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# MISSIONS' BRIEF

4 MARCH 1993

## 1. WINDHOEK: WEDNESDAY IN PARLIAMENT (NAMPA)

Namibia's defence policy, like its foreign policy, was founded on the principles of co-existence and co-operation with other countries, and in the operation of international law.

This view was expressed by Defence Minister Peter Mueshihange in Parliament during his opening statement on the White Paper on Defence Policy yesterday.

He stated that the day-to-day guarantee of security lay in the maintenance of international order and, in particular, in regional stability.

Mr Mueshihange said that, apart from the war in Angola, prospects for future regional stability and co-operation were encouraging, but added that despite an assessment that the threat was low at present, Namibia's defence policy should be based on the premise that it might face a security threat in future.

To be able to counter any future threat, he added, the country must maintain a minimal, unified national defence system, supported by appropriate structures, policies and plans. "The system must demonstrate to any potential aggressor that his aggression would be met with an active, determined and robust defence," Mr Mueshihange stated.

He said the aim was to maintain a small, professional, well-equipped and mobile defence force capable of deploying to contain and contest any attack on Namibia's territory.

He stated that the training of the contingent of Namibian Defence Force (NDF) members assigned to war-torn Somalia had been completed, adding that the Defence Ministry was only awaiting advice from the United Nations regarding the contingent's likely



deployment and the cost-sharing arrangements that will apply.

Mr Mueshihange said isolated incidents of breach of discipline had been recorded in the Defence Force, which the Ministry regretted, in particular the recent shooting of a number of people by an NDF member, but added that he would not tolerate such acts.

He promised that "most vigorous steps" would be taken to ensure that this was not repeated.

"Our armed forces must be well-disciplined and exemplary at all times. Stricter control will be exercised over soldiers' movements after cessation of their duties," he stated. "This will include arrest by the military police of soldiers found outside their bases without proper authorisation," he added.

He said the Defence Force could make a positive contribution to the country's development, both through the provision of assistance to civil authorities and through training of its personnel to play a more constructive role in society.

The military school at Okahandja conducts a variety of military and administrative courses which help improve NDF members, Mr Mueshihange said. "We are also participating keenly in the national literacy programme," the Defence Minister stated.

The debate on the White Paper on Defence Policy was then adjourned until Friday morning.

## **2. WINDHOEK: NATIONAL COUNCIL ON WEDNESDAY (NAMP)**

The Roads Amendment Bill that was passed by the National Assembly went smoothly through the second reading debate in the National Council when it was reviewed by the Lower House yesterday.

Speaking during the second reading stage of the Bill, DTA member Samuel Petrus Cloete said the Bill would undoubtedly help farm owners to fence off roads going through their properties. He added that, in the past, farm owners only received subsidies for materials and not for the actual transport and labour costs.



He said that, since moving animals in the absence of a fence constituted a threat to road users, especially at night, this danger was now being eliminated by the new legislation. The Bill was then read for the second time. It was the first of its kind to be reviewed by the National Council since its inception two weeks ago.

During the same session a report of the Select Committee on Standing Rules and Procedures was tabled by SWAPO member, Wilfred Emvula.

The House was then adjourned until Thursday morning.

3. **WINDHOEK: ANTI-APARTHEID CAMPAIGNER VISITS  
PRESIDENT NUJOMA (NAMP)** ✓

The chairperson of the Anti-Apartheid Movement in Belgium, Ms Poulette Pierson-Mathy, paid a courtesy call on President Nujoma at State House yesterday.

Ms Pierson-Mathy, who arrived in the country on Sunday, had been attending the African National Congress Solidary Conference which was held in Johannesburg two weeks ago.

"I could not go back home without visiting Namibia, especially SWAPO leaders with whom we have been living in solidarity for many years," she told President Nujoma.

She said European countries were satisfied with the current situation in Namibia and the country's policy of national reconciliation was being regarded by Europeans as a model for the rest of Africa. "South Africa and Angola have a lot to learn from Namibia," she added.

President Nujoma, in turn, expressed delight at meeting Ms Pierson-Mathy again after so many years. "Poulette is an old freedom fighter and no stranger to Namibia," the President said.

Ms Pierson-Mathy is expected to leave for Belgium today.



**4. WINDHOEK: BRITISH ORGANISATION TO INVESTIGATE WAYS OF HELPING NAMIBIA (NAMPA)**

The regional director of the British Executive Service Overseas (BESO), Mr Denis Dickinson, will be visiting Namibia for three days towards the end of this month to explore possible ways in which his organisation might be able to help Namibia.

BESO, a London-based independent charitable organisation, has a register of 2 700 qualified and experienced advisors with a wide range of skills.

Most of these advisors are recently retired and are ready to undertake short assignments free of charge as advisors and consultants to both the private and public sectors in countries overseas to promote the training and development of local people to improve their skills. Over 2 100 assignments in 90 countries have been performed to date.

**5. WINDHOEK: KARAKUL SEMINAR OPENS (NAMPA)**

Karakul producers have been urged to combine efforts in fighting low market prices for their products as a result of a world-wide economic recession and the drought.

Addressing sheep farmers, representatives of co-operatives and the International Karakul Secretariat at the opening of a two-day seminar on karakul farming, the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development, Dr Kaire Mbuende, warned that "only by combining all our available resources will we stand a good chance to survive in these difficult times."

Dr Mbuende, however, stated that, despite the present low market prices for karakul products, karakul sheep production still had an important role to play in contributing positively to the country's agricultural sector and the economy.

He added that the Government was supporting the industry for the benefit of the communities and the people involved. The Government has implemented a subsidy scheme of R10 per pelt as a means of discouraging farmers from slaughtering their karakul



sheep at a high rate during the severe drought, he explained.

The Deputy Minister further urged farmers in the karakul industry to find international markets for products such as rugs and carpets and to find a way of selling the mutton from Karakul sheep at premium prices. He also stated that more research work on the improvement of carcass qualities should be encouraged.

The chairperson of the International Karakul Secretariat, Mr Jack Albertyn, in turn, announced that the Secretariat was presently involved in a campaign to promote karakul products on both the local and international markets. He explained that the campaign was aimed at increasing the market prices for karakul products which have decreased because of a world-wide economic recession and the severe drought facing Southern Africa.

"This initiative is also aimed at encouraging farmers to continue to produce more karakul products despite the low market prices," he stated, adding that only better prices could encourage production.

6. **WINDHOEK: INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY TO BE CELEBRATED (NAMPA)** ✓

International Women's Day will be celebrated worldwide this year under the theme "Violence Against Women".

According to the national programme officer of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), Ms Eunice Ipinge, women will be holding a panel discussion at the United Nations Headquarters in New York today.

She said participants in the panel discussion would include women who played a prominent role in the fight against various forms of violence. "The discussion is scheduled prior to Women's Day in order to encourage press coverage on the day itself," she added.

Ms Ipinge explained that the issues to be discussed would focus on rape, female circumcision, sexual harassment, domestic violence, enforced prostitution, as well as the issue of the



payment of a dowry. ✓

She further said that, as part of the programme, women will also look at what the United Nations was doing to combat violence against women, in particular the draft declaration on the allegations of widespread rape in Bosnia.

In Namibia, the preparatory committee for the celebration of Women's Day has already completed the programme. Namibian women will hand over a petition on Women and Violence to the Minister of Justice, Mr Ngarikutuke Tjiriange, on 6 March.

On that day, women will march through Independence Avenue as part of the celebration and there will cultural dances, dramas and several speeches to mark the occasion.