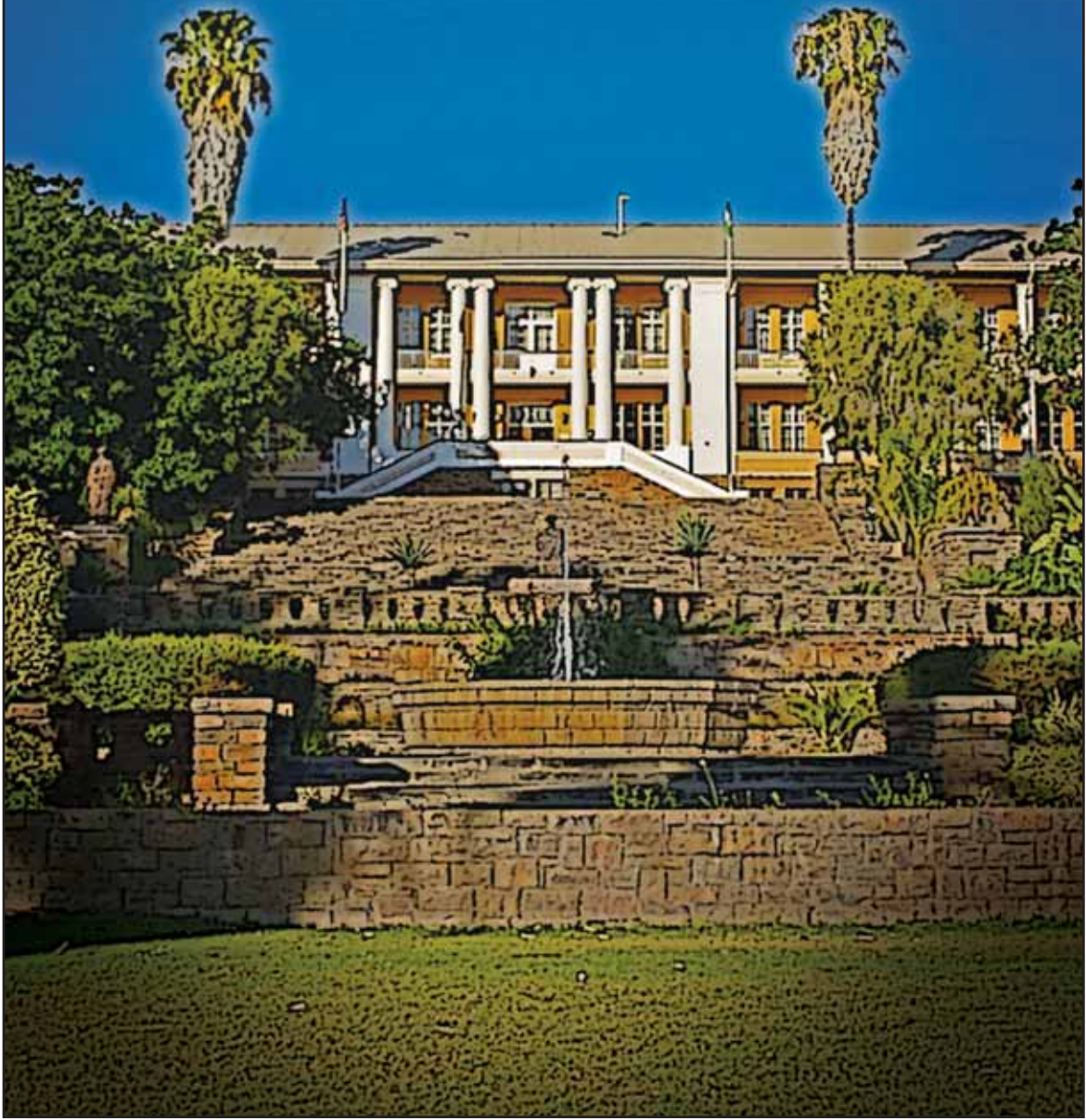


# Guide to Parliament



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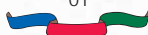


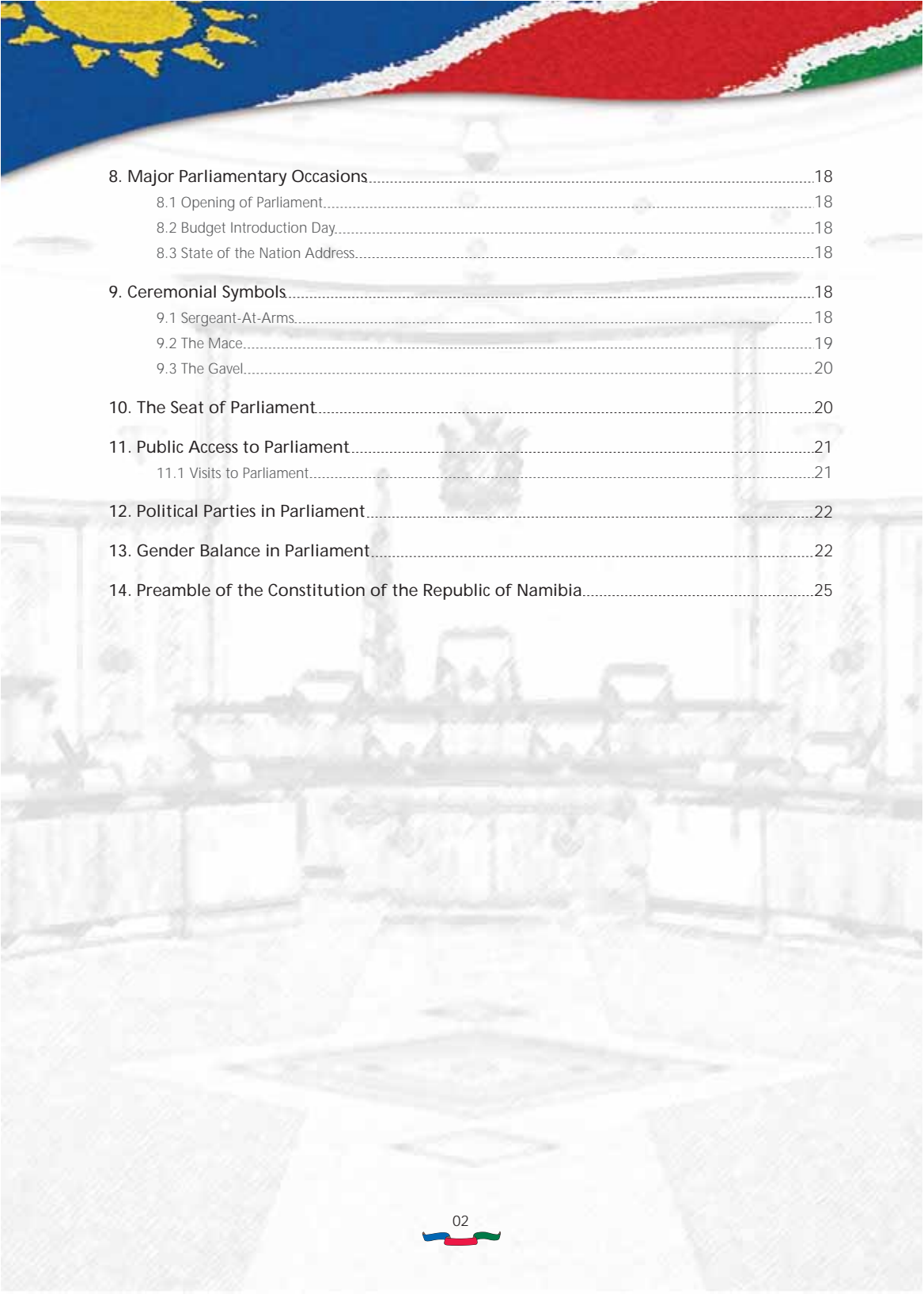
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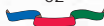
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## 1. Introduction

The word parliament comes from a Latin word meaning to speak. Parliament is a place where a nation speaks about its policies and laws through its elected representatives. It is a place where the words of the people are turned into laws for the people. The Parliament of the Republic of Namibia consists of the National Assembly and National Council, which are also known as the Houses of Parliament. Because Parliament consists of two Houses, Namibia is said to have a bi-cameral Parliament. The main purpose of a bi-cameral system of Parliament is that laws are debated by every interest group in the country before they are passed or thrown out. This limits the abuse of power and ensures that laws are passed for the good of the people.

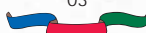
The Parliament of Namibia is one of the three main organs or branches of the State. These are the Legislature (law-making branch), the Executive (President and the Cabinet); and the Judiciary (Courts). Namibia was under imperial German colonial rule from 1884-1915 and under the South African apartheid control from 1915-1990. During this period, Namibians did not make their own laws.


In April 1989, United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 435 of 1978 was implemented, resulting in the first free and fair elections held in Namibia from 7-11 November 1989.

## 2. The Constituent Assembly



Members of the Constituent Assembly drafted and adopted the Namibian Constitution on 9 February 1990.





Following the 1989 UN-supervised general election, the Constituent Assembly was elected to draft the Namibian Constitution. The Constitution is a document that sets out the rules on how a country should be governed. It protects all citizens and our democratic principles. Democracy in Namibia is new. The people of Namibia struggled for a very long time to achieve democracy. Therefore, democracy must be protected so that no person, political party or group can seize all the power for himself/herself or itself and take away the rights and freedoms of others. This is why it is important for every citizen to know his/her rights and understand the work that Parliament does. The rules that protect our democracy are written in the Constitution for all the citizens to know.

Seven of the ten political parties that contested the 1989 election gained enough votes to share the 72 seats in the Constituent Assembly. The parties represented were SWAPO (41 seats), DTA (21 seats), UDF (4 seats), ACN (3 seats), NPF (1 seat), FCN (1 seat) and NNF (1 seat).

Although another election was to be held to elect members of the National Assembly, the political parties unanimously agreed to transform the Constituent Assembly into the 1st National Assembly.

The Constituent Assembly adopted the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia on 9 February 1990. This day is today known as “Constitution Day”, although it is not a public holiday.

## 2.1 Taking the Oath/Solemn Affirmation

All Members of the National Assembly and National Council are required to subscribe to, or take, an oath or solemn affirmation, administered by the Chief Justice before they take their seats in Parliament. Schedule 3 of the Namibian Constitution prescribes the following oath/affirmation for Members of the National Assembly and National Council:

“I, .....(name), do hereby swear/solemnly affirm that I will be faithful to the Republic of Namibia and its people and I solemnly promise to uphold and defend the Constitution and laws of the Republic of Namibia to the best of my ability. [In the case of an oath: So help me God].”



Members of Parliament taking an oath/solemnly affirming.

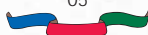
### 3. The National Assembly

The National Assembly is one of the two Houses of the Parliament of Namibia that makes laws.

#### 3.1 Composition of the National Assembly

The National Assembly is the larger of the two Houses of Parliament. It consists of 72 members elected on the basis of proportional representation. Here, each political party hands in a party list, a list of names of its preferred candidates, before an election. After the election, parties will be represented in proportion to the support they received. Voters vote for a party and not for a candidate.

In Namibia, proportional representation is worked out by dividing the total number of valid votes by the number of seats (72) in the National Assembly to get a seat quota. This seat quota determines the number of seats allocated in the first round. In the second round, remaining seats are given to parties with the largest fractional remainder. If there is a tie in remainders for allocation of the last seat, it is given to the party with the lowest total number of votes. The main advantage of proportional representation is that it allows smaller parties and minorities to be represented in government. There are six additional members, with no voting rights, appointed by the State President on the basis of their skills, expertise, experience or status in society, which brings the total number to 78 members. The six presidential appointees



have no voting powers, but are allowed to take part in the debates. Members of the National Assembly hold their seats for five years and are eligible for re-nomination.



The National Assembly sits for at least two sessions per year.

### 3.2 Functions and Powers of the National Assembly

The functions and powers of the National Assembly are, amongst others, to:

- Debate and vote on proposed laws (known as Bills), when they are tabled in the House. If the majority of members vote in favour of a Bill, it is said to have been “passed” by the National Assembly;
- Hold public hearings to gather the views of citizens on some Bills/issues being considered;
- Approve government spending, regulate taxation, consider the budgets prepared by various government ministries and pass relevant laws;
- Approve international agreements entered into with other governments by the Government of Namibia;
- Receive reports on the activities of government ministries/offices and parastatals;
- Debate issues and advise the State President on matters which the Constitution has authorised him/her to deal with; and
- Scrutinise the activities of government ministries.



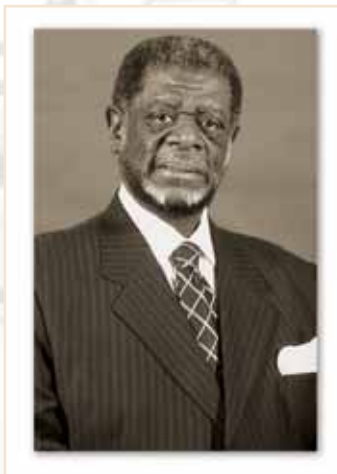


## 3.3 Presiding Officers

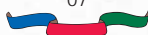
### 3.3.1 *The Speaker*

The Presiding Officer in the National Assembly is officially known as the Speaker. He/she is elected from amongst the 72 elected members to perform the following functions:

- To act as the spokesperson of the House in its relations with the State, the President, the National Council and other authorities outside Parliament and the Republic of Namibia;
- To preside over the sittings of the House and enforce adherence to the Standing Rules and Orders of the House for the preservation of order and the conduct of its business;
- To assume overall responsibility for the internal functioning of the House; and
- To oversee Parliamentary finances, present and defend Parliament's annual budget in the House.



Hon. Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab  
Speaker of the National Assembly



### 3.3.2 The Deputy Speaker

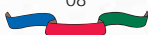
The Deputy Speaker is elected by Members of the National Assembly from their own ranks. He/she deputises the Speaker in executing his/her duties. The Deputy Speaker is the Chairperson of the Whole House Committee of the National Assembly.

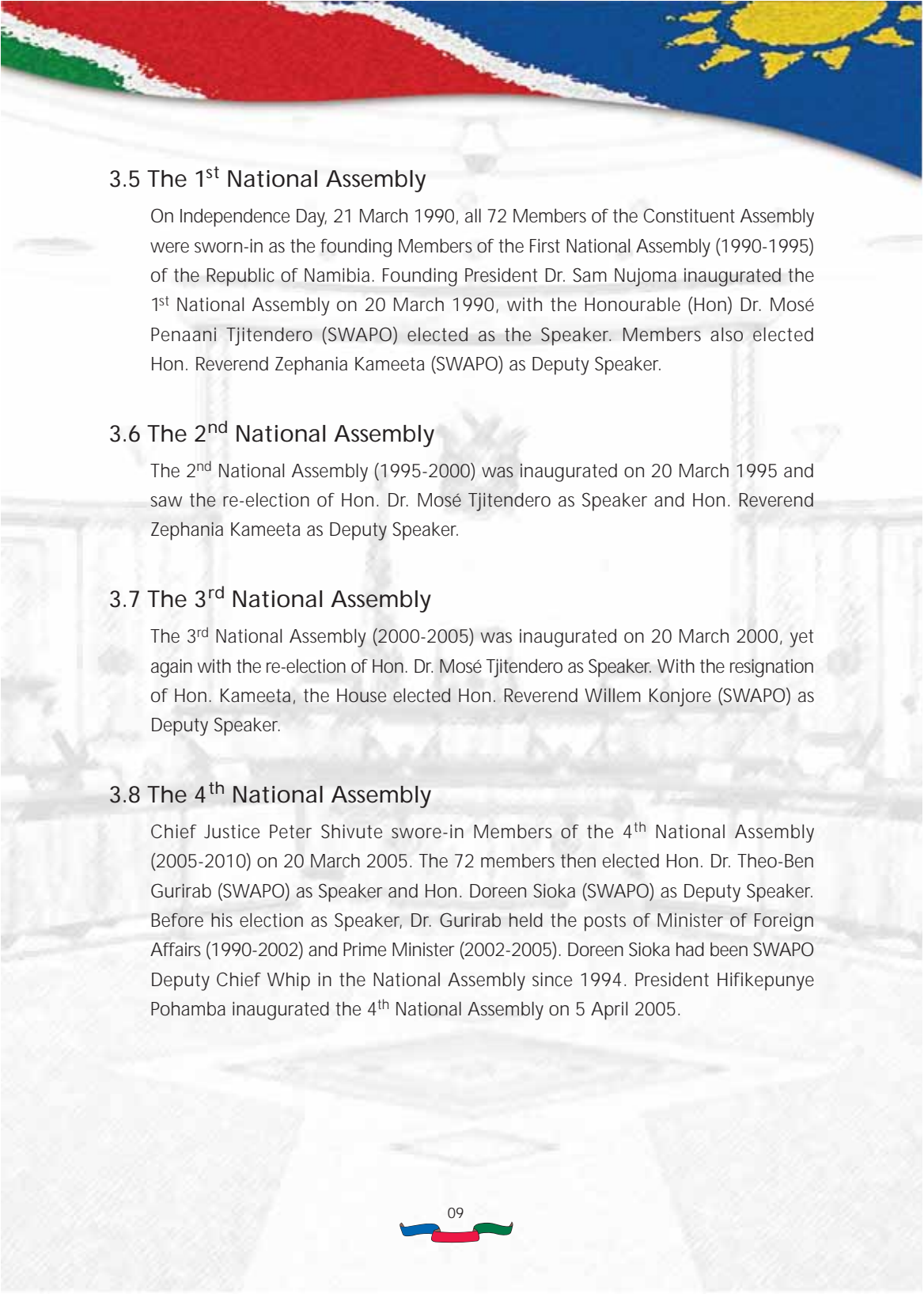


Hon. Doreen Sioka  
Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly

### 3.4 Sitting Days and Hours

The National Assembly sits for at least two sessions per year. The first session starts on the Wednesday of the second week of February and ends during the second week of July. The second session commences on the first Wednesday of the second week of September and terminates at the end of November. However, the day of any commencement of a session may be altered by proclamation by the State President, on the Speaker's request, on the grounds of public interest, urgency, security or convenience. Thirty-seven (37) voting members of the National Assembly, other than the Speaker or the presiding member, form a quorum.





### 3.5 The 1<sup>st</sup> National Assembly

On Independence Day, 21 March 1990, all 72 Members of the Constituent Assembly were sworn-in as the founding Members of the First National Assembly (1990-1995) of the Republic of Namibia. Founding President Dr. Sam Nujoma inaugurated the 1<sup>st</sup> National Assembly on 20 March 1990, with the Honourable (Hon) Dr. Mosé Penaani Tjitendero (SWAPO) elected as the Speaker. Members also elected Hon. Reverend Zephania Kameeta (SWAPO) as Deputy Speaker.

### 3.6 The 2<sup>nd</sup> National Assembly

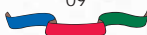
The 2<sup>nd</sup> National Assembly (1995-2000) was inaugurated on 20 March 1995 and saw the re-election of Hon. Dr. Mosé Tjitendero as Speaker and Hon. Reverend Zephania Kameeta as Deputy Speaker.

### 3.7 The 3<sup>rd</sup> National Assembly

The 3<sup>rd</sup> National Assembly (2000-2005) was inaugurated on 20 March 2000, yet again with the re-election of Hon. Dr. Mosé Tjitendero as Speaker. With the resignation of Hon. Kameeta, the House elected Hon. Reverend Willem Konjore (SWAPO) as Deputy Speaker.

### 3.8 The 4<sup>th</sup> National Assembly

Chief Justice Peter Shivute swore-in Members of the 4<sup>th</sup> National Assembly (2005-2010) on 20 March 2005. The 72 members then elected Hon. Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab (SWAPO) as Speaker and Hon. Doreen Sioka (SWAPO) as Deputy Speaker. Before his election as Speaker, Dr. Gurirab held the posts of Minister of Foreign Affairs (1990-2002) and Prime Minister (2002-2005). Doreen Sioka had been SWAPO Deputy Chief Whip in the National Assembly since 1994. President Hifikepunye Pohamba inaugurated the 4<sup>th</sup> National Assembly on 5 April 2005.



## 4. The National Council

The National Council reviews all Bills passed by the National Assembly. The review of legislation is one of its main functions.

### 4.1 Composition of the National Council

The National Council consists of 26 members. Each of the 13 political regions nominates two councilors from its Regional Council to become Members of the National Council, where they represent their respective regions. They hold their seats for six years and are eligible for re-election.

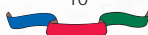


Members of the Youth Parliament in session in the National Council Chamber.

### 4.2 Functions and Powers of the National Council

The functions and powers of the National Council are, amongst others, to:

- Review all Bills passed by the National Assembly;
- Propose amendments and object/agree to the principle of a Bill;
- Investigate and report on any subordinate legislation, reports and documents sent to it by the National Assembly for advice;
- Recommend legislation on matters of regional concern for submission to, and consideration by, the National Assembly; and
- Perform any functions assigned to it by the National Assembly or by an Act of Parliament.





## 4.3 Presiding Officers

### 4.3.1 The Chairperson

The Presiding Officer in the National Council is officially known as the Chairperson. He/she is elected from amongst the 26 Members of the National Council to perform the following duties:

- Chair all sessions of the National Council and preside over all meetings of the Steering Committee;
- Oversee the finances, administration and policy guidelines of the National Council and its select and standing committees;
- Ensure the implementation of decisions and directives of the National Council; and
- Provide a link between the National Council and Government Offices, Ministries, Agencies, other institutions and organizations.



Hon. Asser Kuveri Kapere  
Chairperson of the National Council



#### 4.3.2 The Vice-Chairperson

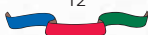
The Vice-Chairperson of the National Council is elected by the National Council from amongst its Members. In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson presides over sessions of the National Council.



Hon. Margaret Mensah-Williams  
Vice-Chairperson of the National Council

#### 4.4. Sitting Days and Hours

The sittings of the National Council sometimes run concurrently with those of the National Assembly for as long as it is necessary to complete its functions. Except for public holidays and unless otherwise decided, the National Council sits from Mondays to Thursdays (09:00-13:00). There are no sittings on Fridays. The Chairperson of the National Council may determine dates for special sittings. In consultation with Members of the Steering Committee, the Chairperson sets the commencement and termination dates of each session of the Council. Fourteen (14) Members of the Council form a quorum. Unless otherwise provided for in the Constitution, all questions in the Council are determined by a majority of the votes of Council Members, excluding the Chairperson or any other presiding member. In the event of equal votes, the Chairperson or any other presiding member has the right to exercise a casting vote.





## 4.5 The 1<sup>st</sup> National Council

The first National Council (1992-1998) was inaugurated on 23 February 1993, following the first Regional Council elections held from 30 November to 3 December 1992. The Chairperson of the 1<sup>st</sup> National Council was Hon. Kandy Hinananye Nehova (SWAPO) from the Oshana Region, with Hon. Zedekia Mujoro (SWAPO) from the Erongo Region serving as Vice-Chairperson.

## 4.6 The 2<sup>nd</sup> National Council

The 2<sup>nd</sup> National Council (1998-2004) saw the re-election of Hon. Kandy Nehova as Chairperson. Hon. Margaret Natalia Mensah (SWAPO) from the Khomas Region was elected Vice-Chairperson. Members of the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Council were sworn in on 15 February 1999.

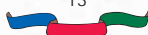
## 4.7 The 3<sup>rd</sup> National Council


Members of the 3<sup>rd</sup> National Council (2004-2010) elected Hon. Asser Kuveri Kapere (SWAPO) from the Erongo Region as Chairperson. Hon. Margaret Natalia Mensah-Williams was re-elected Vice-Chairperson. Chief Justice Peter Shivute swore-in Members of the 3<sup>rd</sup> National Council on 16 December 2004.

# 5. The Law-Making Process

## 5.1 Where Bills Originate

Legislation in Namibia is initiated by government, either through line ministries and government offices or through the Law Reform and Development Commission (LRDC). In such cases, the draft Bill or policy initiative is presented to and discussed by the Cabinet. Cabinet can instruct a line ministry to draft a legislative proposal on an issue that a particular government policy seeks to address. The draft proposal is then submitted to the Cabinet Committee on Legislation (CCL), which prepares it for consideration and approval by the whole Cabinet. When Cabinet approves it, it is sent to the Minister of Justice and Attorney-General to certify that the Bill meets all constitutional requirements. Once certified, the Bill is submitted, through the Secretary to the National Assembly, for tabling in the National Assembly.





Bills can also be proposed by Members of Parliament in their individual capacity. This is known as a Private Member's Bill. A Private Member's Bill is introduced by a Member of Parliament who is neither a minister, nor holds any other government portfolio. One-third of the members present must support the motion that introduces such a Bill.

## 5.2 Bills in the National Assembly

Government Bills are tabled in the National Assembly by the Prime Minister, or by the Minister or Deputy Minister of the Ministry responsible for the proposed legislation. The first stage in a Bill's passage through the Assembly is called the *First Reading*. Only the title of the Bill is read and no debate takes place. The Bill is laid on the table and becomes a public document.

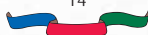
At the *Second Reading*, the Minister introduces the Bill, outlining its purpose and thereafter the debate starts. During the Second Reading, Members may raise any issue generally associated with the Bill. If any Member objects to the principle of the Bill, the objection must be made at this stage.

After the Second Reading, the Bill goes to the *Committee Stage*. The House may resolve to sit as a *Committee of the Whole House*, or refer the Bill to a *standing or select committee*. If the Whole House Committee convenes, the Speaker leaves the Chamber and the Deputy Speaker takes the chair. If the Deputy Speaker is not available, the House appoints a Chairperson – usually the Chief Whip of the majority party. During the Committee Stage, the details of the Bill are considered clause by clause and amendments to the Bill can be suggested.

After the Committee Stage, the Bill is read for the third and last time. Usually no debate takes place at the *Third Reading*. After the Bill has been read for the third time it is considered to have been passed by the National Assembly. A Bill lapses if any of its reading is not seconded.

## 5.3 Bills in the National Council

After a Bill has been passed by the National Assembly, it is referred to the National Council for review. The National Council may suggest amendments to any Bill. The legislative stages followed in the National Council are the same as those in the National Assembly. If the National Council passes the Bill with amendments, it





goes back to the National Assembly for further discussion. However, the National Assembly is not compelled to adopt the amendments proposed by the National Council. If, after reconsideration, two-thirds of the Members of the National Assembly reject the amendments of the National Council, the proposed amendments are left out of the final legislation.

The National Council has up to three months to deal with most Bills. However, it must deal with Bills on levying of taxes or appropriation of public moneys within 30 days of the Bill being referred to it by the National Assembly.

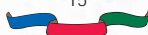
Should the National Council fail to comply with the time limit, it is considered to have confirmed such a Bill. The Speaker of the National Assembly then refers such a Bill to the State President for his assent (signature of approval).


#### 5.4 Parliamentary Committees



A Parliamentary Committee is assigned to deal with a particular matter before the house.

Parliamentary committees in the National Assembly and National Council have an important role of scrutinising Bills and the work of the Executive as well as consulting with the public. In some instances, a special committee (*select committee*) is established to deal with a particular matter before the House. Once a select committee has fulfilled its task and reported to the House, it is dissolved.





The primary purpose of committees is to conduct work in detail. They are announced by the Speaker/Chairperson. All the Members, excluding Ministers and Deputy Ministers, serve on committees. The Speaker and the Chairperson are members of certain committees.

Parliamentary committees also oversee the activities of different ministries in the Executive Branch of Government. Hence, the Accounting Officers and senior officials of ministries are required to brief members of committees on their activities when so required.

## 5.5 Public Hearings

Public Hearings are organised by parliamentary committees to solicit the views and opinions of interest groups and the general public on a specific piece of legislation or any other matter before the House. Public Hearings are usually held at various venues throughout the country to give the public a fair chance to be heard.

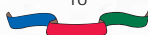
The dates and venues of Public Hearings are always announced through the media. Persons who wish to make statements or representations at Public Hearings are encouraged to do so in writing or verbally, so that their views are accurately recorded.


## 5.6 Signing a Bill into a Law

After reconsideration by the National Assembly, the Bill is sent to the State President for his/her assent. If the Bill is passed by a two-thirds majority of all the Members of the National Assembly and also confirmed by the National Council, the President is obliged to give his/her assent (agreement). A Bill passed by Parliament only becomes a law, or an Act of Parliament, once it has been signed by the President and published in the Government Gazette. This is called the promulgation of an Act.

Where a Bill has been passed by less than a two-thirds majority of the National Assembly and confirmed by the National Council, but the President refuses to assent to it, the President must communicate his/her dissent to the Speaker. The Bill is then referred back to the National Assembly.

The National Assembly can reconsider a Bill referred back by the President and pass it as it is, pass it with amendments, or not pass it at all. If the Bill is again passed by the National Assembly, it does not require further confirmation by the National Council. However, if the Bill is passed by less than two-thirds majority of the Assembly,





the President may withhold his/her assent, in which case the Bill will lapse and not become a law.

The Minister of Justice and Attorney-General can also refer a Bill to a competent court for an opinion on its constitutionality. If the court rules that the Bill conflicts with the Constitution, it cannot become a law.

## 6. Party Whips

Each political party or organisation represented in parliament is required to designate a member, referred to as a whip, to deal with matters affecting that party or organization in Parliament. Political parties or organisations elect/nominate or appoint their respective Party Whips.

## 7. Administration of Parliament

The Secretary to the National Assembly and the Secretary to the National Council head the administration at the Parliament of Namibia. The two Secretaries are the chief administrators and accounting officers of their respective institutions. They are assisted in their duties by the administrative staff from the various directorates and divisions of the two institutions.

The Secretaries manage the day-to-day affairs of the National Assembly and the National Council. They perform their functions under the supervision of the Speaker or Chairperson. The Secretaries are assisted by Deputy Secretaries. The overall efficiency and performance of the parliament administration depends on the leadership skills of these officials.

The main functions of the Secretary are to:

- Exercise financial and administrative control;
- Advise the Speaker/Chairperson on the exercise of his/her functions;
- Advise the Speaker/Chairperson on procedural and other relevant matters;
- Co-ordinate and monitor the work of the various directorates;
- Recruit and discipline staff;
- Ensure administrative and procedural support to parliamentary committees; and
- Keep custody of all the documents of the House.





## 8. Major Parliamentary Occasions

### 8.1 Opening of Parliament

This is the main ceremonial event at Parliament and takes place once a year, usually in February. At this occasion, the State President officially opens the parliamentary session for the year. The opening ceremony marks the start of the legislative year. It is a day of national celebration that is broadcast live on national radio and television.

The three main Branches of the State – the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary – take part in the proceedings during the opening of Parliament. The opening address by the State President usually focuses on the achievements of Parliament and upcoming legislation.

### 8.2 Budget Introduction Day

At the end of each financial year, the Minister of Finance is required by law to present the National Budget in the National Assembly. This occasion is attended by interest groups, concerned parties and the public at large. The budget enables citizens to know how the economy is performing and how the government intends to spend taxpayers' money. Members of the public can access the budget documents.

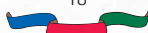
### 8.3 State of the Nation Address

Article 32 (2) of the Namibian Constitution provides that the President must attend Parliament during the consideration of the National Budget. At this occasion, the President must also address Parliament on the State of the Nation and on the future policies of the government. He/she also reports on the policies of the previous year and is available to respond to questions.

## 9. Ceremonial Symbols

### 9.1 Sergeant-At-Arms

The Sergeant-At-Arms is an officer responsible for ensuring security and protocol in the Chamber. He/she plays a ceremonial role during major parliamentary occasions and during daily sessions. The Sergeant-At-Arms is also responsible for removing any unruly Member of Parliament from the Chamber when the Speaker/Chairperson instructs him/her to do so.





## 9.2 The Mace



Mace of the National Assembly.

The mace is a decorated staff used in the National Assembly and National Council as a symbol of the authority of the Speaker/Chairperson. It is hoisted high on its place with its head facing left when the Speaker/Chairperson is in the chair. The mace accompanies all parliamentary processions. Its absence from the Chamber symbolises the suspension and/or adjournment of business in the House.

The Sergeant-At-Arms is responsible for safe-keeping the mace. When the Speaker/Chairperson leaves the chair, the Sergeant-At-Arms lowers the mace to indicate the Speaker/Chairperson's absence in the Chamber.



Mace of the National Council.



### 9.3 The Gavel

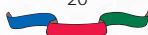
A gavel looks like a hammer. The Speaker/Chairperson bangs the gavel on the table when calling the House to order. The gavel is also used to signify agreement, adjournment or point of order in the Chamber.



The Presiding Officer bangs the gavel on the table when calling the House to order.

## 10. The Seat of Parliament

The Parliament of Namibia is housed in the Parliament Building in Windhoek. It was built in 1913 by the German colonial authority to serve as an administration office and was called the *Tintenpalast* (Ink Palace) because the locals thought it was as big as a palace and because "ink" denoted its administrative role. In November 1989 the *Tintenpalast* hosted the Constituent Assembly which drafted and adopted the Namibian Constitution. At Independence, it became the Seat of Parliament, first housing only the National Assembly. After a new extension was added, the National Council also moved in, in 1993. The building accommodates both Houses of Parliament and has since been renovated and upgraded several times.





The Parliament Building in Windhoek was built by the then German colonial authority in Namibia in 1913.

## 11. Public Access to Parliament

All sittings of the National Assembly and the National Council are open to members of the public, except when a motion has been adopted and supported by a two-thirds majority of the House to exclude the public.

### 11.1 Visits to Parliament

Parliament also provides guided tours to visiting school groups, tourists and interested people. In order to arrange for a guided tour or to inquire about any information related to Parliament, please contact one of Parliament's Liaison Officers at Tel: (061) 288 2583 or 202 8097.



## 12. Political Parties in Parliament

Since Independence in 1990, the following parties have held parliamentary seats:

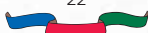
ABBREVIATION	FULL NAME	PERIOD
ACN*	Action Christian National	1990-1995
NNF	Namibia National Front	1990-1995
DCN	Democratic Convention of Namibia	1995-2000
DTA	Democratic Turnhalle Alliance	1990-2010
MAG*	Monitor Action Group	1995-2010
FCN	Federal Convention of Namibia	1990-1995
NPF	National Patriotic Front	1990-1995
UDF	United Democratic Front	1990-2010
SWAPO	SWAPO Party	1990-2010
COD	Congress of Democrats	2000-2010
RP	Republican Party	2005-2010
NUDO	National Unity Democratic Organisation	2005-2010

ACN\* was later renamed Monitor Action Group (MAG) in 1995.

## 13. Gender Balance in Parliament

1<sup>st</sup> National Council: 1992-1998

PARTY	TOTAL	F	M
SWAPO	18	01	17
DTA	08	00	08
UDF	00	00	00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>01</b>	<b>25</b>





2<sup>nd</sup> National Council: 1998-2004

PARTY	TOTAL	F	M
SWAPO	24	02	22
DTA	01	00	01
UDF	01	00	01
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>24</b>

3<sup>rd</sup> National Council: 2004-2010

PARTY	TOTAL	F	M
SWAPO	24	06	18
DTA	01	01	00
UDF	01	00	01
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>07</b>	<b>19</b>

Constituent Assembly: November 1989-March 1990

PARTY	TOTAL	F	M
SWAPO	41	4	37
DTA	21	1	20
UDF	04	0	04
ACN	03	0	03
NNF	01	0	01
FCN	01	0	01
NPF	01	0	01
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>67</b>



1<sup>st</sup> National Assembly: 1990-1995

PARTY	TOTAL	F	M
SWAPO	41+ 6	4	43
DTA	21	1	20
UDF	04	0	04
ACN	03	0	03
NNF	01	0	01
FCN	01	0	01
NPF	01	0	01
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>73</b>

2<sup>nd</sup> National Assembly: 1995-2000

PARTY	TOTAL	F	M
SWAPO	53 + 6	12	47
DTA	15	02	13
UDF	02	00	02
DCN	01	00	01
MAG	01	00	01
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>64</b>

3<sup>rd</sup> National Assembly: 2000-2005

PARTY	TOTAL	F	M
SWAPO	55 + 6	16	45
DTA	07	02	05
UDF	02	01	01
COD	07	03	04
MAG	01	00	01
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>56</b>



4<sup>th</sup> National Assembly: 2005-2010

PARTY	TOTAL	F	M
SWAPO	55+ 6	18	43
DTA	04	00	04
UDF	03	01	02
COD	05	02	03
MAG	01	00	01
NUDO	03	00	03
RP	01	00	01
TOTAL	78	21	57

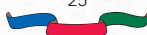
#### 14. Preamble of the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia


*Whereas* recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is indispensable for freedom, justice and peace;

*Whereas* the said rights include the right of the individual to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, regardless of race, colour, ethnic origin, sex, religion, creed or social or economic status;

*Whereas* the said rights are most effectively maintained and protected in a democratic society, where the government is responsible to freely elected representatives of the people, operating under a sovereign constitution and a free and independent judiciary;

*Whereas* these rights have for so long been denied to the people of Namibia by colonialism, racism and apartheid;



Whereas we the people of Namibia:

- Have finally emerged victorious in our struggle against colonialism, racism and apartheid;
- Are determined to adopt a Constitution which expresses for ourselves and our children our resolve to cherish and to protect the gains of our long struggle;
- Desire to promote amongst all of us the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Namibian nation among and in association with the nations of the world;
- Will strive to achieve national reconciliation and to foster peace, unity and a common loyalty to a single state;
- Committed to these principles, have resolved to constitute the Republic of Namibia as a sovereign, secular, democratic and unitary State securing to all our citizens justice, liberty, equality and fraternity,

*Now, therefore*, we the people of Namibia accept and adopt this Constitution as the fundamental law of our Sovereign and Independent Republic.