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## NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

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### MAIDEN SPEECH OF ROSA MBINGE-TJUENDO, MP, (PDM)

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10 APRIL 2025

**Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members, (Fellow Namibians)**

It is an esteemed privilege and a great honour for me to stand here today before this August House and the entire Namibian nation to deliver my maiden speech in accordance with the Standing Rules and Orders. *We 91*

**Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members,**

Permit me to formally introduce myself. I am Rosa Kamutuwa Mbinge Tjeundo, proudly hailing from the Kunene Region, Opuwo – Himba descendant. My professional journey has been shaped by my background as an educator, school teacher for more than 25 years of my life.

## 5. Road Infrastructure

Furthermore, our road infrastructure in Kunene remains inadequate. Earlier this year, I had the opportunity to travel with Honourable Marius Sheya from Opuwo to Terrace Bay and Möwe Bay. Covering a mere 300 kilometers along the Skeleton Coast took us between nine to twelve hours due to poor road conditions without network coverage. However, the Kunene Region, with its breathtaking landscapes and untapped investment opportunities, remains one of Namibia's most valuable assets to Namibia. Yet, the absence of proper road networks and railway infrastructure hinders its growth. I am committed to advocating for the improvement of transportation infrastructure to unlock the region's full economic potential.

### **Honourable Members,**

As a democrat and a proud citizen of this country, again I stand firm for justice and fairness. Coming from the Kunene Region and having been entrusted by the Namibian people to represent them in this distinguished August House, I pledge to ensure that their voices are heard, and their interests safeguarded. In reviewing the national budget, I will diligently monitor the implementation of planned ministerial programs, ensuring that public resources are utilized effectively and transparently for the benefit of all.

### 3. Housing

The issue of housing is another concern that I feel must be addressed with a serious sense of urgency. Namibia currently faces a severe housing crisis, with over 230,000 families living in informal settlements, lacking access to basic services like electricity, water and sanitation. In accordance with Article 95 of the Namibian Constitution, the State shall actively promote policies aimed at ensuring access to adequate housing for all Namibians. As democrats, we firmly believe that every Namibian deserves a place to call home. Given our expansive land resources, it is imperative that we develop sustainable housing solutions that afford all citizens a dignified living environment.

### 4. Informal traders

As informal traders continues to support countless Namibian households, protecting these traders must become a national priority. According to the former minister of trade and industry 2023, our informal sector has been recorded to be the country's largest employer and contributes about 24% to the country's gross domestic product (GDP). For that reason, it is disheartening to witness hardworking single mothers and fathers being displaced from trading areas, as though they are criminals, when they are merely trying to earn an honest living.

## 2. Agriculture

Although agriculture remains a key national priority in Namibia, many people continue to live in poverty, highlighting a clear disconnect between policy focus and tangible economic outcomes for the people. I have a strong growing concern about Namibia's high import levels, which may undermine local production and widen the trade deficit, posing long-term economic challenges. According to the 2024 Statistics Trade Report, Namibia's total imports amounted to N\$161.5 billion, reflecting an increase of N\$25.2 billion compared to the previous year.

**Honourable Members,** we must therefore leave behind our heavy reliance on imports and take pride in producing what we need, right here at home. It is therefore important to intentionally invest in our agricultural sector and to support our farmers because it will ensure food security, boost our economy, and build a healthier, more self-reliant nation.

Additionally, I believe it is high time we address the issue of water pricing, especially after receiving significant rainfall across the country. Namibians should not be burdened with high water costs. It is therefore essential government to negotiate with Namwater to reduce the cost of water.

**Honourable Speaker,**

During my stay in this August House, I will focus on issues that affect the Namibian people but allow me to mention the following issues of concern:

1. Education

Our education system consistently continues to receive the highest portion of our national budget, with a total of N\$24.8 Billion allocated in the 2025/2026 Financial Year. Despite this high allocation, the education system continues to experience serious challenges that have a direct impact on the future of our children. As announced by the education ministry in January this year, 28 726 learners out of 40 757 who registered for the Namibia Senior Secondary Certificate level examinations which represents 70.5%, did not meet the requirements to progress to AS level. The above results demonstrate a clear picture of the ministry being under-budgeted because many schools lack proper infrastructure, textbooks, and stationeries.

*UPE Fund and USE funding does very little to address the schools needs, that leave teachers with no choice rather than to go cry back to parents - Confusion*

Honourable Speaker, we should always remember that education is not just a budget line, but it is the foundation of our nation's future. It is therefore important to invest wisely, monitor fiercely, and dream big for every learner in Namibia.

*R. ... proposed*

## **Honourable Speaker, Honourable Members,**

I stand here today with a deep sense of responsibility and purpose, ready to engage constructively and contribute meaningfully to the legislative and developmental aspirations of our great nation to articulate my vision, hopes and aspirations for a prosperous Namibia. A Namibia where every citizen is given a fair opportunity - a chance to have a dignified home, access to nutritious meals, the right to quality education, and an enabling environment for business, particularly for our hardworking informal traders who strive daily to sustain their families. It is my fervent hope that all Namibians benefit equitably from our nation's vast natural resources.

### **Honourable Members**

This serious responsibility requires us to act with integrity, foresight, maturity and dedication to the service of our people. However, a 2024 Afrobarometer survey revealed a decline in public trust and performance ratings for the National Assembly, with only 37% of respondents expressed trust in their Members of Parliament. We as elected representative of our people should therefore step up our game and truly represent the interest of our people.

My political background has been shaped by being Chairperson of the PDM Women's League, Member of the Central Committee, Member of the National Executive, Opuwo Town Councilor for 5 years and the latest being the Mayor of Opuwo. I assume my role in this August House as a representative of all Namibians, irrespective of their backgrounds, under the PDM mandate. ~~Go~~ Speaker →  
Governor →

Therefore, **Hon. Speaker**, at this juncture, I wish to express my profound appreciation and admiration to the Democrats for making it sure that I reach this level. And to the leadership of the PDM President, Hon. McHenry Kanjonokere Venaani, your unwavering dedication, bold leadership, and steadfast commitment to the advancement of the Namibian people remain truly commendable. Hon. Venaani has been at the forefront of advocating for economic emancipation and has consistently provided sound counsel at the highest levels of government. His vision and policy contributions continue to shape national discourse, with his ideas being adopted by the ruling government - an embodiment of true leadership. <sup>His values</sup>  
<sup>inc's true quality</sup>

Furthermore, allow me to extend my sincere appreciation to the Honourable Speaker and all Honourable Members for your warm welcome extended to me in this esteemed legislative chamber. I am deeply honoured.

**Honourable Speaker,** in closing, kindly allow me to extend my gratitude to my family. To my beloved husband, thank you for your unwavering support and inspiration. Thanks for your understanding even when I am constantly on the road or coming very late in the evenings at home. You simply make my political career very easy. To my grandchildren, Pepi and Yora thank you for putting a smile on my face after political stressful evenings.

Finally, I acknowledge the ultimate Leader, God the Creator, the source of all Leadership potential. Thank you for the grace to influence my environment positively. Without you, life has no purpose.

**I thank you.**