



# Parliament

Journal





Ghanaian parliamentary staff during their study tour of the National Assembly. Ms. Charmaine Groenewald (third from left) is a staff member of Namibia's National Assembly.

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#### Cover photo:

National Council Chairman Hon. Asser Kapere presents a copy of the National Council Strategic Plan to Secretary to the National Assembly, Mr. Jakes Jacobs.

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# From the Editor's Desk

The year 2009 had finally come to an end. It is a year that will define the future of legislative democracy in Namibia. In this edition, Parliament Journal highlights the most significant issues that parliament had been involved.

Among these issues is the passing of the much publicised Communication Act as one of the highlights that drew public attention. The Communication Act was passed without amendments despite various proposals from affected stakeholders.

It was also a year that saw the launch of the National Council Strategic Plan. The strategic plan will serve as a road map for National Council operations in attaining its goals. It is indeed a milestone for the National Council as an institution.

The parliament of Namibia has continued to enhance the public participation in the legislative process. The participation of parliament at various exhibitions and community outreach has seen parliament scooping Best Exhibitor trophy under government category at Ongwediva Annual Trade fair this year.

As a member of various parliamentary organisations, Parliament of Namibia continues to forge ties by attending conferences of such organisations. The Chairman of the National Council, Honourable Asser Kapere attended the Conference of the Association of Senates, Shuura and Equivalent Council in Africa and Arab World (ASSECAA). The conference was held amid an atmosphere of optimism, understanding and common keenness on enhancing cooperation and buttressing common interests of Africa and the Arab World.

The National Council's fight against HIV and AIDS is in full swing. In commemoration of the World AIDS Day on 1st December, the National Council donated nutritional food hampers to HIV and AIDS Orphanage organisations as part of its corporate responsibility. As we move into 2010 with confidence in realising all our set objectives, we remain committed to fighting the further spread of the pandemic in our country through healthy eating and other preventive means.

Also of importance were the Presidential and National Assembly elections at the end of November where the people of Namibia flocked to the polls to elect their President and Members of the National Assembly. We will have a full report on the elections in the next issue of the Parliament Journal.

Parliament Journal wishes its esteemed readers a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous 2010.

## Strategic Plan Defines Responsibilities, Says Kapere

The Chairman of the National Council, Honourable Asser Kapere, says the formulation and adoption of the National Council Strategic plan was a challenging task given that it involved, among others, reviewing the institution's vision and mission, aligning them with the country's National Development Plans and Vision 2030. He said this when he officially launched the National Council five-year Strategic Plan on 13 October 2009 in Windhoek.



Chairman Asser Kapere launching the Strategic Plan.  
Photo: Ambrosius Amutenja

Chairman Kapere believed that the distinct features of the Plan placed it on a path which was certain to shed more light on the important role that the institution played as the House of Review. The formulation of the plan compelled the National Council to reflect and examine the real issues affecting its operations. It defines the institution's goals, roles, responsibilities, accountability and measures the progress being made, said an elated Hon. Kapere.

Added Chairman Kapere: "The process led us to understand the concept and principles of strategic management. Above all, it called on us to recognize the value of forging good relations with all our stakeholders as we promote and provide sound leadership and good governance with vigilance."

The plan contains five key strategic themes that guide the institution on how best to achieve its long term goals. The themes are: good governance, stakeholder relations, operations and service excellence, capacity and competency building, and resource mobilisation and management. The plan also spells out impartiality, integrity, loyalty, professionalism, accountability,

transparency and teamwork as core values that should be instilled in the institution's corporate culture.

According to Chairman Kapere, the themes and core values came about through assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the National Council to gain an integrated perspective of where the institution was and how it wished to improve on the service that it provide.

"Our five year plan also called on us to recognize the unique role of the National Council, and reminded us of the wisdom of our Constitutional drafters in creating a bicameral Parliament, and moreover showed how, together with the National Assembly, we can build and make Namibia's Parliamentary democracy robust and working in the best interest of Namibians," Chairman Kapere underlined.



Some members of the National Council who witnessed the launch of the Strategic Plan. Photo: Ambrosius Amutenja

Dressed in a black suit, white shirt and a matching white-dotted red tie, Chairman Kapere acknowledged that the plan was “a collective brainchild and product of a number of people and institutions,” which include the Office of the Prime Minister, Members and Secretariat of the National Council and Professor Earle Taylor.

The remaining challenge, Chairman Kapere further acknowledged, was implementation of the plan which depended entirely on sufficiency of funds, the performance management system, and the monitoring and evaluation of the Annual Management

Plans. “In the absence of any of these aspects, the Strategic Plan will not serve the purpose for which it was put in place,” he cautioned.

Chairman Kapere was confident that the commitment of Members and staff to the process would be the source of successful implementation of the plan. “I am convinced that we at the National Council are more than ready to take up the task of turning our five year strategic plan into a living document,” Hon. Kapere said.

Chairman Kapere thanked all those who had contributed to the completion

of the plan and assured stakeholders of the National Council’s endeavour to uphold its national responsibility to the best of its ability through implementation of the strategic plan. The stakeholders present included, government ministries, members of the diplomatic corps, and local and international partners.

The launch of the plan was a product of months of intensive research and consultations by the National Council Secretariat and the institution’s key stakeholders.



*Members of the National Council Strategic Planning Committee.*

## Strategic Plan Result of Intensive Consultations, Mensah-Williams

The successful launch of the five-year Strategic Plan of the National Council was a culmination of intensive internal and external consultations with its stakeholders, especially the last one with Members of the House of Review where all loose ends were firmly addressed. The Vice-Chairperson of the National Council, Hon. Margaret Mensah-Williams, made this observation when she was delivering a vote of thanks at the launch of the National Council Strategic Plan.

The National Council, Hon. Mensah-Williams declared, was thrilled to finally have a document which replicated its vision and mission that provided clear guidelines on reaching its goals as stipulated in the Namibian Constitution. She appreciated the fact that at times stakeholders had to re-schedule their programmes to accommodate National Council invitations to attend stakeholder conferences. She noted that stakeholder inputs had served as a yardstick against which the institution's undertakings were measured in relation to its duties and responsibilities.

"Your commitment to share your experiences and expectations of the National Council ensured that your interests are addressed...We thank you for the immense commitment and patriotism that you have shown and urge you to keep that spirit of mutual cooperation in the interest of participatory democracy and good governance," she emphasised. The Vice-Chairperson explained that one of the objectives of the plan was to enhance efficiency in the institution's review and oversight functions, in addition to the administration of the legislative matters.



National Council Party Whips (left to right) Hon. Sebastiaan !Gobs (UDF), Hon. Nghohauvi Kavetu (DTA) and Hon. Jhonny Hakaye (SWAPO) receiving from NC Vice-Chairperson, Hon. Margaret Mensah-Williams, a collective copy of certificate of appreciation for the MPs' role in the production of the NC Strategic Plan. Photo: Ambrosius Amutenja



Secretary to the National Council, Ms. Panduleni Shimutwikeni (right) receiving on behalf of the Secretariat, a collective copy of certificate of appreciation from the Vice-Chairperson, Hon. Margaret Mensah-Williams, for the Secretariat's role in the production of the Strategic Plan. Photo: Ambrosius Amutenja

She thanked Professor Earle Taylor, a consultant, and officials from the Office of the Prime Minister who guided the Secretariat through all the strategic plan formulation processes; and for motivating and often pushing the Strategic Plan Committee beyond limit to finalise the plan within a reasonable time frame..."Your guidance has indeed contributed immensely to the successful conclusion of this remarkable plan," she said.

Hon. Mensah-Williams, the Councillor for Khomasdal North Constituency in the Khomas Region, thanked Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) for providing the necessary resources for the National Council to convene stakeholders Conferences. "Your assistance eased this challenging road for the National Council and for that our institution will always be grateful," she said. KAS is a German non-governmental organisation based in Windhoek.

She applauded Members of the National Council, the Secretariat and the Strategic Planning Committee in particular for their determination and commitment to duty which, she stressed, “was enormous and undiminishing throughout the process, starting with the initial task of situational analysis through to the production of the actual plan that we have just launched”.

She was confident that “after this lengthy strategic planning process, we sigh with relief convinced that those who will take over from us will have a good foundation on which to perfect, not only the National Council’s review function, but also its overall administration”.

With the launch of this Plan, she cautioned, we have created a legitimate expectation from our stakeholders to implement it successfully and to be unwavering in all our endeavours. “I have no doubt that, given the required resources we are determined to

implement the plan to its letter and spirit.” The National Council will continue to count on your support as it steers through its strategic objectives to meet its vision and mission, she assured the stakeholders. Members of the Strategic Planning Committee

were each awarded with a certificate of appreciation in recognition of their valuable contribution to the formulation of the plan. Two similar collective certificates were awarded to Members and Secretariat of the National Council each respectively. ■



*Hardap Regional Governor Hon. Katrina Hanse-Himarwa (left) and Karas Regional Governor, Hon. Dawid Boois, gracing the launch of the National Council Strategic Plan. Photo: Ambrosius Amutenja*

## Ghana Parliamentary Staff Visit National Assembly

By Ambrosius Amutenja

Five Senior Secretaries from the Parliament of Ghana came to Parliament of Namibia on attachment to the National Assembly from 30 November – 4 December 2009.

The aim of the attachment was “to enable participants learn at first hand and acquaint themselves with best practices in modern office management and bring such experiences to bear on their jobs for improved efficiencies. It will also enable them to adequately equip themselves to meet the demands of



*Ghanaian parliamentary staff (standing from left): Ms. Esmi F. Kudawoo, Ms. Susanna E. Foli; Ms. Paulina Shipahu (Namibian) Ms. Perpetual Anaman; and Evelyn Agyeman. Seated from left: Ms. Andzie Elizabeth Amozie-Quainoo; and Ms. Marianne Gei-khoibes (Namibian) Photo: Ambrosius Amutenja*

the increasing complexities of today's office," according to a letter from the Clerk of the National Assembly of Ghana, Mr. Emmanuel Anyimadu.

In an interview with Parliament Journal, the leader of the visiting staff, Ms. Elizabeth K. Andzie-Quainoo, said that "the study visit was educative" and that they had learned a lot and interesting things about Namibia. "The set-up is impressive. We hope to carry back home what we have seen. We are intrigued by your set-up," she said of the group's impression about the country.

Ms. Andzie-Quainoo said that her team had selected to visit Namibia because the country was a friend of Ghana. There are also exchange programmes between the two parliaments under which "some of Namibia's Members of Parliament and Staff do sometimes come to Ghana's Parliament to learn," she explained.

In his letter to Namibia's Secretary to the National Assembly, the Ghanaian Clerk of Parliament Mr. Anyimadu, singled out five key areas of interest for his staffs' study: these were general office set-up/arrangement, electronic/paper filing methods; management of appointments/customer care; and mail handling.

Apart from touring Parliament Building, the Ghanaian Parliamentary Staff also paid courtesy calls on both the Secretary and Deputy Secretary to the National Assembly; the Chief Human Resource Practitioner, the Chief Accountant, the Chief Control Officer, the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary, Private Secretaries, the Chief Liaison Officer, Registry Clerk; the Executive Secretary to the Prime Minister. They also visited staff at the Electronic Documents and Records Management System (EDRMS) in the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). At the Office of the Prime Minister, the Ghanaians were interested in electronic/paper filing methods, whereas at the National Assembly the team focused on the management of appointments and the handling of mails.

## Parliamentarians Graduate from Paralegal Course

By Tina Srowig

Seven out of ten Members of the National Assembly's Standing Committee on Constitutional and Legal Affairs reaped the fruit of their hard work on October 9 when they were awarded diplomas in a paralegal subject at the University of Namibia (UNAM). The course was financed by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS).

Seven of the attending parliamentarians – Dr. Korbinian Amutenya, Hansina Christian, Pillemon Moongo, Kaveri Kavari, Alfred Chilinda, Loide Kasingo and Nickey Nashandi – passed with distinction.

Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab, congratulated participants for their great success during a graduation ceremony held at the Safari Hotel and Conference Centre. He stressed on the big responsibility that Members of Parliament (MPs) have: "At the end

of the day, law-making and political leadership are about the people and public interest," he said, pointing out that both sought to promote social stability, the rule of law and good governance. Furthermore, he emphasized, knowledge and education must be linked to wisdom. "The success of this programme is not only demonstrated by certificates, but also by the legal knowledge that the MPs have acquired. The MPs should show in action what they have learned – in debate and in law-making," Dr. Gurirab maintained.

The Country Representative of Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Dr. Anton Bösl, made it clear that the more lawmakers were trained, the better the laws of Namibia would be. "Therefore, I hope that our cooperation will continue in 2010," he said. At the same occasion, Professor Nico Horn, the Dean of Faculty of Law at UNAM, expressed hope that the course would be the beginning of a long standing cooperation between Parliament and UNAM. Loide Kasingo, MP, confirmed this hope: "It should be a permanent course attached to UNAM and not only the standing committee, but also the executive who should participate. It is very important to highlight the supremacy of the constitution," she argued.



*Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab addressing participants*

Hon. Kasingo, in her vote of thanks, admitted that it was not an easy sail as three of the ten members of the committee did not finish the course. However, she was convinced that the course was beneficial to every participant. "What is important is not the paper, but what we gained from this course. It has opened our mind, deepened our knowledge in terms of law-making, procedures and the contents of the constitution," she admitted.

The three-month training course started in March this year. The training was designed by the Law Faculty in cooperation with the Department of Political Science, supervised by Professor Andre du Pisani and coordinated by Mrs. Chiku Mchombu. Participants were lectured in the following subjects: Customary Law, English for Communication, The Role of Parliament, Constitutional and Administrative Law, Interpretation of Statutes and Legislative drafting.

In Customary Law, lectured by Professor Manfred Hinz, participants learned about the basic principles of African customary law. They were also given an overview of the factual situation in traditional communities and the legal status of traditional authorities and courts. Lecturing on the Interpretation of Statutes, Mr. Sam Amoo concentrated on the role of statutes in common law countries like Namibia, the responsibility of parliament which passes laws and the difficulties involved in interpreting statutes in an actual case. Honourable Phillemon Moongo found the subject most challenging: "You must interpret the statute exactly as it should be and not as you like. It is very complicated, but also very interesting," he observed.

On Constitutional Law, Professor Nico Horn focused on the history, development and drafting of the Namibian Constitution. Furthermore, he explained the supremacy of the constitution, the separation of powers, the independence of the judiciary and the limitations of rights and freedoms in Namibia. Here, Hon.



*From left: Professor Nico Horn, Hon. Loide Kasingo, Hon. Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab, and Dr. Anton Bösl*



*Participants of the UNAM paralegal course*



*Participants and lecturers of the UNAM paralegal course*

Moongo commented: "If all MPs could participate (in this course) that would be recommendable because they have to take the interest of the people first and not the interest of the party. Very few people know this, but it is very important."

Regarding Administrative Law, Mr. John Nakuta provided participants with case studies on how to apply the most appropriate method to a given hypothetical situation. The participants learned how to identify, analyse and

extract relevant information from cases and the principles of law in legal and social contexts. The Role of Parliament was conducted by Dr. T. Chirawu who elaborated on the concepts of state and governance, the code of conduct for parliamentarians, the role of ethics and the crafting of bills, laws and policies. English for Communication, a subject presented by Mr. Chris Masule, enhanced the participants' skills in listening, reading and writing in English in order to achieve better results in all other subjects.

The course was a great success and all participants, presenters and sponsors agreed that this should be the beginning of a long standing cooperation.

Tina Srowig is a researcher at the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) Office in Windhoek.



## Botswana Elects First Female Speaker

By Clemence Tashaya

Botswana made history as it elected a woman to the position of the Speaker of the National Assembly three days after the results of the General Elections were announced.

Honourable Dr. Margaret Nasha is the first female Speaker since Botswana gained its independence from Britain in 1966.

The election of Dr. Nasha as the first woman to occupy the post of the Speaker of the National Assembly in Botswana signals another step towards gender equality in southern Africa.

However, the low number of women who made it into Parliament in the recent elections is a setback in a region committed to reaching 50 percent parity in decision making by 2015, in six years time, following just one or more election. Out of a total of six women who took part in the Parliamentary elections on 16th October 2009, only two women won seats in the august house.



Hon. Dr. Margaret Nasha

The Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) that secured 45 seats, and its main opposition, the Botswana National Front (BNF) that won six seats, had fielded only three women candidates for the 57 contested Parliamentary seats. Other parties did not nominate even one woman to stand in the elections.

The Hon. Dr. Nasha believes her elevation should lay the foundation which the country can build on and allow more women to assume high positions in society. Speaking after she was elected, Dr. Nasha said her main aim would be to transform the Botswana Parliament by fast-tracking new standing orders, automation of the library and reform the Committee system to dispose more business and cut down time spent on general debates.

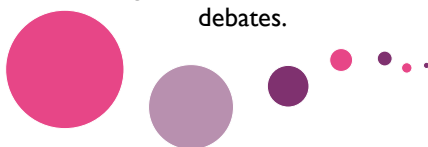
"I feel elated, honoured and humbled to be the first woman to assume the position of Speaker of the National Assembly," she said. "You have just made history by electing me as the first woman Speaker of the National Assembly in this country and I am proud to be that pioneer. I cannot, however, pretend it is not a bitter sweet moment for me in view of the fact that there are only four women members in this tenth Parliament of sixty-two including the president," she explained.

She said she did not intend to turn Parliament into a pre-burial night vigil. "I shall allow robust and lively debates which must however remain focused on the issues at hand and this shows that people have got confidence that I can lead the House," she said.

She urged women, the electorate and political parties to work together to ensure the gains made by Botswana in the field of women representation in politics and urged that gender equality is not reversed.

The Hon. Dr. Margaret Nasha replaces the Hon. Patrick K. Balopi, MP, who was at one time the SADC PF Chairperson.

Following the appointment of two more women out of the four seats filled in Parliament this means the gender representation in Parliament now stands at four women and 58 men occupying the total 62 Parliamentary



seats, or 6.5 percent, the lowest in the region.

This poor representation of women is also reflected in the new cabinet announced by the President, who must choose his ministers from Parliament, but he deployed all four women elected or appointed to represent his party. Two women were appointed to head ministries while the other two will be assistant ministers. The number of cabinet ministers announced by the President totals 18, therefore the two women represent the 11 percent of the total.

Dr. Pelonomi Venson-Moitoi was appointed Minister of Education and Skills Development, while Lesego Motsumi becomes Minister for Presidential Affairs and Public Administration. Assistant Ministers are the Hon. Dorcas Makgatho-Malesu and Bothhogile Tshirelesto in the Ministries of Trade and Industry and Local Government respectively.

The Attorney General, Dr. Athaliah Molokome, is also a woman and an ex-officio member of cabinet, as is the Permanent Secretary to the President, Eric Molale. If these two are added, the full cabinet totals 18 members, of which three are women, which is 15 percent representation. This figure still falls short of the target of the SADC to have 30 percent women in decision making positions by 2015, and shows little progress towards the target set by the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development in 2008 to achieve 50 percent of women in decision-making positions in the public and private sector by 2015, in line with the position taken by the African Union (AU).

Botswana attained 18 percent women representation in the Parliament in the last election in 2004, demonstrating a strong will to promote gender equality. About 28 percent of the cabinet was also made up of women. On the campaigning trails, the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) President Seretse Khama Ian, raised concern over the decline in the number of

women contesting the elections.

“This is a worrying trend indeed. I know that it is not out of lack of capability or willingness by women to stand for positions of responsibility at council and parliamentary level,” he said, adding that he remained committed to seeing more women in key positions.

He said women make up the largest number of voters hence they must actively participate in the running of the country. More than 403,000 women registered voters out of a total of 725,000 voters who registered to take part in the elections, according to the Independent Electoral Commission. ■

## SADC PF Undergoes Organisational and Systems Reforms

By Fanuel Katshenye and Ambrosius Amutenja

The Southern Africa Development Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC PF) has embarked on an initiative to reform the Forum's organisational structure and management systems to make its operations more efficient. Recently appointed SADC PF Secretary-General, Dr. Esau Chiviya, says he has already submitted the reform proposals to the Forum's organs for further consideration. In an interview (below) with Parliament Journal on 17 December 2009, Dr. Chiviya, a public sector management expert from Zimbabwe, further revealed that during the last four or six years, the Forum has made some progress in

lobbying for the establishment of a SADC Parliament.

**PJ:** You were recently appointed as Secretary-General of the SADC PF. How was your personal feeling about such an appointment?

**EC:** I felt very much humbled and greatly honoured. Out of all the potential qualified candidates from the SADC Region who have applied for this position, the Executive Committee and the Plenary Assembly meeting that was held in Windhoek in June 2009 finally appointed me as the Secretary-General of the SADC PF. I felt very much honoured because there were others who were also candidates for this job. But when they put everything together, the Executive Committee felt that I was the one who was most suited for this job. For me it is a great honour.

**PJ:** Which are the short- and long-term objectives of the SADC PF and when are these likely to be realized?

**EC:** The SADC PF came into being in 1996. Between 1996 and July 1999, they did not have a full-time Secretary-General (SG). A full-time Secretary-General only came in July 1999. That was Dr. Kasuka Mutukwa from Zambia. Between 1999 and 2009, Dr. Mutukwa has worked so hard in terms of bringing the Forum to where it is today – a recognised organisation with credible reputation, regionally and internationally.

As a professional institution, several donors and other partners want to work with the Forum because of the reputation it has established for itself during the last ten years. When the Forum started during the time of Dr. Mutukwa, we only had two main programmes: on democracy, which focuses mostly on elections, and on gender. Over the years, the Forum has expanded in terms of programmes. We now have programmes on democracy and governance, on gender, on HIV and AIDS, on regional integration, on information and communication

technology (ICT) as well as the Parliamentary Leadership Centre. You can see that the Forum, over the last ten years, has expanded in terms of the programmes that it offers.

These have implications on the Forum itself – in terms of how it is organised to enable the Forum to effectively deliver its programmes. Organisations are like human beings. They also grow in age and, if nothing is done, they can die. There comes a time when you need to rejuvenate the organisation. For me the main challenge is to reform the SADC PF in terms of its structures and its systems so that we can effectively deliver the mandate of the Forum. By reforming the Forum, we have got to look at the way the Forum is organised. Right now we have programmes that don't seem to be unified in terms of the way they are managed.

We would want to make sure that issues of human resources, administration and financing are given adequate attention. We are proposing a reform of the organisational structure of the Forum. In this proposal, we want to have four departments: a department on finance that will deal with all the financial issues of the Forum and donor finances. The second department will be on human resources and administration. This department will deal with staffing, recruitment, contracts, and administrative matters. The third will be the programmes department where we will have programmes that are currently scattered – programmes on democracy and governance, public health, gender, ICT and regional integration. So, we will actually have five programmes under the programmes department.

The fourth will be the parliamentary training department. Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff would like to be capacitated in various areas. One way of doing that is to train them. We want this function to be within the mainstream programmes of the Forum so that it can be funded from the core budget of the Forum and not leave it to donors. These four departments will be



*Dr. Esau Chiviya emphasising the need for reforms, Photo: Ambrosius Amutenja*

headed by directors. We will have the Office of the Secretary-General within which there will be an information officer to market Forum's activities. We also have an internal auditor and then, of course, an executive assistant and a secretary in the Office of the Secretary General.

The management team will compose of the four directors of the departments, plus the Secretary General. Those five people will constitute the senior management team. The organisational restructuring is aimed at making the Forum efficient in delivering the expanded programmes. The initial structure of only about two programmes is no longer adequate. Hence, we want a structure which can put the Forum on efficient, modern management.

In addition to reforming the structure, we are also interested in reforming the systems of the Forum. The systems reform will focus on administrative reform. Right now, the Forum uses administrative procedures and regulations of the SADC Secretariat. We don't have our own and this creates problems. These administrative procedures and regulations were designed for the SADC Secretariat and not for the Forum. We would want to make sure that we develop

our own administrative procedures and regulations. In addition, we also need to have our own disciplinary code, our own grievance procedures, our own communication strategy and so forth. All these are aimed at making our management efficient.

We also want to improve upon our financial management regulations. This is an area where some of our donors have complained about its weaknesses. We want to put in place financial regulations that will make sure that we manage our finances – both Forum and donors – in an efficient manner. I have presented these reform proposals at the 26th Plenary Assembly that was held in Victoria Falls (Zimbabwe). They were all generally in agreement that these reforms are necessary for purposes of making the Forum efficient.

**PJ:** It is understood that one of the main aims and objectives is to transform the SADC PF into a regional parliament. Is this ambition achievable and how do you plan to achieve it?

**EC:** Yes, this is achievable. During the last four or six years, there has been a lot of lobbying for a SADC Parliament – lobbying the Heads of State, parliaments, and even Foreign Ministers who constitute the Council



*The general position is that there is consensus on the need for a SADC Parliament.*

of Ministers of the SADC Secretariat. The last lobbying initiatives this year were a goodwill mission to Zimbabwe. This goodwill mission composed of Speakers of Parliament from Namibia, Angola, South Africa, Tanzania and Swaziland. The Speakers had a meeting with the three principals in this global agreement – President Robert Mugabe, Prime Minister Morgan Zvangirai and Deputy Prime Minister, Professor Arthur Mutambara. In our meeting, the President came out in support of a SADC Parliament. In fact, it was him who raised the issue of a SADC Parliament and hoped that it was going to be discussed at the DRC (Democratic Republic of Congo) SADC Summit.

From Zimbabwe we went for a meeting with President Jacob Zuma of South Africa on 26 August 2009. President Zuma was the Chair of SADC up to September when he handed it over to President Joseph Kabila of the DRC. So, we lobbied again and he was quite in agreement. The only issue he had in mind was that the SADC Parliament cannot be 100 percent autonomous because it exists among other institutions, like the SADC Secretariat and the SADC Tribunal. These are like the three arms of government. So, none of the three arms of government can say they are independent. They depend on each other.

Then the Chairperson of the Forum,

former Secretary General Dr. Mutukwa and I went to the DRC Summit to lobby for the SADC Parliament with government officials, ministers and even Presidents. The general position is that there is consensus on the need for a SADC Parliament. In fact, a SADC Parliament was approved by the Council of Ministers in Mauritius at the 2004 Summit of Heads of State and Government. What remains is to have this item put on the agenda of the Summit of Heads of State and Government for their consideration. This is how we intend to make sure that next year at the 2010 Summit it is one of the agenda items. We have asked all parliaments to move motions and debate the issue and agree that a SADC Parliament is necessary. Once they do that, they should write to the Secretary General to say we debated this issue on such a date and our parliament agreed that we need a SADC Parliament. So, we will have statements from 14 parliaments. That is strategy number one.

Strategy number two, we will then constitute a delegation of Speakers and Members of Parliament, with the statements from the 14 parliaments, to go to the current Chair, President Kabila of the DRC, and specifically ask him to have the issue of a SADC Parliament put on the agenda for the 2010 Summit. That same delegation will come to Namibia to have an audience with President Hifikepune

Pohamba and again request him that this item be put on the agenda for the 2010 Summit because he is going to become the next Chair. From Namibia, the same delegation will go to the SADC Secretariat to see the Executive Secretary, again request him to have this item put on the agenda. So, we think that these three steps will ensure that the SADC Parliament, as an agenda item, will be there at the 2010 Summit. In my discussions with President Pohamba during my courtesy call on his office, it appeared he is in full support of a SADC Parliament.

**PJ:** SADC PF has the mandate to monitor and observe regional elections at both presidential and parliamentary levels. Are member-countries adhering to the SADC Guidelines on Democratic elections?

**EC:** Not so much adhering. One might look at it in terms of adopting the good practices contained in the SADC norms and standards for elections in the region. This is a document that was prepared by the SADC PF. It specifies good practices in elections management. Initially, there were a number of what I may call bad practices in elections management and observation. Since 1999, the Forum has observed about 25 Presidential and Parliamentary elections, with the latest one being in Namibia in November 2009. In all these elections we have been identifying the good practices and the areas where improvements are needed.

Over the last ten years, most of the countries in the SADC Region have been slowly adopting the good practices. For example, the counting of ballot papers, previously in most countries, was done at a central point with all the suspicion that goes with it. The process was not transparent at all. When ballot papers were being transported, in some countries, from polling stations to the central point, they would be accompanied by soldiers and police to the exclusion of political party agents. That raised a number of suspicions because the process was not transparent.

In order to make the process transparent, counting now in most of our countries is being done at polling stations in the presence of political party agents and observers. That is a big improvement. Even the degree of transparency now has improved. Most of our countries now invite observers to see how they (countries) manage their elections. These observers make recommendations on things that are not good and things that are being done well. Furthermore, there is the issue of transparent ballot boxes. Previously, some of our countries used card, wooden and even metal boxes.

Most countries have moved from wooden and iron boxes to translucent boxes where people can see what is inside. So, it is not the Forum having the power to enforce. But the countries have seen that what the SADC PF is advocating in terms of electoral processes and systems is good. Some countries have reformed their electoral laws and have independent electoral commissions. In some countries the election management bodies were departments of home affairs. Now we have independent electoral commissions in most of the countries. This is what we are advocating in our norms and standards. Even though we don't have the power to enforce, countries are slowly embracing the good practices in elections management.

**PJ: What mechanisms does SADC PF use to enforce adherence to these guidelines?**

**EC:** We are not a legislative body. We don't have an army or police to force countries to abide by the guidelines. Our strength lies in the moral justification of our norms and standards on conducting elections in the region. The guidelines that we say should be followed are in line with good practices, good governance and good democratic practices. Most of our countries are moving towards democratic dispensation and would like to manage their countries on good governance principles. They have been slowly adopting without

us having to dictate to them. We have follow-up meetings with the electoral commissions where we tell them about good things and bad things that we have observed. So, they make efforts to ensure that wrong things have been changed and good things are put in place.

**PJ: SADC PF has the other mandate to train parliamentarians and parliamentary staff in parliamentary processes and procedures. How much progress has been made in this regard?**

**EC:** We have, in the SADC PF, the Parliamentary Leadership Centre that is supposed to lead in capacity building for parliamentarians and parliamentary staff through training, workshops and so forth. We could have done more because the demand for training from our member-parliaments is there. Our main constraint has been the financial resources. So far in the Parliamentary Leadership Centre we only have one main donor – the African Capacity Building Foundation. They have been supporting the activities of the Forum since 2005 when the Parliamentary Leadership Centre came into being.

Other donors have come in, not in a big way, contributing by supporting a specific workshop and so forth. We have not done as much as we would have liked to. For example, this year alone, we had elections in South Africa, Malawi, Botswana, Mozambique and Namibia. We would have liked to conduct orientation workshops or trainings for all the new Members of Parliament who have been elected because some of them have no knowledge of parliamentary affairs or procedures. They need to be trained. So far we were involved in an orientation programme for the Botswana Members of Parliament who were elected in October this year. We could have done the same for Namibia and the other countries. But our problem has been mostly finances and the capacity. Our capacity is rather limited. We only have one full-time professional staff, a director, two officers and a consultant. That is really not adequate capacity to deliver the

training. We are not doing as much as we should be doing.

**PJ: Finally, what would you describe as achievements and setbacks that the SADC PF has experienced since its establishment in 1996?**

**EC:** In terms of achievements, the Forum has grown from a humble organisation when it was created in 1996 to an organisation that is known regionally and internationally. Donors and parliamentary organisations like AWEPA (Association of European Parliamentarians with Africa), the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), want to work with the Forum. That is quite a big achievement that we are a well-known organisation that is likely to see itself being transformed into a SADC Parliament.

We have expanded in terms of programmes that we have been offering, from two in 1999 to six in 2009. This is a big achievement. The membership also has expanded with countries like DRC and Seychelles coming on board. Initially, we had a membership of about nine countries. Now we have 14 countries. Those are some of the achievements.

In terms of constraints, the biggest one has been funding of the Forum's activities. The Forum is funded from two sources: contributions from member-countries; and funding from donors. Contributions from member-countries have been rather stagnant for a long time. For the past four or so years, contributions have been pegged at N\$850 000 per country per year. When you put this contribution vis-a-vis the expansion in programmes, you will find that our budget is becoming smaller and smaller. We have to rely more on donors. But donors sometimes also have their own preferences. They can decide that today this is no longer a priority. It means that each time you've got to dance to what they want and not so much to what you want.

The good news is that from the Victoria Falls' 26th Plenary Assembly, we put up a case for an increase in contributions. They have agreed to increase it by 30 percent. Contributions as from next year will be about N\$1, 100 000 per member-country per year. That is a positive thing for the member-countries to have realised that our contributions are a bit outdated. Inflation has gone up and the cost of living has gone up. So, there is justification for increasing the contributions.

Another positive thing is that the Forum organs – the Plenary Assembly, the Executive Committee and its Steering Committee – welcome the initiative to reform the Forum. They want to see the Forum put on modern management practices. Hence, they have welcomed the proposals I have put forward in terms of reforming the organisational structure, the administrative and financial management systems. These are some of the positive things that



*The biggest constraints has been funding of the Forum's activities*

have happened within the Forum over the last ten years.

In line with increased programme activities, the staff compliment has also expanded from an initial small number of less than ten. We now have a staff

establishment of about 27 people. We have expanded over the years in line with the expansion of our programme activities. So, these are some of what I see as positive things that have happened within the Forum.

## ASSECAA Urges Cooperation Between African and Arab Countries

His Majesty King Mohammed VI of Morocco has stressed the importance of engaging heavily in the democratic process based on the status of parliaments in decision-making, rather than impetuous lobbyism and voracious capitalism that lacked human and social spirit. The King said this in a message read at the 4th Conference of the Association of Senates, Shuura and Equivalent Councils in Africa and the Arab World (ASSECAA), during its 5th Council Meeting in Rabat, Morocco, from 12 to 13 November 2009. Hon. Asser Kapere, Chairman of the National Council, attended the conference.



*Chairman Asser Kapere and Hon. Hilma Nicanor at the ASSECAA Conference, Photo: Fanuel Katshenye*

The conference was held amid an atmosphere of optimism, understanding and common keenness on enhancing cooperation and buttressing common interests of Africa and the Arab World. The delegates were determined to attain the objectives for which

the Association was established. These include the Annual Report by ASSECAA Secretary-General, Hon. Livinus I. Osuji; the extension of the tenure of the Secretariat as well as reports by the Budget, Administrative and the Programmes Committees.



*Dr. Mohammed Cheikh Biadillah*

The other critical issues discussed and mainly moved by the Arab delegates were calls for the condemnation of what the group saw as “interference” in Sudanese internal affairs; support for the Governments of Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Yemen in dealing with internal conflicts within their countries; calls on the international community to condemn Israel’s “colonization” and occupation of the Palestinian territories. Further the conference condemned in the strongest term extremism, terrorism and fundamentalism world-wide. They have also called for a firm stand against piracy in the Gulf of Aden, urging closer collaboration between African and the Arab countries on the issue.

Delegates observed with great concern “the declining interest” by African and Arab member-states in joining the ASSECAA. The first ASSECAA conference, held in 2004, attracted a membership of 14 African and Arabic countries. This number has since drastically dropped to 11 countries who attended the 4th conference of the association in Morocco in 2009.

The President of the Council of States of Sudan and outgoing Chairman of ASSECAA, Hon. Ali Yahya Abdullah also attended the conference. Hon. Abdullah

“expressed immense gratitude to ASSECAA for supporting Sudan during the hard times it passed through. Case in point was the rejection by ASSECAA of the ICC (International Criminal Court’s) indictment of Field Marshal, Omar Hassan Ahmed Al Basheer, who is a symbol for the sovereignty of Sudanese state. ASSECAA spared no effort to back all peace deals in Sudan”.

Hon. Abdullah, who needed support to walk due to poor health, paid tribute to Yemen for the role that that country was playing for the betterment of the Association, including provision of the venue for the General Secretariat to efficiently fulfill its tasks to achieve the objectives of the Association and to create a conducive work environment.

“It is high time to praise the Yemeni Shoura Council for the efforts it is still exerting to boost the role of bicameral councils in enhancing the democratic dialogue and contributing to the international efforts at the elimination of all forms of tension and violence, as well as the establishment of peace and security in Africa, the Middle East and the world at large,” urged the Sudanese lawmaker.

“With regard to the launch of the activities of the Association, ASSECAA

had forged the committee on peace and conflict resolution that held its meeting in Bujumbura, Burundi, from 2-3 March, 2009. A variety of issues, including the crisis in Somalia and the conflict in Congo (DRC), were thoroughly debated at the meeting that came up with carefully thought-out visions envisaging radical solutions to these issues at the local, regional and international levels,” he said.

He applauded the Bujumbura meeting for presenting solutions to tackling the negative impacts of the Somali conflict that resulted in piracy flourishing in the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean. “We, in ASSECAA, are showing growing interest in what is going on in Palestine, including the storming and beleaguering by the Israeli troops of the holy Aqsa Mosque precincts, as well as the fierce confrontations with the Palestinians standing their ground inside it. Therefore, we denounce any attempt at taking over the Aqsa Mosque and desecrating our holy sites. We also show great interest in any threat to the security, unity and stability of brotherly Yemen, namely Saada events, and any menace to the security and stability of all member states,” he said.

The Speaker of the House of Councillors of Morocco, Dr. Mohammed Cheikh Biadillah, delivered an opening speech in which he stressed the importance of the Association, saying it was the only organization bringing together Africa and the Arab world; it was the only organization advocating bicameralism, and fostering economic cooperation between the two regions. He urged ASSECAA to focus on combating poverty and illiteracy, and eradicating all forms of underdevelopment, tensions and violence.

Dr. Biadillah said Morocco was aware of the importance of ASSECAA as it was a unique organization which brought Africa and the Arab World together. He noted that the conference was taking place at a period of changing world order which was undergoing deep, rapid and structural changes, preparing for the third millennium



Hon. Ali Yahya Abdullah. Photo: Fanuel Katshenye

which would forcibly be very different from the world as we knew it.

“These changes have touched all the fields, during the globalisation wave, and were aggravated by the economic crisis which has destroyed the biggest world economies, the dialogue resuming on liberalism, the return of the state and the end of ‘the Market dictatorship’ and has also shown the importance of confidence in the economic and financial relations and the danger of corruption and dishonesty,” Dr. Biadillah said.

According to Dr. Biadillah, the globalisation of democracy and the universality of rights and liberties must go hand in hand with the particularity of our societies, culture, identity, political history and democratic experience. These are today respected because they led to the aggravation of the “occidental centralism speech” and the sole and unique example of democracy, as well as the giving up of imposing examples to follow in order to build a democracy or import it or impose it.

He added: “It is the duty of our organisation and our parliaments to reinforce our emerging democracy, through the particularity of each country, especially the socio-cultural

one. It is also the duty of our parliaments to regain its complete legislative role through showing initiative, proposition, debate and creation.”

Dr. Biadillah observed that the current international situation was worrying about the increase of armed conflicts, terrorism, and radicalism in all its forms, the imposing of military solutions, the flagrant intrusions and the nourishing of armed conflicts. “Surely the most important conflict is the Palestinian cause. The sufferings of the Palestinian people are still on and the hope for peace is getting far

as well as the cruel embargo and the Judaizing of Jerusalem and the increase of colonization. On this occasion, we would like to salute reverentially the constant positions of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, President of the Committee Al Quods which translate the outstanding positions already taken by the Kingdom of Morocco,” Dr. Biadillah said.

He said ASSECAA would support the reforms in its respective member-countries and contribute to putting humankind and development at the core of their preoccupations.

After the official opening, the conference broke into three committees - the Budget, the Administrative and the Programmes Committees - to consider the General Secretariat’s report as well as the topics presented to the Council. Thereafter, the committees submitted their reports and recommendations to the plenary for discussion and endorsement.

Delegates from the Senates/Councils of Bahrain, Egypt, Ethiopia, Jordan, Morocco, Gabon, Mauritania, Namibia, Nigeria, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, South Africa, and Yemen attended the conference. Delegates from the Senate of Senegal, the Arab Parliamentary Union, and Shuura Council of Maghreb attended as observers.



Hon. B. Mncube (left), Head of delegation of the South African National Council of Provinces at the ASSECAA Conference. Photo: Fanuel Katshenye

## Kapere Attends 32<sup>nd</sup> Conference of APU

The Chairman of the National Council, Hon. Asser Kapere, was among Speakers of African National Parliaments, Heads of Parliamentary Delegations, Members of Parliament and Senators who participated in the 55th Session of the Executive Committee of the African Parliamentary Union (APU) held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, from 16 to 17 November 2009. The Executive Committee meeting was succeeded by the Union's 32nd Conference, also held in the Burkinabe capital from 18 to 20 November.

Welcoming delegates at the conference, the Speaker of the National Assembly of Burkina Faso, Hon. Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, urged the African Parliamentary Union to contribute, with the support and full participation of all its member parliaments, by producing creative ideas for their people and governments which were responsible for driving the development and progress in their respective countries.



*Hon. Guigmal/Diasso Mariam M. Gisele, 2nd Vice-President of the National Assembly of Burkina Faso. Photo: Fanuel Katshenye*

At the same occasion, the Speaker of the Parliament of Uganda and Chairperson of the APU Executive Committee, the Rt. Hon. Edward Kiwanuka Ssekandi, reminded delegates of the challenges facing the continent which, he said, included economic and other social ills, wars and conflicts. "These have greatly undermined development on the continent. However, in spite of its vulnerability, Africa is certainly not in a state of uncertainty. Having been endowed with resources, Africa is capable of standing on its own feet again to make use of its rich potential, to reduce the burden of poverty and champion peace and democracy on

its soil," the Ugandan Speaker said in a statement read on his behalf.

Hon. Ssekandi called on fellow parliamentarians to be optimistic in spite of the hostile global economic and environmental distress which the international economic crisis had continued to aggravate. "The African Parliamentary Union, which has existed for more than thirty years, has contributed strongly to all causes in Africa, and championed the changes that our countries have been through over the period, especially in the area of promotion of democracy, still remains a forum of cooperation and exchange of experiences among African Parliaments and Parliamentarians," he said.

With the development of parliamentary diplomacy, Hon. Ssekandi observed, parliaments and parliamentarians had become key players in the regional, continental and international scenes. It is for this reason that this enriching inter-parliamentary cooperation should be strongly encouraged, greatly enhanced, and well sustained.

The Ugandan Speaker emphasized that the African Parliamentary Union was a privileged forum for national Parliaments, debating themes that concerned the growth of their countries, working in line with the



*Hon. Roch Marc Christian Kaboré. Photo: Fanuel Katshenye*



Photo #00914: Members of the Committee of Women Parliamentarians of the APU who steered discussions on the "Role of Parliaments in the Fight against Poverty among Women through Micro-credit Grants and Markets Outlets. From right: Ms. Oliver Wonekha, Rapporteur from Uganda; Chairperson Ms. Botouli Biang Paulette from Cameroon; and Vice-Chairperson Ms. Hiame Amer from Egypt (left). Photo: Fanuel Katshenye

strategies and objectives of the African Union and with those of the New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD). The APU continued to make a substantial contribution to the debate concerning democracy, peace and development in Africa, he said.

He underlined that in all its endeavors, the APU had taken into consideration the important role of the African women. Cognizant of this role, the APU had supported all efforts aimed at the promotion of the role of women, and had established a Committee of

Women Parliamentarians, which meet alongside the sessions of the APU in order to deliberate on important topics related mostly to women's roles and activities. During this year's sessions, the Committee of Women Parliamentarians considered "The role of Parliaments in the fight against poverty among women through micro-credit financing and the search for markets for their products".

"The APU is today called upon to continue working in close cooperation with the African Union, the Pan-African Parliament and other parliamentary regional organizations, to engage itself in developing a network of relations

and promote areas of solidarity and cooperation with the international parliamentary institutions, in order to enhance the impact of the African Parliamentary action to the benefit of Africa," Hon. Ssekandi said.

He said the impact of the global economic and financial crisis on the African economies had affected efforts to eradicate poverty, maintain social stability and protect the gains realized in all fields. "This global crisis, which affects the heart of the economies of African countries, particularly fragile economies, requires short, medium and long-term strategies to rationalize economic and monetary policies. It also requires that efforts should be put in the acceleration of the process of sub-regional and regional integration of African countries," the Ugandan Speaker warned.

Hon. Ssekandi was confident that the conference would consider the implementation of structural measures and other measures aimed at promoting investments as the current economic and financial crisis would unavoidably result in donors cutting both bilateral and multilateral aid which, he feared, would affect the agricultural sector and aggravate the food crisis in Africa.

Speaker Ssekandi said "the development of infrastructure with a view to fostering long-term growth", was one of the major challenges facing the African continent. Infrastructure, he noted, was a pre-requisite to economic development as well as to economic integration. Access to transport, communications, water and energy was an essential component to the betterment of the quality of life of African populations.

He felt that the huge shortage in infrastructure raised the cost of production in African countries, hence constituting a major obstacle to the promotion of trade amongst African countries and competitiveness in the international trade. To overcome this infrastructure shortage and to achieve the objectives of the Millennium Development Goals, Africa should invest between five and 10 percent of its GDP in infrastructural development. That remains an immense task taking into account the meager resources and the impact of the international economic and financial crisis, Hon. Ssekandi stressed.

The Ugandan Speaker reiterated the delegates' gratitude to Mr. Blaise Compaore, the President of Burkina Faso, the Government, the Parliament and the people of Burkina Faso for the excellent working conditions accorded to the delegates.

The Executive Committee assigned three separate committees to discuss different topics. The Women Committee discussed the "Role of Parliaments in the Fight against Poverty among Women through Micro-credit Grants and Markets Outlets"; Committee 1 deliberated on the "Development of Infrastructures in Africa with a view to Fostering Long-Term Growth" while Committee 2 discussed the "Effects of the Global Economic and Financial Crisis on the African Economies: Strategies and Measures to face them." The three Committees submitted their reports and recommendations to the plenary for consideration and adoption.

## Parliamentary Leaders Discuss Crime and Cooperation

Some 1,000 delegates, including the Speaker of the National Assembly who is also the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Hon. Theo-Ben Gurirab, gathered at the 121st Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) from 19 to 21 October 2009 at the Centre International de Conférences de Genève (CICG). Speakers of national parliaments from 23 countries participated at the Assembly

During the three-day discussions, participants debated major issues on the international agenda, such as cooperation and shared responsibility in the global fight against organized crime, the role of parliaments in developing South-South and Triangular Cooperation with a view to accelerating achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and youth participation in the democratic process. Source: IPU Press Release

## Combating Climate Change Comes at Cost, Says Gurirab

The President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and Speaker of the National Assembly, Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab, said the effects of global warming have been documented and analyzed by scientists. More droughts and flooding, less ice and snow, more extreme weather events, desertification, rising sea levels,

climate-induced migration - all of them appeared on the climate change menu and were likely to strike from one day to the next unless urgent action was taken. The exact extent of the challenge may be difficult to predict but, politically, it is clear that we need to take action. Dr. Gurirab sounded this warning when he was addressing the inaugural session of the parliamentary meeting of COP15 in the Danish capital, Copenhagen, on 16 December 2009.

“We know that action to combat climate change will come at a cost. It will involve public funding, private investments, carbon markets, and so on. Can we simply leave the setting of policy to our governments? I think not. We need to make sure that the necessary political will is there to raise and allocate much needed financial resources. Even so, let us be clear: parliaments and the executive branch have very different responsibilities when it comes to international negotiations, including on the subject of climate change,” Dr. Gurirab told the conference.

He explained that governments negotiated rules and arrangements on behalf of States. Parliaments scrutinized government action, influence policies pursued in intergovernmental negotiations, ratify international agreements, and implement them through appropriate legislation and budget allocations.

“That is why much of our discussion today will focus on the efficiency of parliamentary oversight of government action to enact environmentally-driven economic growth and build climate-resilient societies,” he underlined.

“Clearly our countries and economies are very different and we are not equally responsible for having created the situation in which we now find ourselves. I believe we share a common interest to address climate change not only through transformation of the world economies and of the ways in which we use energy resources, but also of how we develop the necessary

legislative framework on which these actions must be based. We must all contribute to that end,” Dr. Gurirab emphasised.

The IPU President said that all countries would want to be part of and benefit from innovation of technologies, innovation of the regulatory framework, innovation of financial mechanisms and decision-making. Most of these arrangements, he cautioned, had far-reaching consequences. They need to be well understood by all and prepared for. They require political will and legislative guidelines far beyond the climate regime itself.

I hope that our meeting will help identify a positive agenda for climate-related action by the IPU as well. The Climate Change Convention has been ratified by 192 countries and has garnered near-universal support. Its legitimacy must be a source of encouragement. We hope that the same can be achieved for the future climate change agreement. Time is of the essence, he said.

“Your presence in Copenhagen provides eloquent testimony of a global awareness and commitment to address together the most pressing challenge of our times. We should build on that. I am encouraged by the Danish Minister who said: ‘We have no alternative. We must handle climate change and we must do it right now. Copenhagen is the deadline. The time is up. Let’s get the job done.’ To that end, I hope that our session today will be crowned with success and look forward to a rich and constructive debate, in the true parliamentary tradition,” Dr. Gurirab concluded.

## Staff on the Move

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*Mr. Ndaningaweni Nghileendele*

*Mr. Ndaningaweni Protasius Nghileendele has been appointed as Principal Parliamentary Clerk at the National Assembly with effect from 1 December 2009. He was formerly working for the Ministry of Education as Senior Science and Technology Officer, seconded from UNESCO Namibia (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) from 2007 to 2009.*

*Mr. Gottyson Tjipepa*

*Mr. Gottyson Pupaheua Tjipepa has been appointed as driver at the National Council with effect from 14 October 2009. Mr. Tjipepa was previously a bus driver.*



*Mr. Hendrik Afrikaner*

*Mr. Hendrik Afrikaner has been appointed as cleaner at the National Council with effect from 16 November 2009. Mr. Afrikaner was unemployed before joining the National Council.*



## Obituary

The lion of the south is no more. He was a brave lion, a conciliator, a nationalist and a hero. This was how his Comrades in the ruling SWAPO Party and his opponents in the opposition camp described the late Hon. Rev. Dr. Kaptein Hendrik Witbooi at a State Memorial held in his honour in the Parliament Gardens on 23 October 2009. The SWAPO Party stalwart passed away on 13 October 2009 in Windhoek as a result of poor-health. President Hifikepunye Pohamba declared Kaptein Witbooi a hero; accorded him a Hero's Funeral and a 17-gun salute during his State Funeral at the Gibeon Cemetery on the morning of 24 October 2009.

Kaptein Witbooi was a Member of the Constituent Assembly (November 1989 – March 1990) which drafted the Namibian Constitution; and a Member of the National Assembly from 1990 to 2005. He served as Namibia's first Minister of Labour and Manpower Development (1990-1995); and the country's first Deputy Prime Minister from 1995 to 2005 when he retired from active politics.



*Late Hon. Rev. Dr. Kaptein Hendrik Witbooi*



*Late Hon. Hans-Erik Staby*

Following the death on 30 November 2009 of former DTA Member of the National Assembly Hon. Hans-Erik Staby, the Speaker of the National Assembly, Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab, has conveyed condolences to the bereaved family which reads as following:

It is with immense sadness and a deep sense of loss that the National Assembly mourns the passing away of one of its founder Members, Hon. Hans-Erick Staby.

On behalf of all Members of the National Assembly and its Secretariat, I wish to convey our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family, relatives and friends, and wish them all the strength to go through these hard times.

Hon. Staby was a Member of the Constituent Assembly and became a Member of the first National Assembly until 1997, during which time he, amongst others, also served as a member of the Public Accounts Committee.

The National Assembly will remember Hon. Staby as a dedicated democrat, a staunch patriot and able debater, who contributed greatly to the drafting of new laws for independent Namibia. Hon. Staby was a gentleman and a professional.

Namibia is indebted to history for giving her such a brilliant son, parliamentarian and community leader. Hon. Staby's sense of honesty and uprightness is something the whole nation should inherit. After leaving active politics, Hon. Staby was promoting democratic ideals and civil society initiatives in furtherance of good governance and the rule of law in our democratic Republic.

May we all find solace in the fact that Hon. Staby has completed the purpose of his life with dignity and dedication. May his soul rest in eternal peace!

Yours in bereavement and solidarity

Hon. Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab  
Speaker of the National Assembly and  
President of Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)



*As part of its social responsibility and in commemoration of the World AIDS Day on 1st December 2009, the National Council donated nutritional food hampers to two HIV and AIDS Orphanage organisations in Windhoek.*



*Some staff members of the National Council who attended an HIV and AIDS workshop on Council premises from 16-20 November 2009.*