



27 January 2023

Office of the President State House
President H.E. Dr. Hage G. Geingob
Laurent Desire Kabila Street, Auasblick
President Bag 13339
Windhoek
NAMIBIA

Your Excellency, President Geingob

APPEAL FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A UNIVERSAL/UNCONDITIONAL BASIC INCOME GRANT (BIG)

We are writing to obtain your commitment towards ending poverty and inequality in Namibia as promised in your inaugural speech of 2015 by urgently implementing a universal/unconditional BIG cash transfer scheme of N\$500/person/month for all Namibians aged 0-59.

Namibia continues to rank as the 2nd most unequal country in the world without sufficient efforts being made to tackle the problem. The recent United Nations Food & Agriculture Organisation (FAO) report shows that 1,5 million Namibians are starving and constantly stressed about where to get their next meal, which represents the reality on the ground. This is coupled with the ongoing crisis of unemployment.

Namibia's unemployment rate, particularly among the youth, is abnormally high by global standards. This worrying trend of increasing unemployment, is undoubtedly unsustainable, has driven a degree of hopelessness amongst the population and will continue to fuel discontent - especially amongst the youth - directed at the current political leadership.

Human rights experts have warned that poverty undermines societies through conflict, violence and civil disorder should the poor be left hopeless. A wealth redistributive programme such as the BIG will play a major role in reducing and preventing civil discontent and unrest in Namibia.

We were hopeful at independence, as we were promised a better life and prosperity for all. We were excited when you were inaugurated as president in 2015 as you declared war on poverty promising the Namibia people that you would make sure that no one in the Namibian house would be left out. You said that one of your fears was not being able to fulfil the promises you made to the Namibian people. The introduction of a universal BIG presents you with an opportunity to keep that promise.

We can certainly afford to provide everyone with some minimal level of resources necessary for a decent existence. This will provide meaning to Article 95 of our Constitution and pave the way for every Namibian to live in dignity.

Making resources available to eradicate poverty is not only socially necessary but will also provide a major impetus for economic recovery as it increases personal consumption spending and the supply of money in the economy. A universal BIG will assist to put the economy back on track and will have various social and economic benefits.

The introduction of a universal BIG will ensure a **lasting and proud legacy** of your presidency as it:

- will elevate your status by making history for being the first President in the world to implement a BIG;
- gives Africa a chance to spearhead ideas in the world economy, find its identity in the world economy, and not just be followers;
- allows Africa to revive and showcase its Ubuntu values/philosophy;

In the face of the desperation experienced by so many Namibians, we are appealing to you to take decisive action to break the cycle of generational poverty by implementing a universal BIG of at least N\$500/person/month for all Namibians aged 0-59 without any further delay.

We hope to hear from you latest by 20 February 2023.

Respectfully,

Basic Income Grant Coalition

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**THE CALL FOR A
 UNIVERSAL BASIC INCOME GRANT (BIG)**

is supported by





**ELCRN Desk for Social Development
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