



NATIONAL COUNCIL

STATEMENT

BY

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CHAIRPERSON OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL

AT

**THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE 90th CPA EXECUTIVE MEETING –
AFRICA REGION**

ON

5 March 2026

Swakopmund, Namibia

It is with profound honour and gratitude that I address you as your host for the 90th Executive Committee Meeting of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association – Africa Region.

Allow me, at the onset, to extend my heartfelt appreciation to the membership of the CPA Executive Committee for graciously accepting our invitation and for making the journey to Swakopmund.

Your presence is not only a testament to your commitment to the CPA family, but also a powerful signal of the collective resolve to strengthen parliamentary cooperation across our continent.

This gathering is a pivotal moment for CPA Africa Region. We are convening to set the agenda for our upcoming meetings and engagements.

It is vital for us to ensure that the voices of Africa are not only heard but amplified within the broader Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. Our parliaments must stand firm in advancing regional priorities, championing African

perspectives, and shaping the CPA's global discourse with clarity and conviction.

In the near future, a new Commonwealth Parliamentary Association will emerge. The CPA Africa region in general, and the EXCO in particular, have every reason to take pride in their steadfast advocacy for a redefined CPA status.

This is not merely a procedural shift, it is indeed a generational opportunity to renew the CPA's relevance, legitimacy, and impact.

The question before Africa is whether this development will reflect our aspirations, or merely replicate the existing framework in a different form.

It is therefore imperative that we ask ourselves: what meaningful contribution are we, as representatives of our Africa, making to the reform of the constitution of this new Association and its accompanying legislative instruments.

The multifaceted challenges that we encounter, ranging from governance and socio-economic transformation to the

advancement of peace and justice are further intensified by the prevalence of global geopolitical environment.

It is increasingly observed that external actors may put forth considerable influence over African priorities and agreements, often aligning them with their own strategic interests.

In this context, it is imperative that our parliaments actively engage in parliamentary diplomacy to mitigate dependency and to affirm and advance Africa's own agenda.

These circumstances call for a renewed commitment to unity and solidarity, ensuring that Africa's voice is not only articulated but also accorded due regard in shaping the patterns of this evolving global order.

Let us, therefore, use this platform to reaffirm our shared commitment to building resilient institutions, fostering inclusive development, and ensuring that the CPA remains a beacon of parliamentary excellence rooted in diversity and solidarity.

With these words, it is now my distinct honour and privilege to invite to the stage the Vice President of the Republic of Namibia, Her Excellency Lucia Witbooi, to deliver her keynote address.

Thank you.