

CoD 2024 ELECTION MANIFESTO

16 MARCH 2024

Congress of Democrats
A new Beginning



CoD

A New Beginning

*Be Counted for Change. VOTE CoD
on 2024 Election & Make a Difference*



VAINO ELAGO AMUTHENU
CoD: President



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1. FOREWORD



Many Namibians become annoyed when politicians and political party activists start running around shouting slogans and distributing pamphlets and leaflets whenever its election time. Where were these bothersome people during all these years, and why do we see them only at the end of every fifth year, when one parliamentary cycle ends and another is about to start?

This reaction is understandable, seeing that the message coming from political activists during election time does not become important only every fifth year when there is an election. What the CoD activists preach from the political platforms during election time, we hold to be true always, and not only during an election year. We believe that whether we sleep or we are awake, whether we work or we are at rest, whether we live or die, the deep divisions between rich and poor, white and black, men and women, between different ethnic group, between returnees and “remainees” (those who remained in the country during the liberation struggle), and sometimes even between Catholics and Lutherans or “Pentecostal” and “traditional” churches: these are the factors leading to social exclusions and inequalities such as we witness in Namibian society today,

It is therefore understandable that there are expectations from the public that politician be more active and more persistent in preaching what they believe to be generally valid, true and important, all year round. We must admit that often, our voice has not come out loud enough in proclaiming what have always been our strongest believe. At times we have seemed to remain quiet when we should have been shouting at the top of our voices in condemnation of inequities. Sometimes when many had expected us to respond to, challenge and contradict what is obviously false and outrageous, we have not done so.

There could be many reasons for this seemingly deafening silence in the midst of injustice and social wrongs, but a few stand out. In the first place, the tool often used to publicize political opinions, though they belong to the State and should be available for the use of all, are often held or controlled by the Government and used for the benefits of one political house only. In our case in Namibia, the NBC, which is funded through tax payers money, to acquire television and radio broadcasting facilities that enable it to reach the whole population, often tend to be at the service of the government and ruling party only. In other words, what should belong to the public and should be used to the



benefit of the whole population irrespective of political affiliation, often has a strong political bias in its broadcasts. This is an unfair state of affairs and should not be allowed to continue as it is. The press and media belonging to the state should be available for the use of all.

This system, rather than allowing for the possibility of political change, it perpetuates the status quo, and excludes forever potential new-comers on the political scene. We have often spoken out against this system of unequal distribution of public resources.

We can continue to ignore the clear signs of one-party dominance only at our peril. If we want democracy to work for all of us, then it is democracy that we should be funding, and not the political “winners” as opposed to “losers”.



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2. LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

My Dear fellow Namibians,

It is that time again, that we must decide who must rule our Republic for the next five years! Everyone says Democracy is now well established in Namibia. In other words, it is the people themselves who decide which political party must constitute their government during a specific five year cycle.

During the past 34 years we have come together at the polls seven times to elect a president, and members of parliament; the first time that we have done so have been in November 1989. November 2024 will be the eighth time that we go to the polls again.

Always we elect willingly, people to run our affairs and make laws according to which we are governed. Yet we are often unhappy with the way things have turned out in practice. Often I hear people complaining about the growing unemployment, and asking: what is government doing about it? People are aggrieved about how too many of our children fail grades 10 and 12 in our schools, of about how the police are forever without vehicles whenever we call them out to a crime scene in our neighborhoods.

Of what use is a government that fails our people instead of providing them free education from pre-primary to University? What use is a government that cannot and would not stop the criminals from terrorizing us day and night? What value is in a life without employment, sports nor recreational facilities for the young and for old citizens? Where do we go wrong? How can we keep making the wrong choice, seven times in a row?

Well, here I am, asking you, my people, to critically look at our political, economic and social situation, and consider how it has deteriorated in the past 34 years I ask you earnestly to consider the following old Oshikwanyama proverb: "Hashiti she ku nyekel' ekosho, oho endepo wa lungama."

In other words: why make the same mistake over and over again? You are free to walk away from a government that promises year in and year out, but then turns around after every election and go feed themselves on our tax payers money; send their children to



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the best schools while ours are failed through unavailability of textbooks and other teaching aids. Enough is enough!

Our party, the Congress of Democrats, is once again making itself available to guide the Nation out of this social and economic quagmire and move on to times of hope, of moral regeneration, and of general prosperity. We shall start right next year, 2025, and continue right through the next five years and beyond.

I myself as a leader, availing myself to serve you, willingly, with all humility, patience, and endurance.

Let us go together and vote for the One Party and One leader who knows no corruption, nor tribalism nor nepotism, the only True Zebra Party, CoD.

I look forward to seeing you on Election Day, and remain,

Yours Truly

Vaino Elago Amuthenu



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3. WHAT DOES CoD WANT?

Politics is not a career.

If you have always taken it as such, then it's time to know that there are others who have a practical experience and view point totally different.

As CoD, we do take approach that "Politicians" come to be such necessarily through a self-interested decision taken to become a people's servant. Well, there may be those in Namibia who believe that politics is a career field where you join to go cheat people repeatedly and get rich quickly. However, in the CoD, serving the nation is a principle and a value we believe in. Our leaders will get there literally through self-sacrifices and not been led on with promises of bags full of gold.

We have chosen politics because it's our calling rather than a career, to serve our nation. We serve with honour, because we seek always only the redemption of our nation. Today you look around and see our land... no we have no land to speak of! We are poor, and there is no dignity in poverty, nor is it a right, to be poor...

The Congress of Democrats, CoD, has always been ready to SERVE Namibia, through working with all our PEOPLE to CHANGE the current dismal social and economic conditions for the BETTER. Since our memorable launch 25 years ago we have had ONE VISION only: re-make Namibia into a fair Place where we all Prosper by mobilizing our abundant natural resources and our talented, gifted people in unity and in harmony. Our Motto continues to be: Let Us Have A New Beginning; let us restore hope for our Country and our People.

For almost 34 years the current administration has continued to benefit the Elite only, a small group of people who have now grown rich and fat, and who are out of touch with the rest of our Nation. In a country so well bestowed with mineral and other natural



resources the vast majority of our population has continued to be poor, and the income gap has widened; our industries have stalled, workers' wages are low and unemployment has remained very high. The country's education system has continued to falter, and has produced an entire army of secondary school drop-outs; our Public Health Sector is a veritable Pain in the Back with seriously inadequate facilities, no medical or, health insurance for the vast majority rundown , ill-equipped hospitals, health centers and clinics, as well as a shortage of doctors and nurses.

With a quarter of a century of freedom and independence, and a supposedly united Nation, tribalism and nepotism continue to raise their ugly heads, and disillusionment and gloom prevail everywhere, especially amongst youth.

The situation is generally intolerable and can no longer be allowed to continue. Our country needs Change; the CoD is ready to bring that change.



4. OUR CORE VALUES AND POLITICAL PRINCIPLES

4.1 In CoD we believe in the principle of social Justice and mixed economy. We believe in Democratic systems and we will align our support with those in true democratic systems. Politics should be a tool through which social equity can be sought and achieved. In our country Namibia, where the rich/ poor divide is one of the deepest in the whole world, the CoD has always promoted and will continue to promote the principles and policies of social and economic justice, equity and solidarity. These values have to replace the current trends of self-interest, self-enrichment, elitism and entitlements which are destroying the social fabric of our society.

4.2 Education and human resources and development is at the heart of CoD's development policy. We believe that today's competitive world demands the moulding of a knowledge based society, so that Namibian can meet the demands of a fast-globalizing world. Education must allow Namibians to develop their full potential both in terms of skills development as well as critical thinking. A broad-based education should also be capable of inculcating a sense of civic duty and responsible citizenry.

4.3 The CoD shall promote and actively pursue land and Agrarian reform, which will ensure the optimal utilization of agricultural land by all Namibians to the benefit of the Nation as a whole. We aim to promote equity with efficiency in this regard.

4.4 The CoD shall deliberately pursue a gender-balanced policy, and shall specifically promote the advancement of women, as well as protecting the interest of our marginalized community members

4.5 The CoD shall promote National Unity as the cornerstone of Nation Building, in recognition of our nation's rich cultural practices and shall protect them as part of our common heritage.

4.6 The CoD believes in political and social accountability. We shall continue to promote the concept and culture of accountability and the virtues of an open and transparent



society. The party is determined to instill a service culture among its leadership and to empower party structures to hold leaders accountable and to remove them if they cannot meet the expectation of their constituency. The prompt and immediate service delivery to communities that need it shall be one of our priority concerns. The culture of serving the public through the participation in various community activities and the delivery of aid and voluntary services to communities in need will enjoy our priority attention.

4.7 The CoD shall actively promote the democratic culture of tolerance, including the promotion of freedoms of speech and association without any forms of intimidation; we shall promote press and Media freedom, and freedom of information.

4.8 The CoD shall promote the development and growth of a dynamic civil society capable of actively influencing the development of our communities and our nation at large. This shall be done by broadly consulting all stakeholders including the labour Movement, the Business community, NGO's, Traditional Leaders and all other interested parties.

4.9 The CoD shall develop bonds of Solidarity and friendship with organizations all over the world that pursue aims and objectives similar to ours. Together with these allies, we shall seek and promote a development strategy that will put an end to hunger, poverty and human suffering. International links shall also serve to vigorously advocate and promote the resolution of internal, interstate, regional and international conflicts by diplomatic and peaceful means.

4.10 The CoD shall promote a system of broad popular control of public institutions such as State-owned companies and organizations. We shall also promote the development of our rural areas and the country's regions. We advocate the equitable distribution of resources to the regions in order to achieve the development of the whole country.



5. POLITICAL IDEOLOGY:

5.1 FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY: The CoD approaches the concept of “Freedom” from the social as opposed to the individual side. To paraphrase Ingvar Carlsson and Anne-Marie Lindgren, we view freedom in this regard as freedom for many; we seek to put emphasis on the social aspect of freedom in reaction against the lack of freedom and force that people are subjected to when, for example, they demonstrate in public in a peaceful fashion and without arms; or when decisions about their conditions in life are made from the point of view of someone else’s self-interests. In that sense the freedom we talk about is freedom from repression and humiliation, from hunger and ignorance, from fear and disease, unemployment, old age, etc. We mean and actively democratically pursue freedom for active participation and co-determination, freedom to pursue personal development and the opportunity to influence the society which determines the individual’s life and future. Such freedom is achieved through popular, democratic governance, where all adult citizens participate in the political decision-making process.

5.2 DEMOCRACY AND SOCIALISM: The CoD believes in the social as opposed to individual private ownership of natural and mineral resources available in Namibia today and in the future, be they underneath or on the surface of the land, in the ocean or in the air, and in a social organization that allows optimal utilization of all available resources, including human resources, to achieve the highest possible human and social development. Central to this is the demand for EQUALITY, in the sense that all Namibians should be treated uniformly and be given the same opportunity to develop



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their character and to exercise control over their lives by determining, managing and controlling their own living conditions, both as individuals and together in communities.

5.3 AFRICAN SOLIDARITY: Africa belongs to us, those who are born and live in Africa, whether we are black, brown or white. We express and shall act in solidarity with Africans and other people under political oppression or under threat of war, or national catastrophe.

5.4 HUMAN BROTHERHOOD AND SISTERHOOD; We further believe in a common human destiny; a common brotherhood and sisterhood for all the people of the earth, and a common duty to reach out to those in need.

5.5 The CoD recognizes Namibia's various cultural practices and shall protect them as part of our common heritage. CoD shall in this regard strictly execute Article 14 of the Namibian constitution: "Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, color; ethnic origin, nationality, creed or economic status shall have the right to marry and to found a family" therefore CoD as a party that believe in Christianity we are against the same sex marriage because homosexual behavior is immoral and unacceptable and the sodomy laws should remain in force.



6.CoD POLITICAL PROGRAMME

We have developed a straight-forward Five –Point Political Programme that is easy to follow that we term “CoD’s Five Point Plan”, and we invite the readers to study it below.

6.1 FREE EDUCATION, SKILLS TRAINING: (Transform the education system)

(a) Free education:

Education, which shall be truly free of charge, high-quality and comprehensive, from pre-primary to University; shall be offered through the mobilization of national resources, and shall include moral and social education; The CoD shall totally transform the current Education System, modernize education and training; and provide truly free (un-paid for) education at primary, secondary and University level. For this purpose we shall raise the necessary financial resources to ensure the realization of our commitment. All young children, minors and all those seeking education shall be given the opportunity to learn. CoD shall in this regard strictly execute Article 20 of the Namibian Constitution: “Everyone shall have right to Education”, and shall promptly amend the current Education Act to comply with the constitution by rendering education free of charge and compulsory, not only at primary level but right through to university.

(b) Vocational Education and Training:

The CoD believe that Vocational Education and Training provides learners with essential skills, enhancing their employability and supporting their personal



development. In addition, Vocational Education plays a critical role in bridging the skills gap and meeting the evolving needs of industries. CoD will allocate about 40% of the National Budget, every year.

6.2 HEALTH FOR ALL: (Transform the Health Sector) AND SOCIAL GRANTS

Health and Welfare, which shall be based on a totally radical approach, aiming to transform the current Health and Welfare system in the country, introducing total and comprehensive access to all our citizens to health and medical facilities in the country, be they private or state facilities; a comprehensive medical aid and medical insurance and pension system that will include not only government employees but also all private sector employees, war veterans and children of war veterans. The CoD is aware of the burden of responsibility placed on the shoulder of any democratic government. In this respect it's important to state that CoD believes in the equal treatment of all war veterans, as advocated in the genuine Policy of National Reconciliation, our philosophy of equality shall apply. Further, CoD shall amend the current Veterans Act in order to render it more inclusive, and to facilitate the assistance of all Namibians affected by any adverse action by states, arising from colonialism and the colonial wars of subjugation waged on our indigenous populations by Imperial Germany.

All former war veterans shall be given the opportunity for permanent rehabilitation, restitution and resettlement by the State. Let us ensure good Health for all our people, by creating social conditions whereby access to health is available to all Namibians and all who live in Namibia, irrespective of their economic status, or any other irrelevant distinction.

This can be achieved by making sure that all Namibians including those who work for the Private Sector, or are unemployed, should be covered by a system of Healthy insurance, which allows them to access private health services at a fraction (say, 5%) of



its cost. But the assurance of lasting physical and spiritual health presupposes far more than just good hospitals and a modern health insurance system. It presupposes a life lived in the fullest human dignity. To achieve that objective, we shall need to heal the past wounds and repair as much as we can, the damage that was caused by a history of genocide, de-humanization, the expropriation of property, poverty, political oppression and economic exploitation.

Overhaul the Health Sector and provide medical insurance that allows access to health facilities to unemployed youth, students as well as pensioners;

(c) Social Grants:

It is reported that, in total, 618 110 Namibians receive state social grants. The CoD believe that the driving objective of Social Grants, inter alia, the Old age Grant, Disability Grant, in any country is to alleviate the negative impact of poverty. In this light, The CoD believe that Social Grants must be determined based on real cost of living, not according to the political hypothesis as per the current ruling political party electioneering strategies.



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6.3 LAND REFORM AND REDISTRIBUTION (Transform Land Use System)

Commercial Farmers contributed approximately 27% of the GDP: 2012 – 2022: Namibia Commercial Guide.

Land Reform and Agricultural Transformation, which shall be based on the very important “Three R’s Principle: Restoration, Restitution, and Reparations, and which shall follow the approach of peaceful and orderly restoration of access to national Lands to all our communities, and basically those currently and historically expropriated of their lands and agricultural resources; which will have due consideration of the current property principles entrenched in our national Constitution, have a Unified approach to land utilization and agricultural resources; Restrict excessive land ownership by single private individuals to the detriment of communities; introduce Organized Land Utilization and Management Systems that aim at the rehabilitation and conservation of agricultural activities to all farmers.

We must reform land use, including redistributing farming and agricultural land to landless farming communities, as part of a comprehensive, well-planned land-reform programme; we need to overhaul, unify, build and modernize farming and agricultural production into a commercially profitable industry and a proud, major building block to the country’s economy.



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CoD will mobilize and raise funds for the purpose of buying farm land mass expropriation of indigenous people. CoD caution that productive farm land should under no circumstances be turned into informal settlement or squatter camp as is the case at present.

6.4 NATIONAL ECONOMY: (Transform the economy and create jobs)

We will do away with discriminatory policies, like tenderpreneurship policy, and implement policies and programs that are inclusive.

Economy Employment and Job Creation and Labour based Issues, emphasizing the need to develop the economy and creating jobs for those currently sitting at Street corners and in Kambashus across the length and breadth of our country; ban the employment of foreign unskilled workers and allow for Mineral and Natural Resources Redistribution.



6.5 NATIONAL BUILDING AND GOOD GOVERNANCE: (Transform and Unite Namibia Nation)

In CoD we believe that a Truth and National Reconciliation could only be realized and effective if the National Reconciliation Commission is established.

Nation Building, which shall aim at building and enhancing the Namibian National Identity; put an immediate stop to the so- called Returnees/ Remainees Dichotomy, stop all discrimination based on exiles and the support of certain political parties; Reform and review the 2008 Veterans act to do away with political rewards and awards, build unity and enhance true national RECONCILIATION, introduce stricter anti-corruption laws and regulation, enhance good governance practices; do away with all negative social classifications, negative tribal connotation and name-calling; introduce a law to fight tribalism, nepotism and general discrimination and the awarding of tenders and other public national resources to a group of people who are well connected to a certain political network. Unite all our communities and provide for a programme and guidelines to Build a truly United Namibian Nation.

7. CONCLUSION

We firmly believe that our Five Point Plan will help transform our country and society and build true prosperity, doing away with poverty completely. As we speak, Party cadres are busy adding flesh and expanding on our Political Programme, and soon, on a date and venue to be announced, we shall call on the Media, our members,



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supporters, and on the general public, to come and join us in the launch and publication of these plans in our Election Manifesto.

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