
THE ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS CONGRESS

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WELCOME ADDRESS

**by Alex Kamburute
Mayor of Mariental**

Honourable Governors and delegates, it is indeed a pleasure to welcome you at Mariental, the jewel of the beautiful South and at your annual congress, a very needed occasion for Namibia's important Regional Councillors to establish formal and informal communication links between Regions and Regional Councillors.

This is also an event for open and in-depth deliberation on matters affecting each individual in Namibia.

All of us share a vision of a prosperous bright future for Namibia. May you receive the wisdom to formulate dynamic attainable goals, for each Council to develop in activities benefiting each individual in our beautiful country.

Mr. Master of Ceremonies, you must be congratulated on your choice of Mariental as venue for your congress. Namibia does not consist of only Windhoek, Swakopmund and Walvis Bay. The rural areas can also accommodate important congresses and meetings. Hopefully other establishments will follow your example in "decentralizing" their congresses and workshops.

Master of Ceremonies, Section 29 of your Regional Council's Act 1992 identifies a number of specific functions with a direct impact upon local authorities. They are:

- to undertake the planning of the development of a Region with a view to the –
 - physical, social and economic characteristics of the Region and its neighbours;
 - distributions, increase, movement and urbanisation of the population;
 - natural and other resources and the economic development potential of the Region;
 - existing and planned infra-structure;
 - general land-use patterns;
 - sensitivity of the natural environment;
- and to assist a local authority council in the exercise or performance of its powers, duties and functions.

In November 1996, the MRLG11 issued a much-needed and welcome decentralization policy for Namibia. This policy outlines the manner in which the Government of Namibia plans to “devolve responsibilities, authority and resources to Local Authorities and Regional Councils”.

This policy furthermore illustrates that the relationship between Central Government, Regional Councils and Local Authorities is “one of mutual autonomy within the requirements of the law” and can be seen as a motion of trust by central government that Local Authorities and Regional Councils have the ability to assist and execute services satisfactory to communities.

Regional Councils furthermore have “a co-ordinative and residual functional responsibility in lieu of Central Government”. In this process stakeholders have to collaborate and co-ordinate to secure a safe future for all.

The functions to be decentralized vary according to the status of the local authority and the regional councils.

The tasks and resources of both local authorities and regional councils and the needs of the communities these bodies serve can vary dramatically.

For this reason it is inadvisable to become too prescriptive about the capacity of individual local authorities and regional councils to contribute constructively in any process of reform or development.

The need for co-operation and collective action cannot be over emphasized. Not only have regional councils a need to liaise and co-operate on national and even international level, but Regional Councils must collaborate, accommodate and motivate local authorities and the private sector within a region to ensure a positive future for all in a region.

Have each one of you a clear framework of your regions future and potential to sustain a quality environment for your future generations?

Regional collaboration does not occur easily. It involves a continuous activity to build, sustain and care for organisational relationships where:

- the realistic needs and expectations of all in a community are nurtured and channelled to alleviate conflict;
- leaders are committed to process over the long term rather than to depend on quick-fix solutions;

-
- leaders co-operate and are alert to identify new opportunities for economic development;
 - communities take responsibility for their own future rather than to rely on hand-outs and charity;
 - major role players have integrity and are equipped with the appropriate skills, knowledge and an attitude to manage change and conflict and leaders are able to integrate economic, social, cultural and environmental objectives.

Master of Ceremonies, there is still so much to be done to secure a safe and prosperous future for each and everyone in Namibia. Please value your relationship with local authorities dearly.

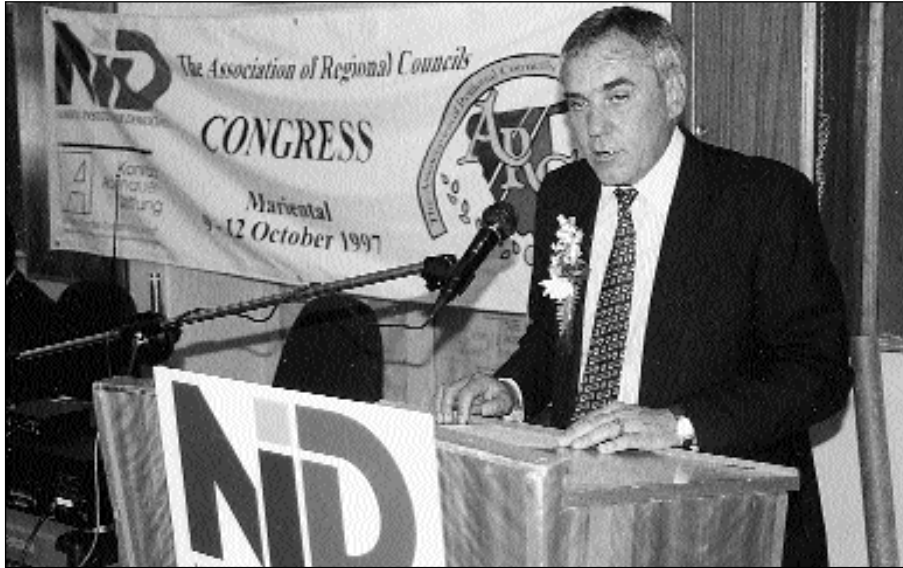
May your deliberations be fruitful and may all future generations benefit positively from your efforts.

I thank you.



Delivering the Mayor's welcoming address, Deputy Mayor K. van Rooyen

SPEECH
by Pieter Boltmann
Governor: Hardap Region



Mr. Pieter Boltmann, Governor: Hardap Region

Ladies and gentlemen, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the Hardap Region, and to Mariental, which is at the heart of our Region. It is a privilege to be your host at this historic first congress of our Association of Regional Councils.

I know that you have all been following the progress being made in Windhoek with regard to the introduction of the policy of decentralization with great interest. After all, ARC has been at the forefront of the movement to persuade the government, and in particular the Ministry of Local and Regional Government and Housing to get this decentralization policy down on paper and to start working towards its implementation.

Considerable expectations have been created in the regions, and especially amongst the Regional Councillors with regard to decentralization. Everyone

has spent a lot of time speculating about the benefits that decentralization will hold for the regions and the people living in those regions.

However, I believe that we also need to consider decentralization from another angle. We need to consider that our – and by that I mean the Regional Councillors – responsibilities will be with regard to decentralization. Everything will not come to us from the government, so that we can sit back and enjoy ourselves. There is a tremendous amount of work to be done by us if we hope to show the government and the people that decentralization is a policy that can be a success.

I believe that government should be brought closer to the people, and this is one of the most important reasons for decentralization. But to make it a success, and to convince the many sceptics who see it as another way to waste the taxpayers' money, levy more taxes from the people or open the doors to more corruption, we will have to work hard at building trust in our institutions, namely the Regional Councils.

We will have to convince not only the government, but also the people that decentralization really does hold important benefits for them.

In other words, ladies and gentlemen, we will have to sell the idea of decentralization and the institution of regional councils to the people of Namibia.

Once we accept the responsibility for a certain function or functions, we will have to make sure that it is carried out properly and efficiently, as well as cost-effectively. We cannot afford to open ourselves up to criticism that certain functions were performed better when they were undertaken by the Central Government. If this happens, it will be the kiss of death for the idea of decentralization.

We will be holding elections for the Regional Councils at the end of next year. That means that we have one year left in which to show the people and the government that we are capable of running regional government effectively and efficiently. We must grasp this challenge with both hands, ladies and gentlemen.

We should also request the government to ensure that all relevant Acts of

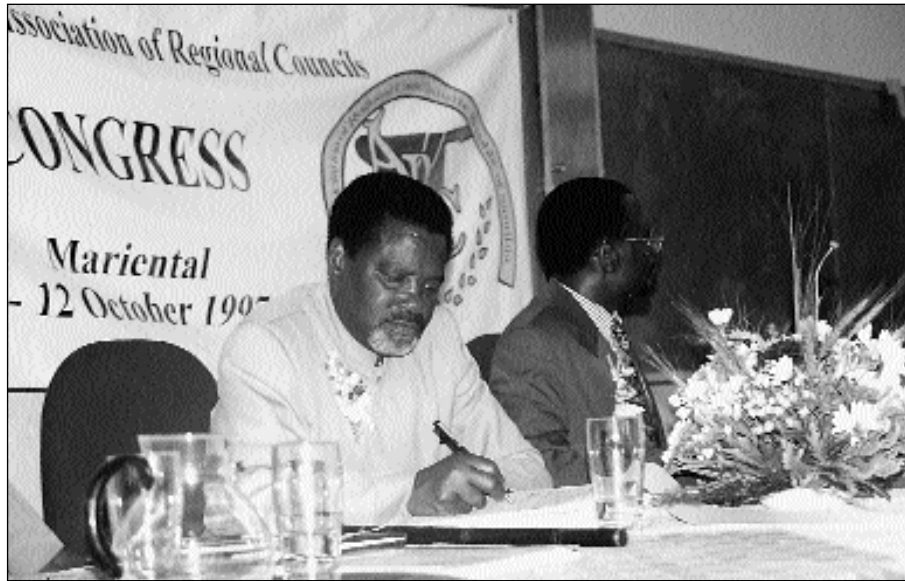
Parliament are reconciled with the policy of decentralization in good time, to avoid unnecessary frustration when the policy is implemented, and to enable the regional Councils to take over their allotted functions smoothly when the time comes.

And finally, ladies and gentlemen, I believe that it is essential that there should be honesty and openness between the various levels of government, as well as interaction between us all to ensure the delivery of the best results for the people of Namibia, who have been waiting a long time for decentralization to become a reality.

I thank you.

OFFICIAL OPENING

by the
Honourable Minister Dr. N. Iyambo



The Honourable Minister Dr. N. Iyambo

The Honourable Dr. N. Iyambo chose not to read his speech, but to speak about decentralization. The Minister was happy to be amongst members of the Regional Councils and representatives from line Ministries. As high-level representatives of all the Ministries involved were present, the Minister invited interactions around the policy of decentralisation which was adopted by the National Assembly the previous week. The Honourable Minister described the policy as a National document adding that what remains now is only the implementation thereof. Before the policy could be implemented, some amendments need to be made on the existing laws governing some functions that would be transferred. The policy of decentralization is not starting from a natural aspect, but from the constitution and the laws needed for that. According to the Minister, the policy already received clearance from Cabinet. Credit was given to the Government which legalised everything by

way of policies and laws. The laws are still in place and need to be undone for the implementation of decentralisation as some policies are in conflict with each other. As was done with the constitution, these laws would be in place until some amendments are done. A total National commitment is needed for the successful implementation of the policy on decentralisation.

There is no uncertainty as to whether the policy would be implemented. The implementation date was announced as 1 April 1998. The question that remains now is whether the Regional Councils are ready and capable of executing the functions that are identified for transfer to them. The Minister reported that the Ministry of Regional Local Government and Housing has worked hard to identify elements that could hinder the implementation of decentralisation. The Ministry of Regional & Local Government and Housing would come up with an enabling legislation which would serve as a short-cut avoiding all the lengthy processes of law amendments, etc.

The Minister further continued that the Regional Councils now have the task of declaring themselves ready and capable of handling the functions that would be transferred to them. An action plan needs to be drawn up by the line Ministries who have been identified as key-note players. The Honourable Minister also requested the Congress to indicate readiness by way of resolutions. Dr. Iyambo also assured the congress that the transfer of functions would go hand-in-hand with resources. The question was then if we are all capable of accepting these functions and resources with responsibility. The Minister expressed concern over the absence of banks and financial institutions in some regions because the Regional Councils would be collecting revenue which is normally the responsibility of the Central Government. Where would these funds be kept in safety if there are no banks? Article 108(c) of the Constitution makes provision for the sharing of revenue collected. These are large amounts of funds which would need to be kept in safe places. Sharing of revenue would solve a whole lot of problems in the Minister's view. The Minister mentioned that he thinks if resources are at our disposal, Regional Councils would be in a better position to implement their Regional Development plans. It would help people in the regions to regard projects as their own and not as the Central Government's. A bit of grassroot-level participation in decision taking is encouraged in the compilation of the NDPI, but as the Central Government has the prerogative to priorities projects in their final form, prioritise as set out by the people in regions are ignored and changed by consultants and officials in Windhoek who don't really know the conditions in the regions.

Minister Iyambo also highlighted some of the implications that decentralisation could have as results. The sharing of resources would mean that the Erongo region would have to share the benefits from the rich fishing grounds with the rest of the country to ensure that we have a country which is equally developed. According to the Minister, 95% of the National Development budget goes to the regions. More than 80% of the budget which goes to the regions is spent on salaries. Of the resources should also be transferred with decentralisation. The Public Service Act would also need to be amended. Those people in Windhoek affected by such transfer would be given a choice to either move to the regions or stay in Windhoek. These are some of the factors that were indicated as things that could bring about some complications. Infrastructure and resources would be shared on an equal basis. The Regional Councils could decide if they want the money spent on them to be transferred on a quarterly basis to the regions. Treasury approval would be sought in that case through mandate by Cabinet. The Ministry of Finance could then allocate money to the regions on the same basis as it is done for the line Ministries. The Minister informed the Congress that some Ministries like the Ministry of Health and social Services have already indicated readiness by appointing Regional Medical Officers in all 13 regions of the country. The Minister is of the view that in regions where there is no infrastructure e.g. bank etc., the Ministry of Regional & Local Government & Housing could continue rendering services on an agency basis. This, the Minister said could be agreed upon with the regions which are affected by the lack of infrastructure.

It was the Minister's view that the Governor's offices cannot be expected to be experts in everything. It is therefore advisable that technical staff in the regions be attached to the offices of the Regional Governors. The different regions would need different experts, depending on their specific resources in their regions. The Minister also reiterated the importance of focal persons on decentralisation on both Regional and Central Government levels.

Minister Iyambo told the Congress that it is his wish to make the Regional Councils autonomous bodies like the Local Authorities. That would mean that Regional Councils would have the responsibility to develop villages and settlement areas. The build-together which would be transferred to the Local Authority in urban centres would be passed to the Regional Councils for control in settlement areas and Villages. The loan repayments would be made into pool accounts controlled by either the regional or the local

authority from which new people/applicants would be assisted. The central government would be responsible for the budgeting of funds under this programme, but monitoring and control would be the responsibility of the Regional Councils. This has been agreed upon in principal by the Ministry of Regional and Local Government and Housing. For this to be implemented, we should be clear in our minds whether we are capable on the ground to receive these responsibilities. The Minister continued that problems could be encountered on the regional level much more than on the central level. He stressed the fact that we would be working with public funds which we would be accountable for.

Honourable N. Iyambo mentioned that he is not convinced that Khomas and Erongo should have Regional Councils as they operate in urban centres where their functions are basically performed by the City Council of Windhoek and the Swakopmund and Walvis Bay Municipalities respectively. This is unfortunately a constitutional provision problem and there is not much that could be done about it. The Honourable Minister added too that he is not in favour of Ceremonial Mayors, but supports directly-elected executive mayors to solve the constant conflicts between Town Clerks and Local Authority Councillors.

The aspect of non-payment for services was touched on. The Minister appealed to the Councillors and Community leaders to encourage people to pay for the services rendered. Only this could ensure for the upgrading and extension of services to others. Non-payment for services has resulted in the demotion of some Local Authorities, the Minister revealed. Everybody has a part to play in the implementation of the decentralization policy as functions cannot be transferred when towns are indebted. The Honourable Minister stated it very clearly that he would not want to be the co-ordinating Minister should anything fail in the implementation process of this policy.

The Minister advised that Regional Councils could start by asking for the transfer of their money which is handled by the central government at present. Dr. Iyambo advised that the income-tax should be left in the hands of the central government for the time being, but funds for capital projects and salaries could be handled by Regional Councils.

Minister Iyambo also revealed that they are looking at Cabinet-level into the possibility whereby each Ministry should budget, and be responsible for electricity and water accounts. The Minister further explained how he fails to

understand why the Works Ministry should alone be held responsible for water and electricity accounts of other Ministries. This, the Minister said was the reason why people regard infrastructure in regions as property of the central government as payments for services done from Windhoek.

Dr. Iyambo spoke about the three levels Government we have in Namibia and about the sources of income. The Minister said that the tax base is very narrow and that the Government depends a great deal on foreign assistance and income-tax. The Minister therefore advised that the Regional Councils leave the tax issue with the central government.

The Minister continued by saying that the Regional Councils could do the following to show capability of handling their own affairs:

- (i) Livestock Levies
- (ii) Grazing fees
- (iii) Property tax
- (iv) Commercial farms and other land-users fees
- (v) Charges on communal land. (Communal land is state land which the community does not pay for)
- (vi) Mahangu tax
- (vii) Forest product levies
- (viii) Toll-gate fees
- (ix) Abattoir fees
- (x) Dog and cat licences
- (xi) Country water management fees
- (xii) Cuca-shop taxes
- (xiii) Gambashu licences
- (xiv) Informal trade licence fees, etc.

These are all examples of how Regional Councils could raise revenue. The Minister cautioned though that affordability of the community should be borne in mind. The challenge now for the Regional Councils is to come up with action plans. Information and data is needed for the compilation of regional master-plans which are documents similar to the National Development Plan 1. The Regional Development and Equity Provision fund would be controlled by people from the office of the Prime Minister, Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development, Ministry of Regional & Local

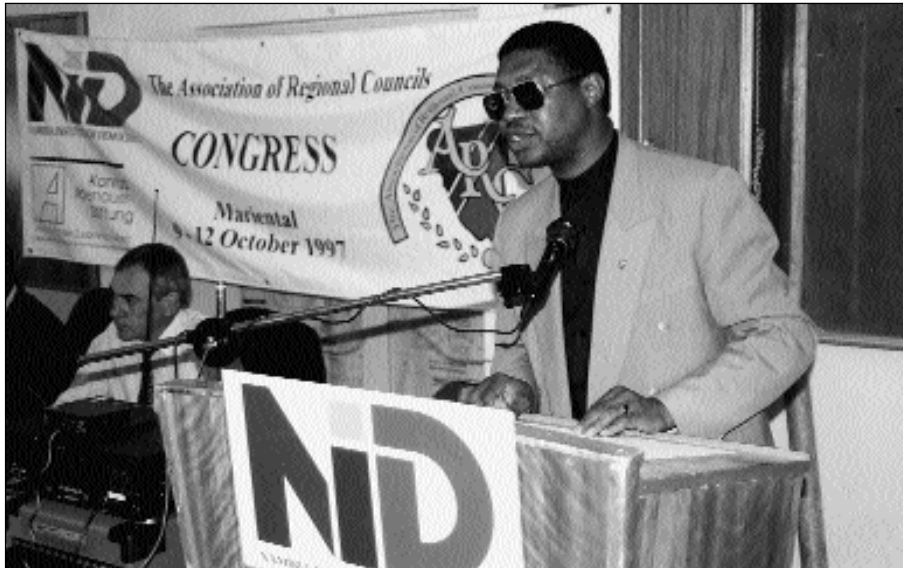
Government and Housing, the National Planning Commission, three representatives from the Association of Regional Councils, three from the Association of Local Authorities and from the Private Sector.

The Minister informed the Congress that the Ministry envisages building offices for Councillors in their constituencies and also to provide transportation. In conclusion, the Minister urges the Regional Governors to lead the efforts of mobilisation for the HIV workshops in all the regions.



DECENTRALISATION POLICY AS A COMPLEMENTARY PART OF THE RATIONALISATION AND REFORM PROCESS IN THE NAMIBIAN PUBLIC SERVICE

**by Isaac Kaulinge
Secretary to Cabinet**



Isaac Kaulinge, Secretary to Cabinet

INTRODUCTION

In this short paper my point of departure will be that Decentralization in Namibia is a pragmatic policy in its own right, but it is at the same time complementary to the Rationalization Exercise and Public Service Reform programmes that have been set in motion by Government since 1992.

I will also argue that although both the Regional Councils Act (Act No. 22 of 1992) and the Decentralization Policy (adopted by Government in 1996) are in place, limited progress has actually been achieved hitherto on the ground to articulate strategies in order to implement the policy and to take the requisite process forward to its logical conclusion.

1. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Newly-independent Namibia inherited a Public Service dispensation, which was divided between Central Administration departments and eleven ethnic Administrations in accordance with the then prevailing Apartheid policy.

The new democratically-elected government that took office at independence adopted a policy of National Reconciliation between all the racial groups in the country. In accordance with this policy, the new Constitution includes Article 141(1), which provides for a person holding office at the date of independence to continue holding such a position until he or she resigns or is retired, transferred or removed from office in accordance with law. At the same time government decided to promote Affirmative Action in public service employment so as to increase representation of the previously disadvantaged groups, mainly blacks, at all levels of the public service and private sector at large.

2. CURRENT SITUATION AND CHALLENGES OBTAINING IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

Given the two guiding principles described above, i.e. guaranteeing jobs for officials inherited from the colonial system and the appointment of Affirmative Action candidates, the government has ended up with a bloated and top-heavy bureaucracy.

At independence in 1990, there were 42 562 filled posts in the public service and over the years the size has grown up to 66 732, at the present moment (the total number of posts on the establishment stands at 76 958).

Expenditure on personnel grew in concert with the increase in employee numbers, and it became a manifestly dominant proportion of central government current expenditure, rising from 41,3% in the 1990/91 fiscal year to 45,8% in the 1997/98 financial year.

3. THE RATIONALIZATION OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE

Since 1992, the Government embarked upon the rationalization of the Public Service, which has been spearheaded by the Office of the Prime Minister. It

was agreed that steps would have to be taken to stem the further expansion of the Public Service and the related expenditure, to improve public service performance, to address the issue of duplication of functions and to consider the outsourcing and commercialization of certain functions.

Cabinet also resolved to freeze all vacant posts (other than teaching posts) directing that frozen posts should only be activated on the authority of the Prime Minister in consultation with Treasury. All appointments from outside the public service, other than in the case of highly skilled and professional groups, were to be frozen.

4. THE WAGE AND SALARY COMMISSION (WASCOM)

The WASCOM was set up by the Government on 18 January 1995 to undertake a fundamental review of the Public Service pay and remuneration structure. The Commission submitted its report to Cabinet in December 1995, where Cabinet approved it in principle.

The WASCOM Report has altogether 54 recommendations that mainly focus on:

- (a) The need to move away from the discriminatory system of occupational classes to a new grading system based on 6 grades;
- (b) New pay levels associated with that structure based on job value and personal performance;
- (c) A new approach to the calculation of benefits and allowances, most of which were to be incorporated in the new pay structure;
- (d) A fresh look at the size and efficiency of the Public Service in line with the Rationalization policy;
- (e) The maintenance of ethical principles in the Public Service; and
- (f) The need to improve management support for Ministers.

A Steering Committee which includes trade unions has been created to oversee the implementation of all the recommendations of the Report and also a technical high-level committee responsible for downsizing and rightsizing the public service has been set up to review each Ministry's restructuring plan and make realistic recommendations to Cabinet within tight budget constraints

5. DECENTRALIZATION AND WASCOM RECOMMENDATIONS

The promulgation of the Regional Councils Act in 1992 (Act no. 22 of 1992) and the endorsement by Cabinet, of the Decentralization Policy in November 1996, have set the mechanisms in place for effective decentralization to take place, but in practice limited progress has hitherto materialised on the ground.

In accordance with the Decentralization Policy Document, the appropriate guarantor for a functional democracy shall be people themselves making their own political and developmental decisions at their own level and the only guarantee for sustainable development can only be when our citizens participate in setting their own priorities, implementing them and evaluating these themselves, i.e. devolution of responsibility, power and resources to the levels closest to the people where these are amenable to their influence and control.

Decentralization is thus, a pragmatic policy in its own right, but at the same time, it is complementary to the rationalization and renewal programmes undertaken by the Government since 1992. It is in line with WASCOM Recommendations 35 through 39 which deal with the downsizing and rightsizing of the Public Service. Decentralization is part and parcel of the rationalization exercise in the sense that the hiving off of functions and resources (financial and human) from Central Government to the Regional Councils will go a long way in reducing the size of the public service as well as curtailing public expenditure.

Cabinet when approving the Decentralization Policy Document in November 1996, identified the following functions for immediate decentralization to the Regions: community development and early childhood development; administration of settlement areas; rural water supply; management and control of communal lands; primary health care; pre-primary and primary education; conservation; forest development and management; resettlement, rehabilitation; and Regional Council personnel responsibility.

Unfortunately, these noble intentions and commitments have not been met with equal enthusiasm at the ministerial and sectoral levels. The need has consequently been expressed by Central Government line Ministries for policy clarity concerning the magnitude of decentralization. It is evident that this perceived lack of policy clarity has contributed to the reluctance on the part of the line Ministries to fully support and drive the implementation

process of the policy.

As a matter of fact, the principle of decentralizing resources, together with functions, has not been satisfied hitherto and this has negatively affected and rendered the whole decentralization exercise almost impotent.

Another impediment is the serious lack of institutional capacity to implement the policy at the regional level, which can only be alleviated through intensive human resources training and development, as well as material, infrastructural and financial resources allocation.

Finally, there is a need to strike a fine balance between expediting the decentralization process and avoiding the costly consequence of creating 13 'Ethnic Administrations' just like the eleven (11) ethnic second-tier governments that were in existence during the colonial era.

Being an eternal optimist, I am very much encouraged by the relentless efforts of Hon. Dr. Nickey Iyambo, Minister of Regional and Local Government and Housing, and his team of technocrats, who have travelled the world and harnessed the global experience of decentralization, notably, the Ugandan dispensation on the African continent; his efforts recently culminated in Parliamentary consensus when adopting the unique White Paper to guide decentralization in Namibia.

The Government machinery, the 27 Offices/Ministries and Agencies must, at this juncture, seize this opportunity to synchronize and intensify their discipline specific decentralization implementation programmes and strategies to achieve the objectives set out in the White Paper, within the stipulated time frame.

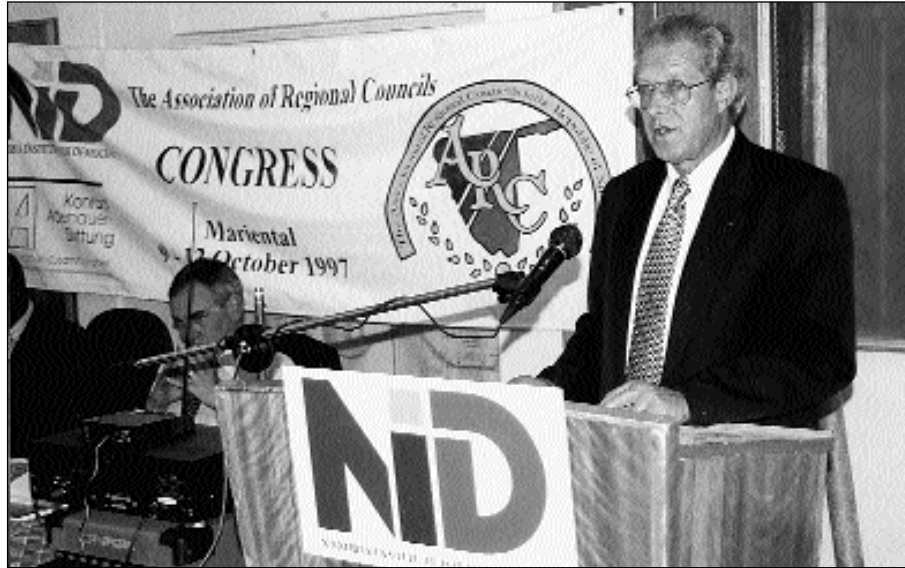
I should, in conclusion, like to place on record and extend to the people and government of the Federal Republic of Germany our profound gratitude and appreciation for their generous financial support to the implementation process of Decentralisation in Namibia.

Democratic and good governance is here to stay for generations to come.

I thank you.

MESSAGE OF SOLIDARITY

by Dr. B. Dobiey
Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung



Dr. Burkhard Dobiey

With great pleasure I welcome the opportunity to say a few words on behalf of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation at this Congress.

This is not just an empty phrase – I really mean it. I still remember vividly my first meeting with John Pandeni and Ken Howes at the beginning of the year 1995, when we discussed the formation of an association in order to further the interests of the Regional Councils in Namibia.

Although enshrined in the Namibian Constitution, decentralisation at that time resembled pretty much a sleeping beauty. The Konrad Adenauer Foundation did not hesitate to pledge its support for the intended association, since decentralisation is a priority on the agenda of our world-wide work. As a result, the Launching Congress of the Association of Regional Councils in Namibia took place at Tsumeb in July 1995, where His Excellency, the

President of the Republic of Namibia, Dr. Sam Nujoma, endorsed the aims and objectives of ARC.

This Launching congress was nothing less than a catalyst of promoting the interests of the Regions and their respective councils. One could virtually feel the enthusiasm and assertiveness of the Regional Councillors as well as the National Council when claiming to play their proper role in the political system.

Fruitful discussions ensued, and one week before the next ARC Consultative Conference took place at Swakopmund in September 1996, the Ministry of Regional Local Government and Housing presented a draft of the Government's Policy on Decentralisation, which included many recommendations made by the Regional Councils. The Swakopmund Conference welcomed warmly the new Minister of Regional Local Government and Housing, the Honourable Dr. Nickey Iyambo, who promised to co-operate closely and in a positive spirit with the Association of Regional Councils in Namibia.

The Honourable Minister has kept his promise. In the meantime, the Cabinet has adopted the final policy document on decentralisation and the discussion now centres no longer on the "ifs" and "whats", but on the question of how to implement decentralization in the most efficient way.

This short overview of the history of ARC shows that it has been a tremendous success-story. Since its inception, ARC has gone from strength to strength and is by now a powerful player in the political arena. Many people have contributed to this success, but I think some persons deserve a special mentioning:

- The President of ARC, Hon. John Pandeni
- The members of the Central Executive Committee of ARC,
- and last but not least, Prof. Gerhard Töttemeyer, who has accompanied ARC as a dedicated, knowledgeable advisor right from the beginning up to this very day.

The Konrad Adenauer Foundation is proud for having been able to assist ARC over the years, but I would also like to point out the strong commitment of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation with regard to decentralisation, and I

mention as a quite recent example the second edition of the most informative “Namibia Regional Resources Manual”.

Finally, I would like to thank our Namibian partner organisation, the “Namibia Institute for Democracy” and its Director, Mr. Theunis Keulder, for all the dedicated work NID has put into organising the ARC conferences over the years.

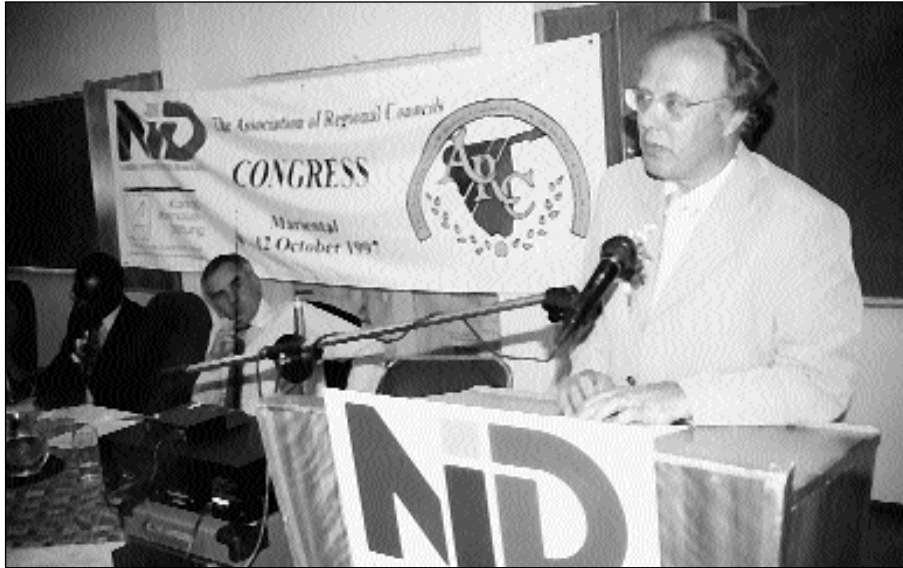
As we can clearly see, the success of ARC is the result of the combined efforts of many, and I hope that everybody will continue to give his or her support on the road ahead during the critical phase of implementing the policy on decentralisation.

As far as the Konrad Adenauer Foundation is concerned, I can assure all of you of our ongoing commitment.

In this spirit I wish this conference fruitful deliberations and excellent results.

MESSAGE

by Oddvar Jacobsen
Resident UNDP Representative



Mr. Oddvar Jacobsen

Honourable Minister Nickey Iyambo, other Members of the Cabinet, Governor of Hardap Region, His Worship the Mayor of Mariental, distinguished Delegates and Guests

Thank you for inviting UNDP to deliver a message to the Association on this important occasion of the opening of its first Congress. I was asked to brief you on how UNDP can assist the member Regional Councils in their efforts towards Regional Development and effective governance.

Before I respond to that request, let me briefly put into perspective **how** and **why** governance is now a focal area for UNDP.

As you will know, over the past few years a number of UN conferences have examined issues such as environment, social development, population, women, human settlements and food security. One common underlying

theme of these events has been what we call sustainable human development, and what appears as something of a consensus from the conferences is that in attaining this goal of sustainable human development, the single most crucial factor is governance. UNDP has been given the mandate of developing capacities to promote and to articulate the concept of SHD, with emphasis on four aspects, namely, poverty reduction, sustainable livelihoods, gender equality and environmental sustainability.

In our search for ways of fulfilling this mandate, we have arrived at the conclusion, perhaps not surprisingly, that the primary means to address these concerns is through good governance. There is substantial evidence to say that it **does** matter enormously to the success or otherwise of the development of a country **how** that country is governed, **how** authority is exercised. Development is **not** something that just comes around as a good fortune. A country may strike rich oil resources and become rich, or natural disasters may strike a country and cause sudden suffering. But development does not strike a country. Development in the sense of sustainable improvement of the living conditions for all its people, is closely linked to how that population organises its system of governance, by which we mean how authority is exercised in the society. By authority, we do not exclusively think of political authority, but also economic and administrative authority. **And** we are not thinking only at the national level – in fact, a very important aspect of what we call good governance relates to the extent to which authority is exercised at sub-regional levels, that is at regional, district and community level.

The reasons for this, I am sure, are obvious to you all as regional councillors.

By good governance we mean, among other things, transparent, equitable and efficient exercising of authority, and in particular allocation of public resources. It leads to mutual trust, respect and support between the authorities and the public. In this respect, regional and local authorities have huge natural advantages over national authorities in many sectors. The Namibian government has fully understood this, and is embarking on a policy of decentralization. As the Honourable Minister appropriately states in the introduction to the Decentralisation Policy paper, Chapter 12 of the Namibian Constitution, which forms the basis for decentralisation, is not merely an instrument for decentralising, it is equally an instrument to exercise democracy, to get people involved in decision-making processes and

participation **in** and **for** development.

GOOD GOVERNANCE

Needless to say in this forum, the Regional Councils constitute cornerstones in the building of regional development. The capacities of the regional and local administrative structures to initiate and implement developmental activities in their areas of jurisdiction are critical factors determining the success or otherwise of developmental efforts. In recognising this critical element, the Ministry and UNDP have together prepared a programme of support to the decentralisation process in Namibia.

The decentralising policy document identifies three areas where the need for capacity strengthening is particularly felt. One is the process of decentralisation itself, where the policy, implementation strategies and moralities will have to be refined, including the elaboration of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Secondly, the implementing institutions need strengthening of the administrative and managerial fields, and thirdly the need has been identified for technical up-grading and skills development.

The capacity building programme is meant to benefit both elected officials as well as administrative, professional and technical staff.

POVERTY

This programme is closely linked to another, separate UNDP programme of support towards poverty reduction, under which assistance will be given under the auspices of both this ministry, and other ministries for institution building at national level, but more importantly, support at the regional level, where most of the funds will be channelled. We have, in close collaboration with all the UN agencies in the country, selected one region, namely Ohangwena, for special attention, to be a pilot region for a variety of support from the UN system.

As you will know, development planning is among the primary functions of the Regional Councils, starting with the collection of data relevant to planning activities. With UNDP financial and technical support, Ohangwena Region has just completed a major collection of basic data from no less than 1 000

households. UNESCO is supporting another survey focusing on disadvantaged sections of the population in the same region. We expect that both the information, as well as the process of collecting it and eventually the analysis and the use of the information will all contribute

- to enhancing the capacities of the region
- to enable the region to exercise good governance
- to attract additional external resources to the region for development.

As a final message, let me summarise UNDP's commitments over the next three to four years, and how they will support the work of the Regional Councils.

We will have four programmes with the Government. I have already mentioned two, the *Governance programme* encompassing capacity building at regional level, and the *Poverty reduction programme* encompassing targeted interventions in selected areas, initially Ohangwena and Omaheke, and later in two more regions. In addition, we will be funding capacity building in the national institutions handling Financial and Economic Management. The Regions will benefit from better economic planning and support for regional economic planning. And finally, we will provide resources for the promotion of **Micro and Small-scale enterprises** in collaboration with the Ministry of Trade and Industry. Again, we will be focusing on the disadvantaged regions.

I see from your programme that your discussion tomorrow will cover the issues of poverty, unemployment and gender, all central UNDP topics, and I wish you fruitful deliberations and I wish that you would find the final solutions to these universal developmental problems.

Thank you.

UNICEF ADDRESS

by Nancy Terreri
UNICEF Representative



Nancy Terreri

Honourable Minister Dr. Nickey Iyambo, President of ARC, Deputy Ministers of Parliament, the Governor of the Hardap Region Mr. Boltmann, other Governors, the Mayor of Mariental, Honourable Councillors, participants and guests

It is a great pleasure for me to be invited to address this congress, as UNICEF has closely followed and actively supported the decentralization process in Namibia. As the United Nations Children's Organization, we attach great importance to the decentralization of authority and responsibilities, as children's concerns and issues more often than not are getting lost in debates about the national interests and the overriding national priorities. Children's needs vary from region to region, and from constituency to constituency, and we strongly believe that many local solutions can be found for their problems. The closer you are to the community, that is to the children in your

communities, the more likely can development programmes and projects be designed that are relevant to their needs.

I am particularly pleased that this meeting takes place in Mariental, as the Hardap Regional Council was the first to issue a Regional Programme of Action Plan for Children. This has been a very good start and I congratulate all of those who were actively involved in the discussion about its content and the drafting of the document. UNICEF is proud to be associated with the development of this programme.

Honourable Councillors, you as the political leaders and direct representatives of the members of your constituency, have great potential in bringing about change within your region. We know that the process of decentralization, especially resource allocations to the regions, has been very slow, and we join you in urging central government authorities to soon establish and operationalize suitable mechanisms.

However, there are many activities that do not cost much, but can make a dramatic impact on children's lives. For instance, when meeting with the members of your constituency, you can help to mobilize them to make use of available immunization or other services. Or you can encourage parents to ensure that girls stay in school as long as do boys, or to become active in school-boards and committees. Many nutritional deficiencies among children can be avoided by educating mothers on correct diets. AIDS has become a threat to all countries all over the world, and you as leaders of the communities in your constituency can play an important role in educating your constituents on preventive measures, and to adopt risk-free behaviour. Especially youths need to be empowered to make informed choices. Also, many communities have serious problems of gender bias, domestic violence, substance abuse, and child neglect. These are not the problems of individuals, but are indications of a possible deterioration of the social fabric and a loss of values. As the leader of your constituency, you can help to identify the underlying causes, and involve your communities in finding community-based solutions.

I would like to take this opportunity to share with you the text of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, together with the goals of the World Summit for Children, which you may wish to use as a reference when contemplating action for children.

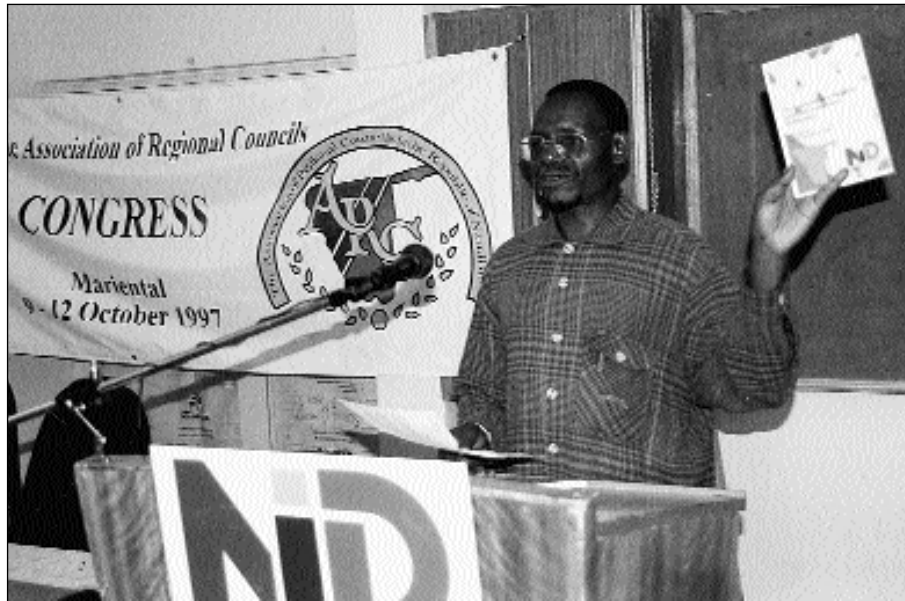
There are two articles, or rather principles, that I like to quote especially for you. One is Article 3 of the Convention on the “**Best Interests of the Child**”. Whenever you are involved in political decision-making or lobbying, please consider that these decisions are taken in the best interest of the children. And secondly, should it come to allocation of resources, be it financial or otherwise, consider **Children First**. I am sure that the communities you serve will appreciate and remember such commitment.

Councillors are the vital link between their communities and the Government services, so as to make sure that line ministries respond to their actual needs. But you have to know the social indicators of your community well. Only with factual information, and an assessment of the social conditions (for instance compared to the national average), can meaningful action plans be developed, with clear objectives and physical targets. With a clear outline of proposed activities, especially when aimed at the betterment of the lives of children in your region, resource mobilization from central government, communities themselves, and the international donor community becomes much easier.

UNICEF will continue to support the capacity-building programme for regional development and decentralization, and we hope that councillors gathered here will join hands in producing tangible results for the betterment of children’s lives in Namibia.

I wish you fruitful discussion and deliberations.

PRESIDENTIAL REPORT



The Honourable Minister of MRLGH, Dr. Nickey Iyambo, Representative from the Office of the Prime Minister, Representatives of invited Ministries, Honourable Governors, Honourable Councillors, Your Worship the Mayor, Councillor Alex Kamburute, Members of the Central Executive Committee of ARC, Regional officers, Representative of ALAN, Dr. B.K.H. Dobiey (KAS), Mr. A. Wehmhörner (FES), Prof. G. Töttemeyer - Director of Elections, Mr. Theunis Keulder (NID), distinguished invited guests, members of the media, compatriots and friends

Today is exactly two years and three months since the establishment of the Association of Regional Councils (ARC), a historical momentous time marking a new page in the history of the existence of Regional Councils in the Republic of Namibia.

Two years ago the beautiful copper town of Tsumeb was honoured to have been selected by popular consensus to host the remarkable launching Congress that led to the establishment of the very Association whose 1st Congress we are privileged to attend today in yet another equally beautiful ostrich town of Mariental. These two towns have things in common.

The launching congress was characterized by the commitment of member Councils in the Republic of Namibia to collectively build a bridge of co-operation and consultation between Regional level on the one hand and Central Government on the other, as well as forging ahead with proper channels of communications aimed at enabling the Association to best represent and articulate the interest of our local communities. These noble ideals were best summed up in the statement delivered by His Excellency, President Sam Nujoma during the official opening and I quote:

“In my view, the Association must be seen as a bridge connecting the Regional Councils and Central Government. It is therefore imperative that a cordial relationship is established between this Association and other Government bodies so that proper co-operation and co-ordination is made possible in the future.”

This Congress has been convened, apart from its constitutional obligation, to take stock of the activities and performances of the Association the last past two years and to lay the ground for the next two years or more for the process of Decentralization, Development and Democracy. In pursuing our resolutions and objectives as laid down by the launching congress, we were guided by the principles of seeking regional empowerment in order to effect development through community participation and involvement as a means to entrench and consolidate our young democracy.

In line with the above, this report is aiming at giving the Congress delegates an overview of the activities since the last congress as well as a critical analysis on the limitations that formed formidable challenges the Association faced, which I must hasten to point out, were met with vigour, courage and determination.

1. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The first task of the Central Executive Committee after the 1995 launching Congress was to elect amongst itself as guided by the constitutions members

of the Management Committee who have to be responsible for the day-to-day business of the Association.

The following were elected at the 1st meeting of the CEC held on 22–23 September 1995:

Hon. J.A. Pandeni (President), Hon. R. Hongoze (Administrative Secretary), Hon. K. Howes (Treasurer), Hon. N. Kaiyamo (Information and Publicity), Hon. S.P. Cloete (Member).

Taking the vow to face this rather challenging task on top of their normal responsibilities as Regional Councillors being accountable to the electorate and the public in general in their respective constituencies, these Honourable members undertook to underscore the importance of initiatives, creativeness and collective leadership in their overall approaches in order to ensure progress and consistency.

2. THE LOGO OF THE OFFICIAL LETTERHEAD OF THE ASSOCIATION

Implementing Congress decision, a community-oriented competition in the Regions was launched to design an appropriate logo as an emblem by which the Association will be identified. Many entries and proposals were received resulting in a certain Mr. Willybardt Moshili Negumbo from Oshikoto Region winning this exciting competition.

3. LAUNCHING CONGRESS BOOK: INFORMATION LEAFLET AND THE ASSOCIATION'S INTERNAL BULLETIN.

With the financial help from the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung a comprehensive and informative book and other useful materials were published and launched. The distribution of those have no doubt contributed significantly to the public knowledge about the existence of Regional Councils and improved our image from the earlier perceptions that were tarnished with all sorts of perceived fears, lack of trust and speculations over the role Regional Councils are capable of playing given adequate resources, useful facilities and competent human resources.

4. OFFICE AND OFFICE EQUIPMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION

The Association by contract agreement with the Khomas Regional Council obtained an office space within the said Regional Council's Computerland

building complex well-equipped with a modern computer, telephone and fax machines, cabinets and furniture through the generous donations from the FES. The official launching of ARC book and opening of the office was done on 23 February 1996 by Dr. L. Amathila – MRLGH. Our special thanks and profound gratitude go to the two foundations that have always been available and helpful when we need help. We definitely are at a loss to find befitting words to thank you.

The communications and the maintenance of appropriate channels of consultations and co-operations will benefit from these arrangements.

5. APPOINTMENT OF A FULL-TIME SECRETARY

On the recommendations of the Management Committee approved by the Central Executive Committee, Ms. Irene Marenga was appointed on a full-time basis with social benefits after a trial period. This was found necessary because the services demanded from it could no longer administered on an *ad hoc* basis.

6. OFFICE SECURITY

Appropriate security was installed at the entrance leading to the door of the ARC office. The tender was awarded to an informal small-scale business person from the formerly neglected area of Katutura.

7. HON. NICO KAIYAMO APPOINTED TO REPRESENT ARC ON THE NORTHERN ELECTRICITY BOARD

On the invitation of the MRLGH, Honourable Nico Kaiyamo was appointed to the Association of Regional Councils on the Northern Electricity Board. of which the areas of operation are covering Omusati, Oshana, Kunene, Kavango, Caprivi and parts of Oshikoto regions.

It is our sincere hope that the Honourable members from the involved regions will give him the necessary information and support to enable him to represent your interests.

8. OFFER OF ASSISTANCE FROM THE NAMIBIA INSTITUTE FOR DEMOCRACY (NID)

For quite a long time now, ARC's administrative secretary communicated to the regions informing them about this offer from NID pledging to render assistance in financing both Regional and Constituency seminars aimed at educating the electorate's and the general public on the vital importance of maintaining closer co-operation and communication with their Councillors.

Seminars could also be used for voter education. However, this generous gesture has not been seriously taken up by many of us as yet.

Again here it could be clear that our capacity seems to be limited in handling issues that could be used to benefit the electorate.

9. COURTESY CALLS TO GOVERNMENT OFFICES AS A WAY OF SOLICITING SUPPORT FOR THE ASSOCIATION AND SEEKING BRIDGES OF COMMUNICATIONS

The leadership of the Association of Regional Councils paid courtesy calls to the following:

- Office of His Excellency the President of the Republic of Namibia, Dr. Sam Nujoma
- Office of the Right Honourable Prime Minister, Honourable Hage Geingob
- Office of the Minister of Regional, Local Government & Housing, the then Minister Honourable Dr. Libertine Amathila.

Overwhelming support and encouragement were received and expressed during these visits.

10. JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED BY THE NATIONAL COUNCIL AND ARC

The terms of reference were mainly to discuss and exchange ideas between the two bodies on issues of mutual interest. A *technical sub-committee* is anticipated to work out draft proposals on the creation of the special regional development equity fund and how it should be administered. Exchange of opinions was also done with officials from the Ministry of Regional, Local Government & Housing regarding financing Regional Councils to enable them to cope with the process of decentralization.

11. CONGRESS RESOLUTIONS

As could be remembered, the launching congress adopted various heavy-loaded resolutions in 1995. This was perhaps understandably so because that congress took place during difficult times when more questions were asked of which many could not be provided with satisfactory answers. Many were designed in such a way that the readers of the records of congress deliberations could sense the seriousness of congress delegates preparing themselves to work tirelessly to provide as many answers as were possible. The reality of the matter is, however, different on the ground.

Congress should take note that the reflection of the implementation of many of those resolutions can be detected in the activities of the Association as its leadership was guided and directed by them.

In order to concretize my statement, may I refer the Honourable members to the content of the Decentralization Policy and its Action Plan.



*** Pension and Medical Aid Schemes**

The Association of Regional Councils ensured that due recognition is given to social benefits of Regional Councillors other than the Governors and members of the National Council.

With regard to the Medical Aid, deductions are already taking place after appropriate medical aid forms were filled in.

Deductions are also made with regard to your pensions. However, there are problems encountered since the beginning. Firstly, the deduction is one-sided, effective only from the side of the employee without the contribution of the employer. This is found to be very strange as the rules governing pension provide contributions from employers as well.

Another confusion came in again taking us back to square one, but the leadership should resist any temptation to deny Regional Councillors social benefit. If the Act does not provide for such, it is high time to make the overdue amendments.

*** Regional Development Planning**

Quite a number of regions made strives to establish Regional Development Co-ordination Committees (RDCC). Others have progressed well with Regional Development Advisory Committees (RDAC).

The Association was offered and undertook to send Regional Officers to Japan for training in Regional Development Planning. The programme could not be executed.

*** Training and Capacity building**

Apart from the Training & Capacity building as part of the process of decentralization, the Association's plans of a specific programme aimed at providing training for member councils and the building of our capacity should be supported to compliment Central Government efforts.

*** International Relations**

Contacts made with Regional and International leaders from countries dealing with governments at regional level were quite encouraging.

Invitations and proposals will in future have to be followed up to work out concrete plans and programmes.

The following leaders/organizations were met: President of the Senate of France; premiers from the provinces of Northern Cape, Kwazulu Natal, and Mpumalanga in South Africa; AWEPA (European Parliamentarians for Southern Africa); Delegation led by the Permanent Secretary from Uganda; Delegation from Botswana; and Malaysia and India study-tour.

* **Gender**

The Association was represented at the AWEPA seminar held on 7–8 March 1997 at the Safari Hotel by the Honourable J. Hamutwe (MP). Governor J. Pandeni attended as an invited guest.

This congress is urged to seriously discuss and resolve how to assist with the organization of involving and empowering women at all levels to enable them to play their rightful and legitimate role in the development of the Namibian society, especially now that we are heading for consecutive years of local elections to be followed next year by Regional Councils elections culminating in the Presidential and National Assembly elections.

12. ARC PLAN OF ACTION

A comprehensive plan of action was drawn up geared towards the implementation of congress resolutions.

13. WASCOM REPORT

The Association submitted on behalf of the member councils, comments and proposals on the WASCOM report to the Office of the Prime Minister. Copies were sent to all regions.

14. DECENTRALIZATION

Our contribution and participation as an Association of Regional Councils in various fora aimed at putting up a policy framework on the process of decentralization, remains an outstanding achievement. References can sufficiently be made of the following:

- Swakopmund Regional Consultative Conference, 19–21 September 1996;

-
- Regional Seminars on the role of Regional Councils in the process of decentralization:
 - Ondangwa, 17–18 July 1997
 - Tsumeb, 31 July–1 August 1997
 - Swakopmund, 14–15 August 1997
 - Mariental, 4–5 September 1997.

A comprehensive and detailed report is on your files for perusal and adoption.

In my capacity as President of the Association and indeed on behalf of all member councils in the Republic of Namibia, I would like to most sincerely thank the following organizations and individuals without whom the Association could not have made it had it not been for their financial, transport and technical support.

Our sincere thanks goes to the MRLGH, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS), Namibia Institute for Democracy (NID), Namibia Economic Policy Research Unit (NEPRU), Directorate of Elections' Director (Prof. G. Töttemeyer).

Allow me also to thank my colleagues, members of the Management Committee, the CEC, Governors and Councillors and Chief Executive officers who were always ready and available whenever they were needed. Special thanks go to our Secretary who despite strains and pressures stood calm and ever dedicated to her work.

15. FINANCE

The Association, because of financial constraints, was unable to recruit a senior officer who could on a full-time basis take charge of the day-to-day administration in the office. This congress is expected to seriously deliberate and debate on the issue as the administration in the office cannot be sacrificed.

The Treasurer will give a full account of the financial position of ARC.

This congress is advised to note attentively the line of operation suggested by the submission from different line Ministries for us to position ourselves

properly and how we could be involved in carrying out the devolved functions from those line Ministries.

Special attention should be paid to the time-frame and the manner in which those functions will be decentralized as well as the provision for training and capacity building.

16. DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS

The importance of democratic elections is so great that it cannot be left to the Directorate of Elections only. It is through elections that *legitimacy* can be given and ensured to those that are to be entrusted with governance and economic development. In fact, democracy can only have meaning if the majority of eligible voters are participating in elections from time to time. Taking government closer to the people is only possible when the local community is involved in decision-making of issues that affect their daily lives.

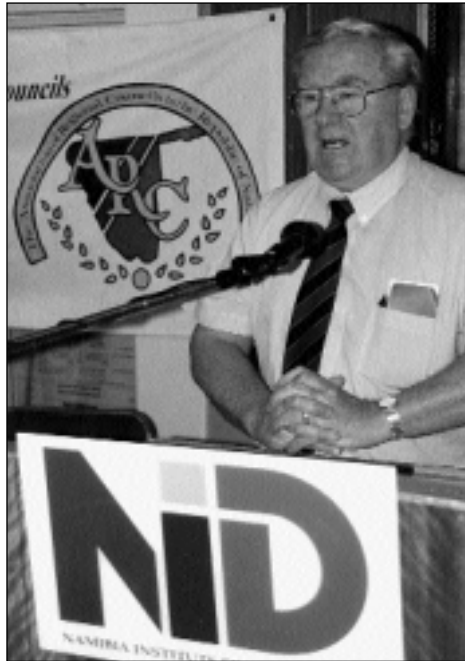
Voters education is a prerequisite of successful democratic elections. It is therefore the duties of all of us to ensure that our electorates understand and appreciate democratic elections and develop a culture of tolerance and acceptance during elections.

In conclusion honourable participants, this congress should leave no stone unturned when it comes to issues affecting our operations and the lives of our people.

I wish you all good successes in your deliberations and constructive contributions.

TREASURER'S REPORT

by
Ken Howes



Mr. Ken Howes

This is the first report to congress since our founding in 1995 and I have thus to deal with two financial year-ends, viz. 1995/1996 and 1996/1997. In 1996 I called for proposals from various Auditing firms and submitted them to the Central Committee of ARC and after consideration they appointed ERNEST & YOUNG as our Auditors. Similarly after quotations received, we appointed First National Bank as our bankers.

I will deal first with the 1995/1996 year-end accounts and you will observe that the excess of income over expenditure was N\$43 448,00. When the fees for 1996 were starting to come in, we decided to open a 32-day call account to hold our excess funds.

In the financial year 1996/1997 the excess of income over expenditure rose to the amount of N\$70 569,00. The call account was increased to hold sufficient funds in order that the interest monthly is enough to pay the salary of our secretary. This is still currently the case and I am sure you will see that the financial affairs of ARC are in a very satisfactory state of order.

The agreed basis of collecting fees to fund ARC was implemented by the Central Committee and as you can see we were able to collect all the fees from those regions that do have an income, we have written off the debts of the regions that have no income and thus you will see in our latest audited accounts the amount of N\$2 500 for 1995/1996 is written off. I suggest that the same policy be adopted in the 1997/1998 year-end accounts.

FUNDS AVAILABLE

The current account as at the end of September is	N\$ 25 857,25
The call account of ARC is	N\$ 158 213,40
ARC has thus available at present the sum of	N\$ 184 070,65

The balance sheets of the two years have been given to all regions and if you wish to see the full accounts please contact your Governors – I have merely extracted the Income and Expenditure pages for all members to see.

I have endeavoured, wherever possible to raise donations from various donors when we have seen a need to address an issue.

I would like to thank the Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation for assisting me in my task of making the finances of ARC stretch so far.

If there are any questions on the detail of the accounts, I will gladly answer where I can.

Thank you

THE ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS IN NAMIBIA
INCOME STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 1997

	1997 N\$	1996 N\$
INCOME		
Donations received	-	28 433
Interest received	112 231	1 576
Membership fees	-	57 094
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	123 980	87 478
 EXPENDITURE	 53 411	 44 030
Accommodation	1 182	-
Advertising	-	2 996
Audit fees	2 133	1 547
Bad debts	2 040	-
Bank charges	677	244
Congress	1 000	-
Fixed assets written off	-	19 331
Insurance	217	178
Interest paid	-	33
Legal fees	955	-
Office equipment maintenance	108	-
Prizes	300	500
Remuneration	16 693	-
Secretarial fees	5 035	4 354
Security, staff and sundry	598	606
Stationery and printing	979	1 856
Telephone	546	369
Travelling	20 916	8 161
Refreshments and meals	32	3 855
	<hr/>	<hr/>
SURPLUS for the year	70 569	43 448

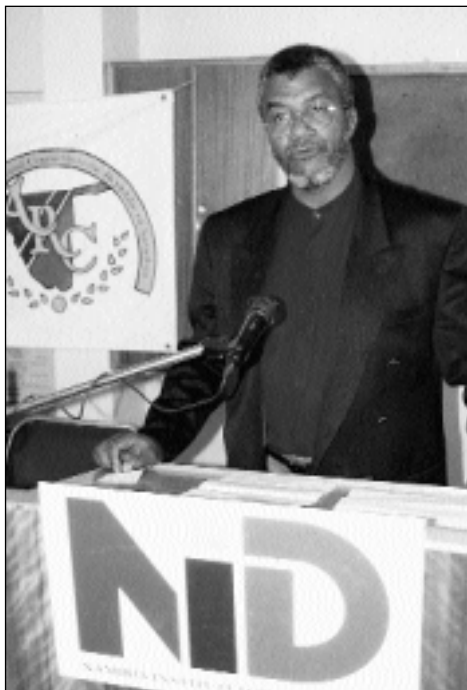
THE ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS IN NAMIBIA
INCOME STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 1997

	1996 N\$
INCOME	
Donations received	28 433
Interest received	1 576
Membership fees	57 094
Sundry income	375
	<hr/> 87 478
EXPENDITURE	
Advertising	2 996
Audit fees	1 547
Bank charges	244
Fixed assets written off	19 331
Insurance	178
Interest paid	33
Prizes	500
Secretarial fees	4 354
Security, staff and sundry	606
Stationery and printing	1 856
Telephone	369
Travelling	8 161
Refreshments and meals	3 855
	<hr/> 44 030
SURPLUS for the year	<hr/> 43 448

08/07/97	117	670	670			28528.62
09/07/97	178	115.5	115.5			28413.12
10/07/97	179	150	150			28263.12
28/07/97	karas/otjo			14208		42471.12
10/07/97	180	495	495			41976.12
10/07/97	181	4626.2	4626.2			37349.92
15/07/97	182	275	275			37074.92
	183	335	335			36739.92
	184	167.65	167.65			36572.27
	185	335	335			36237.27
	186	1980	1980			34257.27
31/07/97	int. credit			66.97		34324.24
31/07/97	gov duty	3.4	3.4			34320.84
31/07/97	service fee	105.59	105.59			34215.25
				Bank Statement =		34215.25
01/08/97	pension	350	350			33865.25
01/08/97	med aid	235	235			33630.25
06/08/97	187	495	495			33135.25
06/08/97	188	275	275			32860.25
	189	575	575			32285.25
	190	295	295			31990.25
	191	335	335			31655.25
	cheq book	6	6			31649.25
				1926		33575.25
	192	275			275	33575.25
	193	335	335			33240.25
	194	1462	1462			31778.25
	195	120			120	31778.25
	196	27			27	31778.25
	197	700	700			31078.25
	198	450	450			30628.25
	199	77.1			77.1	30628.25
	200	120			120	30628.25
31/08/97	interest			91.04		30719.29
31/08/97	gov duty	2.2	2.2			30717.09
31/08/97	service fee	74.63	74.63			30642.46
				Bank Statement =		30642.46
01/09/97	pension	350.00	350.00			30292.46
01/09/97	med aid	235.00	235.00			30057.46
06/09/97	192	275.00	275.00			29782.46
08/09/97	199	77.10	77.10			29705.36
08/09/97	200	120.00	120.00			29585.36
08/09/97	195	120.00	120.00			29465.36
12/09/97	201	651.81	651.81			28813.55
09/09/97	202	335.00	335.00			28478.55
23/09/97	203	335.00	335.00			28143.55
30/09/97	204	1462.00	1462.00			26681.55
	205	120.00			120.00	26681.55
	206	45.01			45.01	26681.55
	207	150.17			150.17	26681.55
27/09/97	208	335.00	335.00			26346.55
27/09/97	209	490.00	490.00			25856.55
30/09/97	interest			74.38		25930.93
30/09/97	gov duty	2.4	2.4			25928.53
30/09/97	service fee	71.28	71.28			25857.25
30/09/97				Bank Statement =		25857.25

ADDRESS

by Hon. R.B. Kukuri
Deputy Minister of Finance



Hon. R.B. Kukuri

Cde Chairman, Honourable
Colleagues, Distinguished
Participants, Ladies and
Gentlemen

I have been asked to address you
on the financing of the process of
decentralisation and to answer
some questions on this issue.

When we talk about decentralisa-
tion, and especially in the context
of this forum, we are inclined to
refer immediately to Chapter 12 of
the Constitution which provides for
Regional and Local Government.
However, the establishment of
such authorities alone does not
constitute decentralisation as we
have seen with the promulgation
of the Regional Councils Act,

1992. Full-fledged decentralisation only comes into effect with the transfer of
functions of the Central Government to the Regional Authorities. Moreover,
the transfer of functions goes hand-in-hand with transfer of the relevant
decision-making which is seen as more democratic.

Cde Chairman, I referred to the transfer of functions of government because
the National Budget is structured on the functions of government and if a
function or part thereof is transferred, one can go to the National Budget and
determine the cost for Central Government and then also transfer the

financing to the relevant regional councils. One advantage of such an exercise will be that the regional authority will have to render the service at the same cost as the Central Government. Although it might sound simple, I can assure you that it will be a very complex exercise. Firstly, it has to be determined which functions will be transferred and to what extent. Secondly, it must be determined how the allocation should be divided among the different regions. It cannot be divided in equal portions, because population and the size of the area among other factors, must be taken into consideration to determine a fair and reasonable distribution.

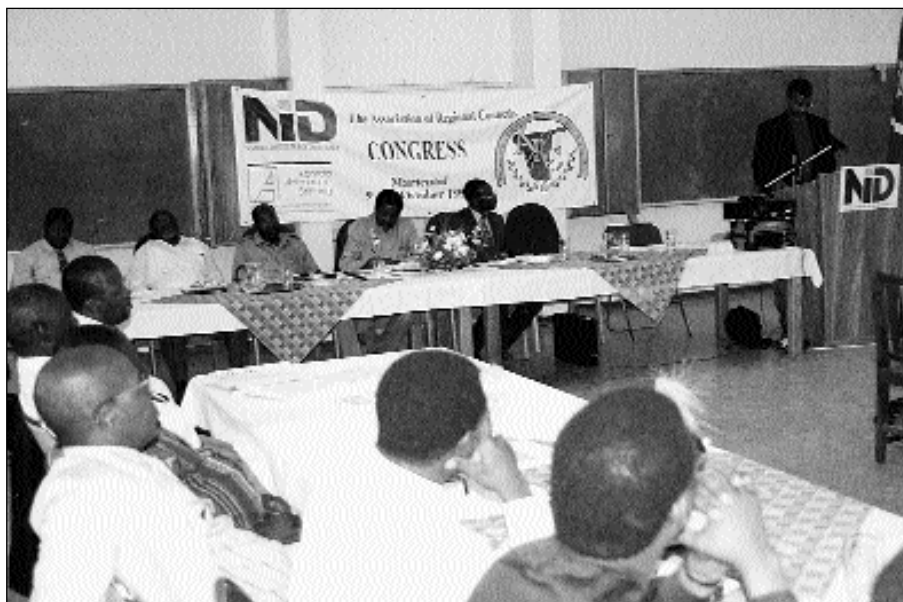
One of the questions that was put to me was how the taxation act would be amended to provide for financing of regional authorities. Cde Chairman, let me put it categorically clear that Government does not want to create a situation similar to what happened before Independence when we had the so-called representative authorities. At that point in time there was a provision in the Income Tax Act that stipulated that the tax paid by a member of a certain population group should be paid to the representative authority to whom such a person belonged. That provision was repealed because it was unfair and allowed certain groups to receive huge allocations while others received only negligible amounts. Should we now provide for similar allocations based on regions, the position might be the same because the economic activities and level of development of the regions are not the same. Regions with large population numbers and covering long distances will not necessarily get more money than smaller areas with higher per capita income and which are paying more taxes.

Since there is still no finality on which functions will be decentralised, it is difficult to develop a final formula for financing regional authorities. Initially it seems fair to allocate the budget to the regions based on the number of people in the region as well as the total area of the region. A similar system is in place in Uganda where 85% of the allocation is based on population numbers and 15% on the total area of the region. I understand that this system is working very well and I strongly feel that we should study this model closely. To comply with the provisions of Article 108(c) of our Constitution we will first have to see how the regions could raise revenue

from their own sources. Later on it might be possible to consider revenue sharing although I cannot see that this should be the only way to finance regional authorities for the reasons that I have mentioned earlier. However, it seems that budgetary assistance by the Central Government will have to stay for quite some time.

To comment on Cde Angola's remark on the State Finance Act, of course there will be a need to amend the Act to meet the decentralisation model. I hope that I have stimulated the thought of all distinguished participants for very fruitful discussions later on.

I thank you.



ADDRESS

by Hon. Marten Kapewasha
Deputy Minister of Lands, Resettlement and Rehabilitation



Hon. Marten Kapewasha

Master of Ceremonies/Chairperson, Your Worship - Mayor of Mariental, Honourable Governors, Honourable Councillors, Officials of the line Ministries, Distinguished invited guests, Comrades and Friends

Let me take this opportunity to thank you Honourable Governors and fellow councillors for having invited us to this important gathering – a gathering which I consider the first of its kind, and a gathering that will set the trend to similar gatherings in all other parts of our country.

Today we talk the issue of decentralization in Namibia as a constitutional guarantee of our unitary state. We in Namibia all agree that it is better to take government institutions to where the people are, that the central government should not be seen as paternalistic, and that the people themselves should be seen to govern themselves and do so within the framework of the constitutional guarantees.

I am sure, nobody in Namibia would attempt to refrain from that constitutional undertaking.

However, it would be foolhardy of our Government if no proper arrangements are done in advance. One should take note that decentralization will have to go hand-in-hand with responsibility and accountability. For one therefore to take charge of one's regional and local authorities, one needs to undertake a series of activities.

One major activity one should undertake is the area of training and orientation in the area of Regional and Local authorities. Such training may include such areas as finance, collection of revenue, management of Regional and Local affairs etc. However, because of our historical background this is not going to be easy for the mere fact that our development pattern has not been equal throughout the regions. Some regions like the Khomas could embark on its decentralization in a short span of time, while regions such as the Kunene or Ohangwena may take longer to get organized, financially or otherwise.

For this I would like to advise that while we all opt for decentralization, various regions will have to do that according to their own pace of development. On our part we have considered decentralization in its proper perspective and have proposed and subsequently advanced further the areas in which decentralization activities as regards our ministry would be undertaken.

The following would therefore be ready for decentralization in the short run.

Land acquisition: Regional and Local authorities will be empowered to identify land for acquisition or expropriation on behalf of the communities for resettlement.

Land evaluation: This function is quite technical and Namibia at present does not possess personnel for that. In fact at present only one land evaluator is available in the country. Much more training will have to be done before this aspect is decentralized.

Deeds: The aspect of Deeds Registration can and will be decentralized after computerization and certain training in property registration has been organized in regions.

Surveying: This aspect is in process and training for land measures is currently underway. Upon completion those people will be assigned to regions, as local land measurers.

Rehabilitation: The idea of Community-Based Rehabilitation is now taking root and communities are now being empowered to deal with such issues. Local authorities will be empowered to identify needs.

Resettlement: This aspect still has a long way to go as the pattern of resettlement chosen has no equal in Africa, and we have no lessons from elsewhere to learn from. But in the short run, chiefs and headmen in co-operation with the Regional Councils will be consulted in all aspects of resettlement in their areas. As it is outlined in our Land Policy there will be co-ordination between relevant Ministries, i.e. Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rehabilitation, Ministry of Regional and Local Government and Housing, Ministry of Agricultural, Water and Rural Development, Ministry of Trade and Industry and Ministry of Environment and Tourism.

However research, identification of potential settlers, and possible land for such resettlement as well as economic activities to be carried out, settlements would soon be responsibilities of local communities.

Land disputes: The Regional and Local Land Boards will be responsible for all land disputes in their areas and will have to be undertaken by Traditional Authorities as may be represented by members of the Boards in the area of their jurisdiction.

Honourable Governors, Colleagues, as we can see here, Namibia's democratic process is on the move and with time and proper preparation we must succeed. We must also be cautious not to allow disintegration of our unitary state through decentralization, but to solidify our democratic process by bringing Government closer to the people/electorate.

I thank you.

ADDRESS
by Hon. H.K. Angula
Minister of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development



Hon. H.K. Angula

Master of Ceremonies, Honourable Minister and Deputy Ministers,
Honourable Governors, Representatives of the UN Agencies, Distinguished
Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is indeed a great honour for me to be given this opportunity to address this Conference on the functions to be decentralised by the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development and the Draft Action Plan in discussion by the Ministry.

My Ministry, having a representative on the Committee of the focal persons on decentralization, was able to learn a great detail about the Decentralisation Policy which was presented to the Focal Persons, during the launching of this institutional structure for decentralisation at the Ehoru Lodge from the 9–11 April 1997. Subsequently a special meeting of management was called in May 1997 to brief them in full on what was expected from the

Ministry in terms of the implementation of the Decentralisation Policy. It will now be my privilege to present an outline of the principles which will guide decentralisation of the Ministerial activities on the basis of the guidelines given by the Policy Document as well as at the Ehoru Lodge Workshop referred to above.

It is my understanding that the functions to be decentralised have been categorised into those to the Regional Councils and to Local authorities, and that such functions be implemented within given time frames i.e. immediate, intermediate and the long term.

It is further my understanding that there are also all those functions that are not likely to be decentralised in the near future, which implies that decentralisation does not mean that all functions are transferred to the regions and local authorities at once, but that it is a step-by-step process, involving three forms i.e. deconcentration, delegation and devolution.

I believe that all these terms are familiar to all of us by now and that I do not need to define them. It is important to stress here that the Regional Councils and Local Authorities can only absorb given functions at a given time, considering their own human resource capacity and financial requirements. At the same time, Central Government still has to maintain a role in terms of overseeing implementation, co-ordination, resource mobilisation and monitoring and evaluation.

Having said this, Master of Ceremonies, Honourable Governor, Ladies and Gentlemen, my Ministry has agreed to follow a step-by-step approach to decentralise the following activities to the Regional Councils as a start. These will be as follows:

- Those areas identified by the decentralisation policy;
 - rural water development
 - emergency management (i.e. Food-for-Work Programme)
 - physical and economic planning (including capital development projects)
- Other areas identified by the Ministry which still need further elaboration and Action planning:
 - Agricultural extension
 - Food security and nutrition
 - Planning
 - General services

But I must point out that most of these functions have activities already being implemented in terms of deconcentration and delegation. Equally important, some activities under these functions will remain with the Ministry. The details of identifying which activities are to remain and which are to be transferred, still need to be worked out.

For the purposes of this conference I would like to concentrate on two functions which are in an advanced stage of decentralisation i.e. Rural Water Supply and Food-for-Work programme.

In drawing up the Action Plan for decentralisation, the Ministry has taken into consideration the guidelines compiled during the Ehoru Lodge Workshop which outlined areas of focus. The draft Action Plan for Rural Water Supply is attached for your perusal, but generally speaking, my ministry has concluded that the number of initiatives undertaken by the Ministry is at the level of deconcentration and delegation and that the ultimate goal of decentralisation which is devolution can only be achieved if the following conditions are met:

- legalisation of water committees
- transfer of ownership of rural water infrastructure from Government to the water committees
- amending the State Finance Act
- capacity building
- decentralised planning and adequate resource allocation
- agreement or compromise reached that not all functions can be decentralised to all 13 regions, but rather to the four regional cluster e.g. in terms of Agricultural Colleges.

Water is a pivotal point in our development, covering cross-sectoral issues and due to its scarcity it requires extra-ordinarily efficient and effective management regime. Thus, for the on-going water decentralisation programmes to be successful and sustainable, it is absolutely essential that:

- The Namibian society at large must be aware of this challenge and conscientiously participate in any process
- Proper structures and well co-ordinated strategies must be in place
- Capacity building and skills-development must be the central focus of this process.

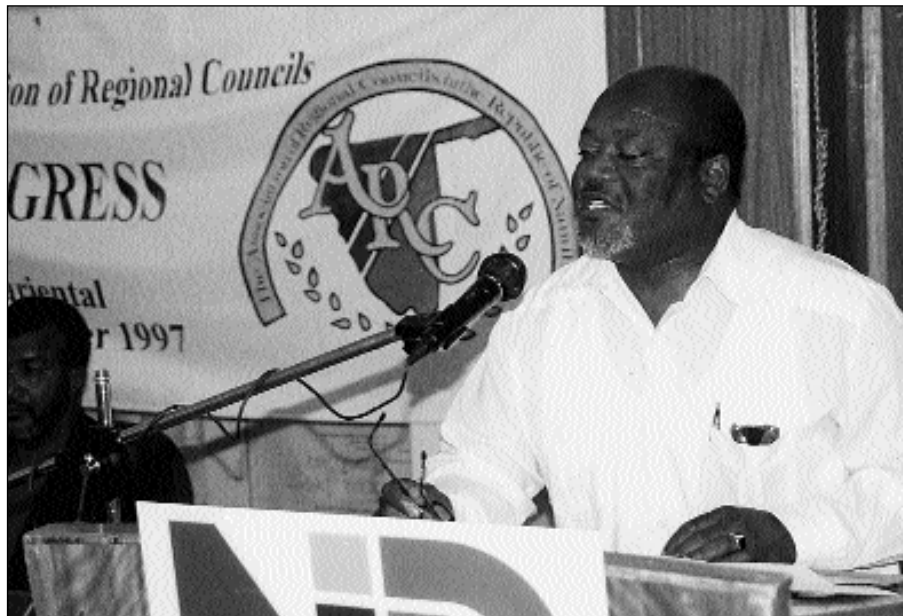
Recognising this enormous challenge, the Government has started to negotiate with The World Bank, UNDP, GTZ and other major donors to fund

the Water Management Review Programme involving all the stakeholders in this sector and this process is already at its initial stage of implementation. This effort is in addition to on-going programmes in this area.

Finally, Mr. Master of Ceremonies, I am of the opinion that focal persons for decentralisation should have met first to discuss various plans of action as it was agreed upon at Ehoru Lodge Workshop. This would have enabled us to present a more comprehensive and well-defined Plan of Action at this conference. But I am informed that further consultation on action plan development will take place after this conference.

With this brief presentation I would like to end here and expect further consolidation of this initiative towards the successful implementation of this policy.

Thank you for your attention.



Draft Action Plan for the Department of Water Affairs

Function: Rural Water Supply

Objectives: Community based management of water resources and sustainable rural water supply for human consumption and agricultural production.

Stakeholders: Regional Councils, local authorities, and Communities, line Ministries, NGO's and Private Sectors

Activities: Regional planning and budgeting and its control scheme, planning, management of operation and maintenance, construction and design, contract administration, rural water extension services and maintenance planning

Strategy:

- to ensure that necessary conditions and requirements are met
- to establish additional regional offices at Omusati, Ohangwena and Oshikoto which will imply increase in staff (i.e. filling vacant post, additional transport, materials and supplies
- Training in community mobilisation skills

Resources:

Available:

- n Personnel 710 posts filled, of which 662 people are already in the regions
- n Offices are established in Kunene, Okavango, Caprivi, Otjozondjupa, Erongo, Omaheke, Hardap, Karas and at Oshakati for the 4 Northern Regions.
- n Funds

Needed:

Personnel: 252 vacant posts to be filled if possible, or existing staff to be redistributed.

Offices: 3 additional offices to be established at Okangwena, Oshikoto and Omusati.

Funds: N\$15 million for 3 offices, N\$47.5 million for Training programme, N\$95 million for rehabilitation

Draft Action Plan for Food-for-Work Programme.

Function: Planning, Organisation and Management of the Food for Work Programme.

Objectives: To enable rural communities to have timely access to food for their nutritional well being, as well as to improve rural infrastructural development for sustainable agricultural development.

Stakeholders: Regional Councils, local authorities, Regional Emergency Management Units, NGO's the Private Sector, and line Ministries.

Strategy:

- Finalisation of the National Drought Policy and the formulation of a Strategic Plan.
- Strengthen the capacity of the Regional Food-for-Work Technical Committees chaired by Chief Control Officers towards the efficient management of the programme.
- Long-term employment of Regional Rural Development Planners, who are recruited under this programme.
- Adequate budget allocation on the basis of regional needs to efficiently run the programme.

Resources:

Available:

Personnel: 13 full-time Regional Rural Development Planners, recruited under a one year contract.

Funds: N\$5,5 million to cover food and non-food items, divided into 13 regions on the basis of poor households per region and the size of the region.

Needed:

Personnel: Permanent employment of the 13 Regional Rural Development Planners and institutional capacity, building of the Regional Food-for-Work Technical Committees.

Funds: A minimum of N\$10 million is required for effective implementation.

ADDRESS

by the Representative of the Hon. Gert Hanekom
Minister of Environment and Tourism



Representative of the Hon. Gert Hanekom, Ms. M. Kapere

The Decentralisation Policy for Namibia means the allocation of very important functions to the sub-national levels for identification, planning implementation and monitoring.

The Ministry of Environment and Tourism has conducted various meetings to discuss the Decentralisation Policy for Namibia under which the latest was chaired by the Honourable Minister Gert Hanekom himself: The structure of the ministry is comprised of five directorates/sub-directorates which are Directorate of Resource Management (DRM), Directorate of Environmental Affairs (DEA), Directorate of Tourism and Resorts (DTR), Directorate of Forestry (DOF) and Division: Special Support Services.

The Decentralisation Policy has identified some functions for the Ministry of

Environment and Tourism that are proposed to be decentralised to the Regional Councils as well as some to the Local Authorities. The functions are stated as Conservation and Forest Development and Management for Regional Councils and full responsibility for Environment and Conservation for the Municipalities.

The above-mentioned functions are very broadly defined and need to be narrowed down to more concise and implementable sectors e.g. community-based tourism, community-based conservation programmes, environmental economics and environmental information, research, etc.

If we look at the Directorate of Resource Management the various functions which are carried out at regional basis are Enforcement of Nature Conservation Law, Provision of Nature-Oriented Information and Environmental Education, Control over the utilization of the renewable natural resources, Commercial Farm Inspection, Butchery inspections, aviaries and other facilities for the keeping of game or wild animals, Trophy Manufactures and trophy dealers. Game dealers and skin-dealers control trophy hunting, etc.

Now the question comes: If all these functions are agreed upon to be decentralised for instance, are the regional councils ready to absorb them into their structure at the same time? And all the other necessary infrastructure and human resources back-up?

We also have the regional divisions which differ from Ministry to Ministry. They will have to be reconciled to correspond with personnel and budgetary mappings.

Our chief control wardens are in some cases divided between two and three regional governors. The process of decentralisation should map out clear strategies how administratively and managerially such a chief can operate efficiently and effectively.

The MET has surely explored the Decentralisation Policy, but the strategy for implementation is not that clear at the moment and this should be the area in which the lead Ministry will have to guide us all properly, with the full commitment and back-stopping of the Ministry of Finance.

Before I conclude Mr. Chairperson, with due respect, the MET recognises

and acknowledges the necessity of decentralisation as it strengthens democracy self-reliance and poverty eradication efforts. So are we also equally concerned about the role that human resources and expenses play in the whole exercise. The focus should thus be on these two aspects.

Finally, the MET wishes the Association of Regional Councils and the Congress all the best in its current and future endeavours.

May God bless you!

POLICY STATEMENT

by John Mutorwa
Minister of Basic Education and Culture



Hon. John Mutorwa

1. In the political context of Namibia, decentralization is a legal constitutional requirement, which should give certain powers and responsibilities to the regions' local authorities and other legally recognized authorities in our different communities.
2. The Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, as part and parcel of the Government of Namibia's organizational and institutional structure, fully endorses the view that decentralization as a policy is, in general, a desirable objective to extend democracy to the people at the grassroots level as their right. Through decentralization, the Government wishes to ensure rapid economic, cultural and social development. It is understood and appreciated that decentralization, like education provision, is NOT an event; but is a process which has to go step-by-step in an orderly and planned way. In education, we believe that decentralization should

ultimately enhance democratic participation and thereby improve flexibility and effectiveness in government.

3. Distinguished Congress delegates: Let me also state clearly here, that the decentralization of education in the Republic of Namibia, must be seen, understood and appreciated in a historical-socio-political context. You may recall that, at the time of political independence seven years ago, most education activities had been taken over by the defunct second-tier or ethnic education authorities. We had eleven (11) ethnic administrations of education in this country. The backlogs, disparities and divisive effects of the former system are still visible today, especially in the remote, rural areas of the former Bantustans or homelands. As the former divisive system of education was not acceptable in an independent, free and democratic Namibia, it was therefore one of the very first tasks of the government to establish a single centrally-located education Ministry and a national system of education.
4. Let me also remind you, ladies and gentlemen, that in as much that some people erroneously regard the previous eleven education administrations as their model of decentralization, it was not genuine/true decentralization at all.

Fundamentally, inequities, inequalities were decentralized. Hence we have today, well-resourced schools with well trained and qualified teachers and a large number of poorly-equipped schools. Why are qualified staff not ready to go back to those former homelands? To go and live there? The answer is very simple: those areas were never developed. These areas lack the basic facilities and infrastructures. Those are the inequities and inequalities that I am talking about. Such inequities must be addressed – and we are addressing them.

5. The book entitled *Namibia 1990 – An Africa Institute Country Survey*, reports on page 178 that: “In early 1986, black schools in the Ovambo reserve had an average of 59 pupils per classroom. In 1988 there were 14 white pupils per teacher and 40 Ovambo pupils per teacher”. It is therefore very important for all of us in education to be careful not to decentralize inequities as was done previously under the systems of ethnic education, whereby the resources (human, financial, material, physical, etc) were so unfairly distributed as I have just quoted to you. In the practical implementation of the decentralization policy, we must continuously insist on levelling the playing-field by empowering all our

people, especially the formerly disadvantaged and marginalized. We must insist on distributing all the national – including the human resources – fairly and equitably to all.

6. Although unifying the education system, the structure of the MEC, later MBEC did make and does make provision for decentralization even before regional or local authorities were in place. Currently, the Ministry's structure provides for seven Regional Education Offices, headed by a Director. In the current review of our organizational establishment, we are proposing that the seven educational regions be retained, but that there will be a Chief Education Officer (Deputy Director) assigned to formal education for each political region.
7. You may also recall that through a Ministerial directive in early 1995, Regional Education Forums chaired by Regional Governors had been established in each political region to bring together all stakeholders in education in the region. Similar bodies have also been established in many constituencies. Within regions, there is also a further decentralization of education services to district offices. Currently, we have the following functioning district education offices: Mariental, Gobabis, Khorixas, Opuwo and Mukwe. Furthermore, we have numerous inspectorate circuit offices and cluster of schools.
8. After a recent consideration of the question of decentralization within the MBEC, at a workshop held on 19 and 20 June 1997, we were persuaded that the next logical step for us will be, to decentralize functions more thoroughly within the approved organizational structure of the Ministry. This will entail a detailed definition of all functions of the Ministry. Each function will then be considered, to determine what duties within that function can be decentralized to particular levels. Such duties will include decision-making, supervision, funding, controlling, reporting, recommending, compiling, processing, co-ordinating, handling, developing and counselling. We plan that through closer liaison, planning and consultation, we will have to ensure that regional and local authorities are better able to fulfil their functions of co-ordinating and integrating development activities in their respective areas.
9. The MBEC strongly supports the Honourable Minister of Regional, Local Government and Housing's proposal of equitable resource distribution through the establishment of an Equity Fund, to especially assist those regions that have nothing or little in order to ultimately and successfully implement the Policy of Decentralization.

10. I conclude my contribution with two quotations from the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture's major policy document, entitled *Toward Education for All – A Development Brief for Education, Culture and Training*. "The most important influences on the quality of our education and many of the most significant resources for improving it, are located at the local level. As educators, we often focus on decisions and programmes at the national level. But in practice, it is our teachers along with learners and their parents, who really make our schools and other educational programmes what they are. To improve our education system and to upgrade the quality of our schools requires a good deal of work in our schools and communities. To achieve that, and to maximize the local contributions to our education system, we shall need to decentralize both responsibility and authority", (*Toward Education for All*, p. 168).

"Our people are our future. National development requires the development of our education system. We all share responsibility for that", (*Toward Education for All*, p. 182).

I thank you all



PRESENTATION

by Hon. Zedekia K. Mujoro
Deputy Minister of Health and Social Services



Hon. Zedekia K. Mujoro

With the adoption of the decentralised policy by the Government at the end of 1997, the Ministry of Health and Social Services started to seriously consider which services to decentralise, how and when to do it.

The policy itself spelt out clearly that the PHC services rendered by the Ministry were to be decentralised first. Other services, according to the policy would be decentralised over the medium and long term.

There are many understandings of what primary health-care is exactly about. Some people understand primary health-care to mean all services rendered at health centres, clinics, dispensaries and outreach points. Some other people understand it to mean all preventive and promotive health services rendered in health facilities and also in the communities. Other people understand it to mean preventive, promotive services and treatment of

common medical conditions inside the health facility, and in the communities. The truth is that the concept of primary health-care is so wide and is not addressed in one government ministry alone, but in several, if not all.

Housing, water, sanitation and food are all part and parcel of the primary health-care concept; and addressed elsewhere other than in the Ministry of Health and Social Services.

We in the Ministry therefore would like to transfer the management of some of the health services to the regional council, when there is enough infrastructure in the regional capitals to take over these functions. It must be emphasised right here, that the Ministry of Health has been anticipating the adoption and implementation of the decentralization policy for some time, since 1992, hence the creation on its staff establishment of health management posts for the 13 regions.

Most of these posts are filled and the occupants will initially be seconded to the regional councils to work for them. Later on, the people will be transferred to the councils. It, if course follows, that the other resources will be transferred together with the human resources.

WHAT SERVICES WILL BE TRANSFERRED AND WHEN?

It is our firm belief that the following services would be transferred within the short term without them causing a lot of disruption.

1. Services rendered at outreach points, clinic and health centres. This means transferring all the management of all buildings, vehicles, equipment and all supplies, as well as staff to the Regional/Local councils. The budgets of individual health facilities will of course also be transferred.
2. All promotive and preventive services: those could include –
 - (a) Sanitation: Promotion of the construction and use of latrines.
 - (b) Promotion of safe drinking-water.
 - (c) Promotion of personal and environmental hygiene.
 - (d) Vector-borne disease control including personal protection against mosquito bites.
 - (e) School health services.
 - (f) Special programmes like Aids- and TB-control programmes.

The transfer of the above-mentioned functions depends largely on the preparedness of the regions to accept the responsibilities.

According to the present Health Act, the Minister of Health and Social Services is finally accountable for the health of the citizens of the country. The decentralised functions therefore are delegated functions. It follows therefore, that the Ministry of Health will initially supervise (but not manage) the delegated services and should be able to take back the management of the services, should this be found necessary.

The Ministry intends also to decentralise the supervision of the distribution of state pensions to the Regional Councils. Since the councillors are in a better position to know the intended beneficiaries of the scheme, it is envisaged that the supervision of this function by the councils will improve the results.

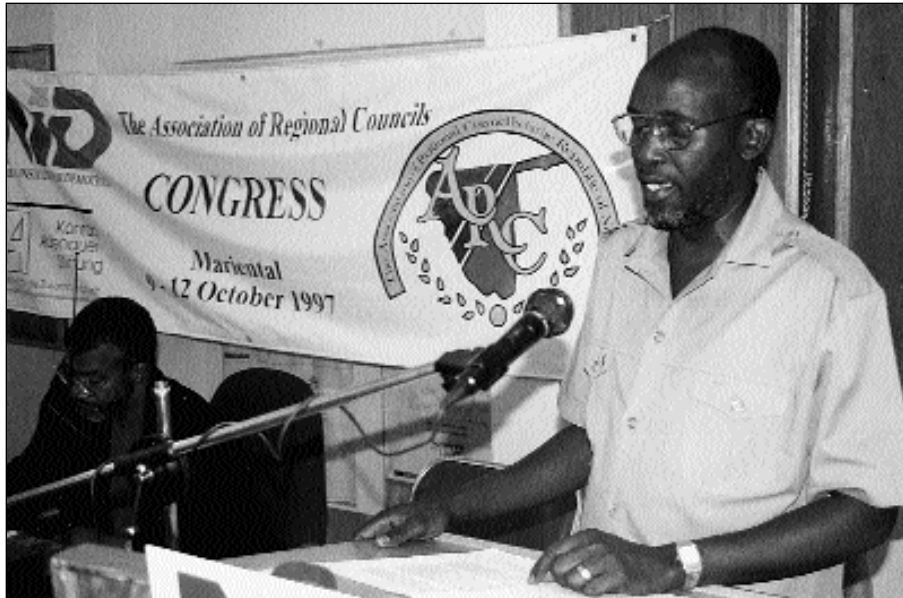
Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, my Ministry will decentralise other functions (services) only when it is satisfied that there are adequate management structures to take over the responsibility.

Clearly it is the intention of the Ministry to eventually hand over the management and supervision of all services happening in the regions to the Regional Councils.

I thank you.

SPEECH

**by Hon. Jeremiah Nambinga
Deputy Minister of Home Affairs**



Hon. Jeremiah Nambinga

Mr Chairman, Honourable Councillors, Invited Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is indeed an honour and privilege for me to have been invited to address this Congress which is specifically dealing with the Constitutional issue of Decentralisation. It is worth recalling that the Government of the Republic of Namibia has since Independence gradually embarked on the Policy of Decentralisation as dictated for by our Constitution. It is for this reason that the Ministry of Home Affairs, as one of the line Ministries that deals directly with the public, was one of the first to decentralise its civic services in 1993.

The Ministry of Home Affairs is a security one with two huge departments, namely the Civic Affairs and the Namibian Police.

Mr Chairman, you will recall that the Ministry of Home Affairs, in line with a Cabinet decision taken at its 3rd meeting held on the 29th of March 1993, began to decentralise its Civic Services in May of 1993, but under extenuating circumstances due to budgetary constraints.

I am therefore, happy to report that the following goals which were targeted have become a reality:

- (a) **Public need:** It goes without saying that every institution, such as the Department of Civic Affairs, exists to satisfy community needs. Prior to Independence, there was only one (1) Central Regional Office based in Windhoek with an outlet office in Ondangwa for the processing and issuance of identity documents, birth certificates, etc. Currently, efforts by the Department to decentralise its services have succeeded to a large extent with the end result that there are now thirteen Regional Registration Offices operational plus one sub-Regional Office in Ondangwa with at least six staff members at each Regional Registration Office. In spite of the above, however, the Department still depends on the Magistrate Offices in most districts for the performance of its vital duties.
- (b) **Access:** In order to ensure that services are taken closer to the people, the Department has been radically re-structured in such a way that there is a Registration Office in each of the thirteen regions thereby saving our rural people long travel distances, enormous expenses and untold suffering due to lack of accommodation while in Windhoek waiting for documents to be processed. You will recall Honourable Councillors, that quite recently the Ministry embarked upon the mass late registration of births countrywide and this exercise, with your assistance, was successfully executed.
- (c) **Quality:** As our Ministry deals directly with the public, this places a huge responsibility on the Ministry to deliver a service that will satisfy the needs and demands of the public. In order to enhance value for money in what we do, provision has been made for the training and re-training of our staff and supportive staff in order to modernise and equip them to operate as efficiently and effectively as possible.

There is no doubt in my mind that the decentralisation of Civic Services, such as the issuance of birth, death and marriage certificates, processing of

identity documents, change of surnames and completion of passport applications, etc., are being done right where the people live although the actual issuance of identity documents and passports is the prerogative of the Head Office in Windhoek. As a sovereign state we must not compromise our security and hence IDs and Passports are centrally issued in Windhoek.

The goal of the Namibian Police, as a National Police Force, is the maintenance of law and order in the country. It follows, therefore, that the Government's policy since independence has been to take policing to the people by establishing more police stations and satellites, including suitable accommodation for our police officers countrywide. Due to budgetary constraints, however, this goal has not been fully realised. As far as policing is concerned, it is true that many of our communities are rising up in arms regarding the escalating rise in serious crimes, such as rape of children, women and the aged, armed robbery and murder. On the other hand, we must be aware that these criminals are not aliens from outer space but live among us. We must therefore, declare a "holy war" against these criminals and wipe them from our communities. It is for this reason that Regional Councillors together with communities in your constituencies and the police must devise the modus operandi of gathering data on criminal elements by forming police-public relations committees or neighbourhood watch groups in your communities.

Indeed, when we talk about participatory democracy and empowering our citizens, we mean setting up a partnership between the police and the community in combating and eradicating crime. The community has a crucial role to play both to advise the police and to learn from them the best methods of community policing. This is a new policing concept that the Namibian Police is implementing with the participation of members of the public.

In conclusion, I have to state again that the Ministry of Home Affairs has done and will continue to do all in its power to expedite the execution of those roles that may be more expedient and relevant to the regions, in particular Civic Services and Law Enforcement.

I would also again like to stress very clearly that we must distinguish between the devolution of powers from the Central Government to the Regional or Local Governments and decentralisation of line functions from the Central Government to the regions.



RESOLUTION 1

Amendments to the Regional Councils Bill 1997

Appreciating the introduction of the Regional Councils Amendment Bill, 1997.

Noting with acceptance the implementation of ARC Launching Congress Resolution No. 1 with regard to the position of Regional Governor/Chairperson of the Management Committees of the Regional Councils.

Noted with concern the serious omission with regard to the position of Regional Councillors who are democratically-elected at Constituency level.

Congress therefore resolves that:

- (a) The position of the Governor as stated in the Regional Councils Amendments Bill 1997 be accepted.
- (b) The status of Regional Councillors to be recognized at constituency level.

RESOLUTION 2
Special Development Support Fund

Having realized the urgent need that Regional Councils require sources of income to meet their needs such as services and development projects.

Cognizant of the fact that there exist some inequities within Regional Councils in the collection of the 5% assessment rate from Municipalities.

Congress therefore resolves that:

A Special Development Support Fund be established to assist the development needs of our regions with particular emphasis to those regions that are economically disadvantaged.

The Regional Development and Equity Fund as proposed by the MRLGH be supported.

RESOLUTION 3
Focal Persons for Decentralization (FPDs)

- (a) Cognizant of the fact that all 13 Regional Executive Officers are key-advisors to the Regional Councils and to equip them better in their task, they should all be involved as focal persons in the process of decentralisation.
- (b) Realizing the importance of a task force and an action plan for the implementation of decentralization.

Congress therefore resolves that:

- (a) A mechanism of FPDs be strengthened by means of involving ARC and all 13 Regional Executive Officers.
- (b) ARC should serve on the Ministry's Task Force for decentralization.

RESOLUTION 4
Amendments to the relevant acts of Parliament
to enable the implementation of decentralization

Cognizant of the importance of the policy of decentralization in terms of participatory democracy and development to be brought closer to the grassroots.

Realizing that devolution of authority, functions, personnel, finance, etc. requires amendments to the existing acts and ordinances.

Congress therefore resolves that:

The need for legislation to enable the policy of decentralization to be implemented.

RESOLUTION 5
Pension

Having noted the absence of the provision of Pension for Regional Councillors.

Noting the fact that there are imbalances between the Governors and National Councillors on the one hand and Regional Councillors on the other with regard to pension provisions.

Congress therefore resolved:

To mandate the ARC leadership as a matter of urgency to take up the problem of pension with the relevant government institutions in order to insure Regional Councillors' participation with full benefit in the pension fund, similar to other political office-bearers.

RESOLUTION 6
Gender

Congress therefore reconfirmed its resolution on the Gender issue and pledged to do more in this regard given the importance of Gender.

GENERAL RESOLUTION
Social

Congress resolved that a workshop be organised to discuss gender, crime, unemployment, poverty alleviation, HIV/AIDS and Squatters.



The newly-elected Executive Committee of the Association of Regional Councils.
Back: Mr. K. Howes (Treasurer), Mr. N. Kaiyamo, Mr. A. Kapere, Mr. R. Hongoze,
Mr. P. Boltman
Front: Ms. I. Jimmy, Mr. J. Pandeni (President),