vocational and technical education", said Katjavivi.

Katjavivi further thanked the Turkish Agency for Cooperation (TIKA) for its continued support in Namibia's educational development. "TIKA has played a commendable role. Projects like the tourism training collaboration with NUST and support in agricultural education are exemplary", noted the Speaker.

Other universities Speaker Katjavivi visited included Istanbul Technical University (ITU) and Middle East Technical University. He further visited the Independence War Museum where he laid a wreath in honour of those who laid their lives for freedom during the Turkish war of independence.

*"Namibia's dependency will be minimized and it can become a net exporter of electricity. Namibia needs to increase its dispatchable generation capacity for self-sufficiency and to become an exporter of electricity due to the current load shedding in South Africa and the dire need for electricity in neighboring countries".*

# KAUMA CALLS FOR *women action*

• *George Sanzila*

Vice Chairperson of the National Council, Hon. Victoria Kauma has implored women parliamentarians to stand in solidarity and collectively confront challenges such as conflict that continues to plague many countries resulting in the suffering of mainly women and children. Hon. Kauma was contributing to a panel discussion on "Women peacebuilders advancing sustainable peace", during a meeting of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians in Geneva, Switzerland.

The Stockholm International Research Institute reports that, over 56 countries are currently experiencing armed conflict.

According to Kauma, women should take centre stage in tackling challenges facing the world as they possessed the

voice and power to do so. "It is no doubt that women and children are often the worst affected by conflict. Therefore, it is vital that women play a central role in peace processes and post conflict reconstruction. Women have a voice and power to be agents of change", stated the Vice Chairperson.

She further stated that conflict resolution could not be left to United Nations bodies alone further challenging women to translate their rhetoric into tangible action. "Experience has taught us that the maintenance of international peace and security cannot be left in the hands of the UN organs and the parties involved alone. The efforts to stop and bring about peace and security mainly through the UN Security Council are being ignored and are not responding



*Vice Chairperson of the National Council, Hon. Victoria Kauma*

favourably when needed the most", she said.

Kauma is part of the Namibian delegation that attended the 148<sup>th</sup> Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).

# MUHA OPENS ANNUAL PLANNING SESSION *of the Standing committees*

• *Rafael Hangula*

The Chairperson of the National Council Honourable Lukas Muha, has called on Members of Parliament (MPs) in the National Council to be mindful of their budgets and activities in order to optimize resource utilisation.

By closely monitoring their expenditures and operations throughout the year, the Chairperson stated that MPs can strive to achieve



*Chairperson of National Council, Hon. Lukas Muha*

more with less, ultimately benefiting both the National Council and the constituents they serve.

He made these remarks on 8 April 2024 when he officiated at the National Council Standing committees' annual evaluation and planning session for the 2024/2025 financial year in Windhoek.

He added that the annual planning session for the Standing committees provided an opportunity for the committees to strategize, set goals, and coordinate their efforts for the upcoming financial year, whilst ensuring effective governance and addressing key issues and serve the interests of the people.

"I urge you to draw lessons from past financial years' experience, and plan well within the means allocated to your Main Division/s," said Muha.

"Planning is one thing but execution is another thing; hence keep on monitoring your budgets and activities throughout the quarters so that where necessary, consider reviewing your plans in order to operate within your means to achieve more with less," said the Chairperson.

National Council in this financial year, received a budgetary allocation amounting to N\$136 662,000.00 to cover its operational and developmental activities.

"With this improved budgetary allocation, let us do things differently by employing efficiency and effectiveness in our operations," said Muha.

As the House of Review in the Namibian parliament, the National Council has a constitutional mandate for representation, legislative review, and oversight.



# PARLIAMENT AFFIRMS SUPPORT FOR *Palestine, Cuba, and Western Sahara*

· George Sanzila

The National Assembly stood in solidarity with the people of Cuba, Palestine, and Western Sahara recently when it unanimously adopted motions intended to advance their cause, in parliament. The Motions were tabled by Members of Parliament, Hons. Leevi Katoma, Henry Seibeb, and Patience Masua.

In July last year, Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Prof. Peter Katjavivi proposed the tabling of a motion on Cuba in the Namibian parliament when he met newly accredited Cuba Ambassador to Namibia, H.E. Sergio Vigoa de la Uz after the latter praised Namibia for its continued support to efforts calling for the lifting of the United States embargo against Cuba. The Ambassador stated then that the protracted embargo had adversely affected Cuba's economy resulting in constant shortage of food and other essentials such as oil. Hon. Katjavivi agreed adding that Cuba deserved a special attention from Namibia given the two countries' long standing diplomatic relations dating back to the time of the struggle for independence. The embargo against Cuba which was restricting the flow of goods to the Caribbean Island

nation, has been in place for nearly sixty years.

Tabling the motion in the house yesterday, Katoma demanded the end of what he called 'the inhumane and unwarranted economic blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba and its citizens, the immediate removal of Cuba from the list of States sponsoring terrorism, and the closure of the United States's base at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba, among other demands.

The House further reiterated its commitment to world peace and



*National Assembly during one of its sessions*

seeing an end to the killings of Palestinians in Gaza by Israel and the self determination of the people of the Western Sahara. Hon. Seibeb who tabled the motion, noted that the Namibian parliament was alarmed by the grave humanitarian consequences brought on by the ongoing conflict in the Gaza strip. He called for the endorsed Two State solution that would see Israel and Palestine peacefully coexisting as equal states in accordance with international law and United Nations resolutions. Seibeb further implored the United Nations Security Council to facilitate an immediate ceasefire to prevent further loss of human life.

The UN Security Council recently passed a resolution demanding an immediate ceasefire for the month of Ramadan. The resolution further demanded the immediate and unconditional release of hostages and the expansion of the flow of aid getting into Gaza. Over a month ago,

Namibia made an oral presentation to the International Court of Justice in the Hague, Netherlands, following a request by the UN General Assembly in December 2022 for an advisory opinion on the legal consequences arising from policies and practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

In her submission regarding the self determination of the Saharawi people, Hon. Masua noted that the continued occupation and illegal annexation of Western Sahara by Morocco was a violation of international law and various UN resolutions. She demanded that all hostilities stop including the withdrawal of Moroccan military forces from Western Sahara territories and the urgent holding of a referendum to allow the Saharawi people to exercise their right to self-determination. ■

# PAN-AFRICAN PARLIAMENT MEMBERS *urged to unite*

· Noreen Sitali

A delegation of Members of the Namibian Parliament attended the Extra-Ordinary Session of the Sixth Parliament of the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) in Midrand, Johannesburg, South Africa from 20 to 27 March 2024.

The commencement of the Extraordinary Session of the Sixth Parliament of the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) which took place on the 22nd March 2024 also marked the swearing-in of approximately 45 new members of Parliament who were deployed to serve in the Continental Legislature.

The gathering served as a prelude to the by-election for the three vacant positions in the PAP Bureau, scheduled for the 25th March 2024.

Hon. Lucia Dos Passos, who was Acting President of the PAP, reiterated a poignant message of unity and urged all members to seize this pivotal moment to rejuvenate the PAP's operations,

ensuring they effectively served the diverse interests of the African citizenry.

"I call on all Members of Parliament to put aside their differences and unite for the greater good of our institution and the continent," stressed, Passos who, in the same vein, issued an urgent call for unity among members of Parliament to prevent the diminishing of the institution's influence.

"Parliamentarians must unite to safeguard the Pan-African Parliament's (PAP's) relevance," said Hon. Lucia Dos Passos

The Extraordinary Session of the PAP is in line with the deliberations of the 44th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council, held in Addis Ababa, from February 14 to 15, 2024, concerning the situation at the Pan-African Parliament. The Council also directed the Office of Legal Counsel to devise guidelines for the election process.

In line with the guidelines and the principle of rotation that has been in

effect since June 2022, these vacancies were filled by the Southern Caucus (President), Northern Caucus (First Vice President), and Central Caucus (Fourth Vice President).

The opening ceremony was followed by meetings of the Regional Caucuses to nominate candidates for the positions of President and Vice Presidents.

After a swift contest for the Southern region Presidential candidates, Hon. Miles Bwayla Sampa and Chief Fortune Charumbira voting was done through a ballot voting, Charumbira emerged as the Presidential candidate for the Southern region and also retained the seat of the PAP president.

The Namibian delegation was led by the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Loide Kasingo comprising of Hon. McHenry Venaani, Hon. Gerhard Shiimi, Hon. Bernadus Swartbooi, and Hon. Hamunyera Hambyuka.



*In Session - the Extra-ordinary Session of the Sixth Parliament of the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) 2024.*

# SPEAKER MEETS ALGERIA AND CUBA COUNTERPARTS *ahead of Geingob's burial*

• George Sanzila

Speaker of the National Assembly, professor Peter Katjavivi and his Algerian counterpart, Brahim Boughali reiterated that the two countries not only shared historic ties dating back to the days of the struggle for independence, but that they were committed to world peace and seeing an end to the killings of Palestinians in Gaza by Israel and the self-determination of the people of the Western Sahara.

The President of the People's National Assembly of Algeria paid a courtesy call on Katjavivi and was among several world leaders who arrived in the country to attend the funeral of late President, Dr. Hage Geingob.

The two Speakers, discussed several issues with Boughali further thanking Namibia for its support as Algeria assumed its non-permanent seat as a member of the United Nations Security Council. Algeria, which began its two-year term as a non-permanent member, earlier this year, had already sought UN action on the enforcement of the recent International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruling regarding Israel. Namibia on the other hand, made a presentation at the Hague, Netherlands, in the case of Israeli occupation of Palestine.

Hon. Katjavivi during the meeting further recounted historical ties between the two countries adding that bilateral relations needed to be expanded to other sectors of the economy. "The camaraderie was established during Namibia's struggle for independence with Algeria providing crucial support to Swapo. Since 1990, the two countries have continued to enjoy warm relations. We need to extend our cooperation to other sectors, one of which is our



Algerian Speaker Hon. Brahim Boughali signing the book of condolences at Parliament before viewing the body of late President Dr. Hage Geingob



Speaker Katjavivi (right) with his Algerian counterpart, Brahim Boughali

agenda to promote renewable energy", said Katjavivi.

## Parliamentary cooperation

While honouring the memory of late president Geingob, the Algerian Speaker shared similar sentiments of expanding ties between Algeria and Namibia adding that his country was undergoing economic reforms that would culminate in a knowledge-based economy and that it was looking forward to cooperating with Namibia. He revealed that the Algerian parliament had already created a Namibian Parliamentary friendship group and was looking forward to Namibia reciprocating the gesture.

## Meeting with Cuban Speaker

President of the Cuba National Assembly of the people's power, H.E. Esteban Lazo Hernández also visited Hon. Katjavivi ahead of the national memorial service of late President Geingob. The two also discussed areas of further cooperation between the two countries with Hon. Hernández proposing the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two parliaments in order to



Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Prof. Peter Katjavivi (right) with Cuba Speaker of the National Assembly of the people's power, Esteban Lazo Hernández

cooperate on issues related to housing, agriculture, and health. Hon. Katjavivi welcomed the idea of an MOU noting that it would serve as an instrument to propel the existing relations to greater heights.

The Cuban Speaker also thanked Namibia for its continued call to lift the protracted embargo that had adversely affected Cuba's economy resulting in constant shortage of food and other essentials such as oil. He added that Cuba had also been unfairly put on the list of countries sponsoring terrorism, an action which had exacerbated matters even further. Speaker Katjavivi towards the end of the year, promised to table a motion in the Namibian Parliament, calling for the lifting of the embargo against Cuba. The embargo against Cuba which restricted the flow of goods to the Caribbean island nation, has been in place for nearly sixty years.

Cuba and Namibia's relations date back to the time of the Namibian liberation struggle when Cuba offered political, military, and diplomatic support to Swapo. Cooperation between the two countries has continued since post-independence, with Cuba assisting Namibia with Cuban professionals in various fields. Cuba has also trained many Namibians as doctors and in other professions.



# PRESIDENT MBUMBA *officially opens Parliament*

• George Sanzila

The new President of the Republic of Namibia, H.E. Dr. Nangolo Mbumba officially opened the 9<sup>th</sup> session of the 7<sup>th</sup> Parliament in February 2024. During the event, Members of Parliament remembered the late President Dr. Hage Geingob by observing a minute of silence. The first day of sitting on was also reserved for tributes by members.

H.E. Dr. Mbumba noted that the late President was the embodiment of democracy in Namibia as one of the architects of the Namibian Constitution. "He is one of the founders of the Namibian constitution, having chaired the Constituent Assembly which drafted the constitution. He served as the first Prime Minister and the third President of our Republic. Our country therefore lost an icon", said Mbumba.

As Namibia heads to the polls, the President urged Parliamentarians to redouble their efforts if the country is to achieve economic growth and shared prosperity for all including the down trodden. According to President Mbumba, lawmakers can achieve these noble ideals by finalizing outstanding Bills and coming up with Bills that were equally critical to the livelihoods of Namibians. "Parliamentarians have an important role to play in ensuring that the work of the legislature positively impacts livelihoods, especially for those under-served Namibians in the remote areas of our country. I therefore appeal to all MPs to complete outstanding Bills



*H.E. President Nangolo Mbumba officially opening parliament*

including passing critical Bills before year end", implored the President.

He further commended Parliament for its increased outreach activities through Standing Committees and the review of its Standing Rules and Orders. The Head of State was also happy that both Houses of Parliament had initiated parliamentary platforms for young people such as the Children's Parliament and the Junior National Council, urging for the urgent reconvening of such initiatives, that were temporally halted during the time of COVID-19.

Bills that were likely to be tabled included Regional Constituency Fund Bill, Health Professions Bill, Namibia Energy Regulator Bill, Electricity Bill, Marriage Bill, Child Justice Bill, Ombudsman Bill, Divorce Bill, Public Gathering and Demonstration Bill, Regularization of Status of Certain Residents, their Foreign Spouses and their Descendants Bill, Roads Bill ,and Vehicle Mass Bill amongst others. ■

*"Parliamentarians have an important role to play in ensuring that the work of the legislature positively impacts livelihoods, especially for those under-served Namibians in the remote areas of our country. I therefore appeal to all MPs to complete outstanding Bills including passing critical Bills before year end"*



# OPENING OF PARLIAMENT

## *9th session of the 7th Parliament*





# SPEAKER COMMENDS *South Africa for ICJ case against Israel on Gaza*

• George Sanzila



*Speaker of the National Assembly, Professor Peter Katjavivi addressing delegates at the summit.*

Speaker of the National Assembly, Professor Peter Katjavivi, has commended South Africa for its boldness in filing a case against Israel at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) over the latter's alleged breach of the UN Convention on genocide by killing Palestinians in Gaza.

Katjavivi mentioned this on 30th January at the 2024 South African Legislative Sector Oversight Summit in Cape Town. The Speaker was among Speakers of Parliaments invited to the summit.

According to Katjavivi, the decision by South Africa was not only a victory for the country, but for humanity

and a learning curve for would-be transgressors. "I just want to applaud South Africa for garnering the courage, based on our own painful experiences with the apartheid oppression during the struggle against colonialism, to take Israel to court to be compelled to end the suffering of the people of Palestine. Indeed, this was a courageous move for the whole of our common humanity", noted the Speaker.

In a recent preliminary landmark ruling, the court ordered Israel to do all it can to prevent genocide, including refraining from harming or killing Palestinians.

The Speaker who also emphasized the importance of collaboration to enhance oversight, added that challenges facing parliaments today such as resource and skills limitations required a strategic approach.

"Addressing these challenges requires a strategic approach, focusing on efficient resource allocation, comprehensive training and capacity building. Our aim is to equip our legislative bodies with the tools and expertise necessary for thorough and impactful oversight", Katjavivi told delegates that included his South African counterpart, Nosiviwe Mapisa - Nqakula and the new President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), and Tanzanian Speaker, Tulia Ackson, among other Speakers.

With the Namibian parliament having recently adopted its e-parliament strategy, Katjavivi further reiterated the transformative role played by digital tools in the legislative process. "We must continue to explore and embrace digital tools that aid in data management, public engagement, and process optimization. The experience we faced during the COVID 19 global pandemic demonstrated that parliaments across the globe need to be technologically dynamic in times of unforeseen challenges", opined Katjavivi.

The two-day event held under the theme "Striving for Oversight that ensures the realization of a better life for all South Africans", was meant for participants to reflect on the gains the sector had made in strengthening democracy and how to optimize collaboration.



# PARLIAMENTARY DIPLOMACY

## *pathway to peace*

• George Sanzila

Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Prof. Peter Katjavivi underscored the importance of parliamentary diplomacy when he addressed hundreds of Members of Parliament gathered at the 148<sup>th</sup> Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) in Geneva, Switzerland, in March 2024.

Katjavivi made the remarks during a General Debate on the theme "Parliamentary Diplomacy, Building Bridges for Peace and Understanding."

The Speaker noted that the IPU served as a platform that promoted dialogue to find solutions to global challenges. "This IPU platform enhances parliamentary diplomacy and facilitates communication between parliamentarians from various member states. This goes beyond conventional diplomatic channels thereby finding solutions to critical issues and getting a common ground that serves as a solution to conflict resolution," said Katjavivi.

It was revealed at the gathering of the world's parliaments that over 56 countries were currently experiencing

armed conflict. According to the Speaker, the IPU provided a space for dialogue to compliment efforts being made by other multilateral forums such as the United Nations.

Katjavivi commended the IPU for creating bodies focusing on conflict resolution such as the IPU Task Force for the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine, of which he is the Vice President. "Although not much progress has been achieved, it demonstrates the importance of parliaments in domestic and global conflict resolution. Parliamentary diplomacy could serve as an effective strategy for fostering understanding and peace in a global, inter connected world", stressed the Speaker.

The Task force, as well as other IPU conflict resolution bodies such as the IPU Committee on Middle East Questions and IPU Group of Facilitators on Cyprus will meet in person and recommend action to be taken during the course of the assembly.

Katjavivi further thanked the various parliaments for messages of sympathies

and the assembly for observing a minute of silence in memory of Namibia's late President, Dr. Hage Geingob stating that it showed solidarity and brotherliness. He also revealed that the Namibian parliament had reached a 50/50 gender parity.

The IPU Assembly, in existence for more than 130 years, is a global organisation of parliaments that brings together parliamentarians to identify international challenges and make recommendations for action. Currently, the IPU comprises 180 national member parliaments and 15 regional parliamentary bodies. The conclusion of the assembly culminated in the adoption of a final document on the overall theme of the General debate.

Other Members of parliament forming part of the Namibian delegation included Hons. Henny Seibeb, Charmaine Tjirare, and Nono Katjingisua. The National Council was represented by its Vice chairperson, Hon. Victoria Kauma and fellow lawmakers, Hons. Emma Muteka, Leonard Shikulo, and Sebastian !Gobs. ■



*"This IPU platform enhances parliamentary diplomacy and facilitates communication between parliamentarians from various member states. This goes beyond conventional diplomatic channels thereby finding solutions to critical issues and getting a common ground that serves as a solution to conflict resolution,"*

*Speaker of the National Assembly, Professor Peter Katjavivi during the general debate at the 148<sup>th</sup> IPU General Assembly underway in Geneva, Switzerland.*



# PROGRESS MADE REGARDING *Russia/Ukraine conflict*

• *George Sanzila*

Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Prof. Peter Katjavivi who was joined by fellow Namibian members of parliament held a bilateral meeting with the Ukrainian delegation, on the sidelines of the 148th IPU Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland. Hon. Katjavivi is the Vice President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union Task Force on the Peaceful Resolution of the war in Ukraine.

The meeting was followed by a presentation of the report of the Inter - Parliamentary Union (IPU) Task Force on the resolution of the war in Ukraine by Speaker Katjavivi. During the presentation, Katjavivi noted that the Task Force took small steps by identifying possible ways to ease the humanitarian consequences of the war and that it continues to advocate for the return to the negotiating table. The Speaker stated that warring parties agreed at the 146th IPU Assembly in Manama to focus on four key issues as common ground in the various proposed peace plans. These are Nuclear safety, food security, access to



*Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Prof. Peter Katjavivi joined by the Ukrainian Delegation and other Namibian MPs after their Bilateral meeting.*

treatment and exchange of prisoners and ecologically vulnerable sides.

The Task Force, composed of eight prominent parliamentarians representing the global parliamentary community – was set up following the adoption of a resolution at the

144th IPU Assembly in March 2022. Its main aim is to facilitate the role of parliaments by promoting dialogue between parliamentarians in Ukraine and the Russian Federation in order to resolve the conflict. ■



*Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Prof. Peter Katjavivi with other MPs during a meeting with the Ukrainian Delegation on the sidelines of the 148th IPU Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland.*

# SPEAKER LAUNCHES *new strategic plan*

• *George Sanzila*

Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Prof. Peter Katjavivi officially launched the National Assembly's Strategic Plan 2023-2027 on 18 January 2024, aimed at bolstering its core functions of law making, representation, and oversight.

Hon. Prof. Katjavivi noted that it was important to devise a road map that would assist the legislature in implementing its constitutional mandate. "It serves as an instrument for the Secretariat to aid our Members of Parliament in executing their constitutional obligations. This plan is aligned with our National Development objectives, focusing squarely on Parliament's pivotal role in ensuring robust governance and accountability from the Executive", said Katjavivi.

The Speaker singled out the successful rollout of the first phase of the e-parliament initiative and the ongoing review of the Standing Rules and Orders and the Rules for Parliamentary Committees as some of the strides made during the previous Strategic Plan of 2018-2020. "The technological leap has equipped each Member of Parliament within the Chamber with access to the e-parliament system, facilitating paperless and efficient conduct of parliamentary business. The strategic plan has also been instrumental in solidifying foundational aspects, including the revision of standing Rules and Orders and the Rules for Parliamentary standing Committees", stated the Speaker.

Hon. Katjavivi further reiterated Parliament's commitment to the



*Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Prof. Peter Katjavivi launched the strategic plan today.*

establishment of the long held dream of a Parliamentary Service Commission in accordance with the Agenda for Change Strategy, adding that the implementation of the strategic pillars of the plan would be led by the Speaker's Roundtable which would include the secretariat and the involvement of other stakeholders such as the Anti-Corruption Commission, the Electoral Commission, the Office of the Ombudsman, the Public Service Commission, and Civil Society Organisations. ■

# CHAIRPERSON CALLS FOR *peaceful dialogue to end Russian-Ukraine conflict*

• *Sakeus likela*

Chairperson of the National Council Hon. Lukas Sinimbo Muha has expressed concerns over the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict and called on the two countries to resolve their differences through peaceful dialogue.

This, especially because the ongoing conflict has negatively affected the whole world and in particular developing nations such as Namibia who rely on global supply of goods for economic growth.

"Every time you speak to Russia in bilateral discussion, you will be seen by other countries that are aligning with

Ukraine as their enemy. That brings suspicion and it is confusing because countries that have been non-aligned are now forced to align themselves to one of the two narratives which is problematic because there would be times that you would rely upon Russia or Ukraine to supply certain resources," he said.

He made these remarks when he received a courtesy call from Dr. Mikhail Nikitin, Chargé d'Affaires of the Russian Federation in Namibia.

During the engagement, the Russian diplomat handed over an official message from the Speaker of the Russian Federation Council, Hon. Valentina Matviyenko to Hon Muha.

In response, the Russian diplomat said his country was prepared to resume the dialogue with Ukraine to find a peaceful solution to the ongoing conflict.

According to him, Russia is demanding that Ukraine should be a neutral demilitarized state. In addition, Russia wants assurance from its adversaries in the west that Ukraine would not be allowed to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) or participate in activities sponsored by it "because it is a real threat to us".

"Our demands are very simple but when there is a threat to the security of Russia, unfortunately we have to respond. You can see how this has affected the rest of the world," he said.

Dr. Nikitin further urged Namibia to remain neutral on the Russian Ukraine saga.

"Do not take any side. You stand by your own principles and follow your own national policies not to be affiliated with anyone or be a puppet of someone. That is how the world should be," he said. ■





# SPEAKER MEETS TURKEY AMBASSADOR *to reflect on recent visit*

• George Sanzila



special fields given the discovery of new energy sources, which he said would require Namibians to be equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to improve value addition.

He expressed appreciation for TIKA's development support to Namibia over the years, including its ICT assistance to the National Assembly. Katjavivi further reassured the ambassador that the setting up of an embassy in Turkey was enjoying attention by government.

Both Oruçkaptan and Katjavivi bemoaned low trade and investment volumes between the two countries calling for mutually beneficial trade relations. According to the Ambassador, currently Turkish goods were traded indirectly through South Africa contributing further to lower trade volumes. The Ambassador appealed to both the Namibian and Turkish business councils to resolve the matter. She further expressed her support for the setting of a Namibian embassy in Turkey. This, she said, would elevate relations even further. ■

Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Prof. Peter Katjavivi and Turkey Ambassador to Namibia, H.E. Feral Çekerek Oruçkaptan met for a meeting intended to reflect on the former's recent visit to Turkey.

Apart from the parliamentary cooperation agreement signed with his Turkish counterpart, H.E. Prof. Dr. Numan Kurtulmuş, Katjavivi noted that the two parliaments were able to establish a parliamentary friendship

group that would look into issues of potential cooperation between the two countries.

He noted that during his visit, he discovered that there was a low uptake of Namibian students at Turkish universities, even though the country had been willing to increase the number of scholarships. He further stated that he would urgently engage the Ministry of Higher Education to ensure that more Namibians were enrolled, particularly in



*Hon. Prof. Katjavivi and the delegation taken on a tour of the Istanbul Technical University, during his visit in Turkey.*



# SPEAKER'S VISIT TO TURKEY IN PICTURES



Hon. Prof. Peter Katjavivi, Speaker of the National Assembly (left) and his Turkish counterpart, Numan Kurtulmuş (right) exchanging gifts during Katjavivi's official visit to Turkey.



The Namibian delegation led by Speaker Katjavivi inside the chamber of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey.



President of TIKA, Serkan Kayalar (right), handing over a gift to Speaker Katjavivi after their meeting in Ankara, Turkey.



Members of Parliament on a site visit of Kapowership, a Turkish company that builds and operates floating power plants on ships.



Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Prof. Peter Katjavivi participating in a wreath laying ceremony at the Independence War Museum in Ankara.



Speaker Katjavivi and his delegation pose for a group photo at the Independence War Museum.



Hon. Katjavivi laying a wreath at the Independence War Museum in honour of those who laid their lives for freedom during the Turkish war of independence.



Speaker Katjavivi (left) exchanging gifts with Erol Özvar, President of the Council of Higher education in Turkey.



# PARLIAMENT

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