

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT
ON THE
COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC STATUS REPORT
BY THE
HON. MINISTER OF FINANCE AND NATIONAL PLANNING (DR
MUSOKOTWANE), MP

Madam Speaker, I thank you for according me this opportunity to provide a status report on the economy. In a sense, I am providing an inception report upon which a baseline is being established. The United Party for National Development (UPND) Administration will build on it and push forward.

Madam Speaker, going forward, as part of the reforms that the country needs to undertake, I think we should institutionalise the practice of an outgoing administration stating the status of the economy as they leave and an incoming administration also indicating what they have found. It is a practice found in many countries. A practice of that nature requires that the data set for making the report be comprehensive and accurate. This needs to be built up with time because currently the data sets are not adequate in some critical areas. A good example of that is employment data.

Madam Speaker, my presentation this afternoon will highlight the macroeconomic economic situation as we found it, subject of course to data availability. I will also give some broad indications of the drive forward on the economy by the UPND administration.

Madam Speaker, here is a summary of what I am going to state. Our economy is faced with a number of challenges. Growth has been sluggish, fiscal deficits have been persistently high and debt is unsustainable. Inflation is in double digits, the exchange rate has been volatile and interest rates have remained high. The combination of these challenges has brought about sufferings among the people, hence the decision they took to change the Government.