30 September 2026

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STATEMENT BY THE SHADOW MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND TRADE-MINISTERIAL TRAVEL COSTS SHOULD BE ANSWERED IN PARLIAMENT

1. **WINDHOEK, 30 September 2026,** Yesterday, after I gave notice of a follow-up question to the Minister of International Relations and Trade, the Speaker ruled from the Chair that questions seeking an account of expenditure were out of order until the expenditure had been audited. I complied with the direction to table the question. I now challenge the basis and effect of that ruling through the lawful procedures of the House.

2. The Minutes of Proceedings record that **Question 152** was replied to on **17 September 2026**. The written reply available to me lists ten trips by the Minister and says that "the full details of the answers will be availed to the Honourable Member". It does not provide the cost of each trip or identify the accompanying officials for each trip.

3. The follow-up question asks for those missing particulars: what each trip cost, who travelled, how it was funded and when the promised details will be placed before the House.

4. I have not identified a provision in the 2024 Standing Rules, the Constitution or the **State Finance Act 31 of 1991** that expressly makes completion of an Auditor-General audit a precondition for a Minister to answer a parliamentary question about expenditure. In my view, imposing an audit-first bar that is not stated in those instruments is a misuse of the rules.

Standing Rule 131 makes the Presiding Member the sole judge of the question rules; it does not make public expenditure immune from parliamentary scrutiny.

5. **Article 41 of the Constitution** makes Ministers accountable for the administration of their Ministries both to the President and to Parliament. The Ministry's published budget estimates also disclose an aggregate travel and subsistence figure of **N$40,121,645.20 for 2024/25**. That is a Ministry-wide figure, not the Minister's personal travel bill, and it does not answer the trip-by-trip question.

6. The practical effect of this ruling is to protect Ministers from answering cost questions when the money is spent and while Parliament can still act. That is bias in its effect, whatever the intention. I make no allegation about anyone's personal motive. I am describing what the ruling does.

7. I am writing to the Speaker to request written reasons, the provision relied upon and reconsideration of the exclusion of the cost questions. I will use every lawful procedure available to obtain the outstanding particulars and defend the right of Members to follow public money. Diplomacy requires travel. Accountability requires the figures. Ministers must answer Parliament for public money now, not years later.

Namibia is all we have
Namibia is not for sale
We must and can save it!

ISSUED BY: Hon. Rodney Cloete, MP
Shadow Minister of International Relations and Trade, Independent Patriots for Change (IPC)