



Statement by the Honourable Asser Kuveri Kapere, Chairperson of the National Council, Parliament of Namibia and Leader of Namibia's Delegation to the Fourth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament.
United Nations Headquarters, New York, 31 August – 02 September 2015

IPU PRESIDENT, HONOURABLE SABER CHOWDHURY,

DISTINGUISHED HONOURABLE SPEAKERS,

IPU SECRETARY GENERAL, MARTIN CHUNGONG,

DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES,

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

ALLOW ME, ON BEHALF OF THE NAMIBIAN PARLIAMENT, AND PEOPLE, AND MY DELEGATION, TO ASSOCIATE WITH THE POSITIVE SENTIMENTS EXPRESSED BY PREVIOUS SPEAKERS, ESPECIALLY REGARDING THE STRATEGIC ROLE AND INSPIRATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM, AS A WHOLE, TOWARD THE PROMOTION AND PRESERVATION OF DEMOCRACY, PEACE, WORLD STABILITY AND HUMAN PROGRESS.

I**N DOING SO, MY DELEGATION ACKNOWLEDGE AND APPLAUD THE EFFORT TO SET UP THE *UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SOLUTIONS NETWORK (SDSN)*, AS AN INSTRUMENT TO WORK OUT AND EVOLVE GLOBAL CONSENSUS ON THE 17 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) THAT WILL SUCCEED THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS, AT THE END OF THIS YEAR.**

THE NAMIBIAN GOVERNMENT, PARLIAMENT AND CITIZENS ARE COMMITTED TO KEEP OUR YOUNG DEMOCRACY EVOLVING, VIBRANT, PROGRESSIVE AND INCLUSIVE. POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES HAVE BEEN PUT IN PLACE TO ENSURE THAT NO CITIZEN IS LEFT OUT. AND IN THIS WAY, WE BELIEVE THAT THE FOUNDATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IS SOLID, AND SUPPORTED ON PILLARS OF PEACE, STABILITY, UNITY FOR VALUE ADDING HUMAN AND CAPITAL PRODUCTIVITY.

TURNING TO THE THEME OF THIS YEAR'S CONFERENCE, "WHAT THE WORLD WANTS", I WOULD LIKE TO QUOTE THE WORDS OF AFRICA'S LIBERATION ICON AND THE FIRST PRESIDENT OF GHANA, DR KWAME NKRUMAH, WHO OBSERVED SOME YEARS AGO THAT, "DEMOCRACY IS MEANINGLESS [AND *UNSUSTAINABLE*] IF THE MASS OF OUR CITIZENS HAVE NO REGULAR [*MEANINGFUL*] INCOME, NO EDUCATION, AND IF THE GOVERNANCE SYSTEM AND ITS ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURES FAIL TO PROVIDE STRATEGIC

LEADERSHIP, ESSENTIAL SERVICES, AND SOCIAL NET FOR ITS VULNERABLE POPULATIONS". DR KRUMAH'S STATEMENT, MADE SOME 50 YEARS AGO, IS AS RELEVANT TODAY AS IT WAS THEN.

THE WORLD'S YOUTH TODAY ARE UNCOMFORTABLE WITH DECISIONS MADE ON THEIR BEHALF; DECISIONS IN WHICH THEY HAVE LITTLE OR NO SAY; IN POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES THAT ARE DEVELOPED FOR THEM AND PROMOTED BY INSTITUTIONS THAT ARE MORE CONCERNED WITH CAPITAL ACCUMULATION OVER CAPACITY BUILDING; WITH PROFIT-MAKING OVER PEOPLE EMPOWERMENT; WITH CORPORATE GIANTS THAT GROW RICHER WHILE THE POVERTY GAP WIDENS IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD, AND EVEN IN THE INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES.

TO THIS END, WE FEEL VERY ENCOURAGED BY THE KIND
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF MRS HELEN CLARK, THE ADMINISTRATOR
OF THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP),
DURING AN OFFICIAL VISIT TO NAMIBIA. I SUMMARIZED HER
OBSERVATIONS AS FOLLOWS:

1. "NAMIBIA HAS A GOOD MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS
REPORT, AND HAS DEFINITELY MADE GOOD PROGRESS ON A
LOT OF THINGS"
2. "NAMIBIA ALSO HAS A STRONG RULE OF LAW, ELECTIONS
[THAT] ARE FAIR AND A GROWING GROSS DOMESTIC
PRODUCT (GDP)".
3. "THE RULING SWAPO PARTY HAS ALSO MADE PROGRESSIVE
MOVES TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY "

REGARDING GENDER EQUALITY, I AM PROUD TO INFORM THIS AUGUST BODY THAT, AS WE SPEAK, THE RULING PARTY, AND INDEED THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA, HAVE NOT ONLY ADOPTED BUT IMPLEMENTED AND EMBRACED, IN ITS 6TH PARLIAMENT (2015-2020) THE 50/50 ALSO REFERRED TO AS ZEBRA STYLE FORMULA FOR EQUAL GENDER REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT.

HONOURABLE SPEAKERS, WE IN NAMIBIA ARE SIMILARLY ENCOURAGED BY THE OBSERVATIONS OF THE WORLD BANK IN ITS 22 OCTOBER, 2014 REPORT STATING THAT "NAMIBIA HAS MADE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN ADDRESSING MANY DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES", INCLUDING "ACCESS TO BASIC EDUCATION, PRIMARY HEALTH CARE SERVICES, SAFE WATER, SOUND PUBLIC POLICIES, SOUND ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT, GOOD GOVERNANCE, BASIC CIVIC FREEDOMS, AND RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS."

DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

DEMOCRACY IN TODAY'S WORLD IS NOT SOME SCIENTIFIC FORMULA THAT ONE APPLIES AND WATCHES IT WORK. IT IS AN EVER EVOLVING SOCIAL AND INTERACTIVE PROCESS THAT PROPELS CITIZENS TO BUILD ECONOMIES THAT RESPOND POSITIVELY TO THE CHANGING ROLES, PROFILES, CIRCUMSTANCES, POSITIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF ALL THEIR CITIZENS AND RESIDENTS.

AS A YOUNG DEVELOPING NATION, NAMIBIA DOES NOT HAVE THE POWER TO CHANGE ANYTHING IN THE WORLD BUT IN OUR OWN SMALL CORNER, AND BY SIMPLE EXAMPLE, WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE, THROUGH UR LITTLE CONTRIBUTION TO GOOD GOVERNANCE, ACCOUNTABLE LEADERSHIP, RESPONSIVE LAWS AND PUBLIC POLICIES, INCLUSIVE PROGRAMMES AND PROACTIVE PARLIAMENT THAT PROMOTES REGULAR COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS, TIMELY LEGISLATIONS, AND OBJECTIVE OVERSIGHT.

THIS IS NOT ALWAYS EASY BUT WE ARE DETERMINED, UNITED, COMMITTED, FOCUSED AND SERIOUS ABOUT ACHIEVING OUR SHARED NATIONAL VISION BY 2030 AND FOR SPREADING THE COLLECTIVE NATIONAL GAINS. HOWEVER, AS MUCH AS WE ARE DETERMINED, THE FACT THAT NAMIBIA IS CLASSIFIED AS UPPER MIDDLE INCOME COUNTRY BY THE WORLD BANK PREVENT NAMIBIA FROM ACCESSING MUCH-NEEDED SOFT LOANS AND GRANTS TO ADDRESS OUR DEVELOPMENTAL CHALLENGES. IT IS THEREFORE MY PLEA THAT THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY CONSIDERS THE INCOME INEQUALITY REFLECTING THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC REALITY ON THE GROUND WHEN DECIDING ON THE CLASSIFICATION OF DEVELOPMENT STATUS OF COUNTRIES.

HONOURABLE SPEAKERS,

I WISH TO CONCLUDE MY STATEMENT, WITH THE ASSURANCE OF MY DELEGATION'S UNWAVERING SUPPORT FOR THE INTER PARLIAMENTARY UNION AND THE VALUES IT STANDS FOR.

**TOGETHER AS NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS AND UNITED UNDER THE
WORLD LARGEST CONGLOMERATION OF NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS
WE CAN CREATE THE WORLD OUR PEOPLE WANT. TO THIS END, I
ENCOURAGE THE IPU TO CONTINUE EXPANDING COOPERATION
WITH LIKEMINDED INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS,
PARTICULARLY THE UNITED NATIONS, IN ORDER TO BRING PEACE
AND PROSPERITY TO ALL OUR CITIZENS ACROSS THE GLOBE.**

I THANK YOU.