

**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY DR SAM NUJOMA
FOUNDING PRESIDENT AND FATHER OF THE
NAMIBIAN NATION, ON THE OCCASION OF
ADDRESSING SWAPO PARTY YOUTH AND PIONEERS**

27 JUNE 2010

KATUTURA MULTI PURPOSE YOUTH COMPLEX

WINDHOEK

Director of Ceremonies;
Honourable Governor of the Khomas Region;
Honourable Regional and Local Councillors;
Comrade Members of the Regional and District Leadership of the SWAPO Party;
Comrade Executive Members of the SWAPO Party Wings;
Comrade Executive Members of the SWAPO Party Youth League;
Comrade Members of the SWAPO Party Youth League and Pioneer Movement;
Comrades:

1. WHERE WE CAME FROM:

Every Nation has a proud history. As Namibian youth, you should appreciate and develop keen interest in the history of our country. By so doing, you will be able to learn the painful journey that we have traveled as a nation over centuries until we have founded the free and independent Namibia.

This land of our forbearers; is the land of the brave. Namibians fought gallantry with vigour and determination to free ourselves from the bondage of colonial oppression and apartheid colonialism. The yoke of colonial oppression and subjugation verified our heroes and heroines and trampled upon our human dignity. The colonialists denied us our fundamental human rights to self determination and independence. It was for this reason that our forefathers and mothers rose to arms to resist and break the chains of colonialism, oppression and slavery.

The first stages of anti-colonial resistance was led by our national heroes and heroines who inspired thousands of Namibians to follow in their footsteps to overthrow the unjust colonial system of apartheid and restore the honour of our motherland, when we hoisted our flag of freedom on the 21st March 1990 and declared to the world that Namibia is free for ever.

I have therefore the honour to mention some of our heroes and heroines namely, Captain Hendrik Witbooi, Jacob Marenga, Chief Kahimemwa Nguvauva, Chief Samwel Maharero, Chief Nehale Lja Mpingana, Chief Mandume ja Ndemufayo, Abraham Morris, Simon Kooper, Chief Lipumbu ja Tshilongo and others. They fought the war of resistance against German colonialism and South African apartheid colonial occupation. They stood firm for the protection and defence of our motherland from European colonial invaders. Their mandate was taken over by Chief Hosea Kutako, Chief Samuel Witbooi and Reverend Theofelus Hamutumbangela who used the weapon of petitioning the United Nations (UN) to place the then Southwest Africa under the UN Trusteeship System with the clear purpose of assisting the Namibian people towards self-determination and independence.

The white minority colonial apartheid regime of South Africa perpetuated colonial oppression against our people. It imposed apartheid policies such as, Bantustans, Bantu education and the so-called South west Africa Labour Association (SWALA) under which the indigenous Namibian workers were recruited as cheap contract labourers.

It was in response to the systematic and barbaric colonization of our country, that as the youth of yesterday, we stood up in defense of our rights and decided to form the Ovamboland Peoples' Organization (OPO) in 1959 with a clear purpose of fighting against colonial exploitation. OPO was instrumental, together with Chief Hosea Kutako's Herero Council, in organizing the national

protest against the forceful removal of our people from the Old Location to the present day Katutura.

On that fateful day, 10 December 1959, the minority white colonial troops of South Africa brutally killed more than 12 innocent Namibians, including Kakurukaze Mungunda in cold blood and wounded 50 others. The Old Location Massacre signaled the turning point in the history of our National Liberation Struggle. In the following year, on 19 April 1960, we formed SWAPO as a Liberation Movement in order to fight for our genuine freedom and independence. SWAPO mobilized under its banner and drew together various progressive forces in Namibia such as the workers, youth, churches under the Council of Churches in Namibia and peasants and became the embodiment of their aspirations for genuine freedom.

SWAPO decided that political mobilization, as well as diplomatic and military efforts should be pursued concurrently.

Therefore, a three pronged strategy was adopted, namely; mass political mobilization inside Namibia, diplomatic offensive to isolate the minority white apartheid regime at the international level and armed liberation struggle.

Inside the country, mass political mobilization was intensified. Following the Tanga Consultative Conference in 1970, the National Union of Namibian Workers was established to mobilize the workers in order to paralyze the colonial economy. The SWAPO Party Youth League was also established to mobilize the youth of Namibia in order to participate actively in the national liberation struggle. Vibrant and fearless SWAPO Party Youth leaders such as Comrades Jerry Ekandjo, Joseph Kasheha, Martin Kapewasha, Nashilongo Taapopi, Charles Namholo and others demanded the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the illegal apartheid regime from Namibia.

In adhering to SWAPO's clarion call, the workers turned their work places into battle grounds leading to the successful 1971 General Strike. Other anti-colonial forces such as progressive churches and students joined the struggle. In the same year, Bishop Leonard Auala of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Owambo Kavango and Rev. Paulus Gowaseb of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Southwest Africa wrote a letter of protest to John Vorster, the then Prime Minister of the minority white apartheid colonial regime of South Africa, condemning the evil system of apartheid colonialism.

On the diplomatic front, SWAPO successfully mobilized the international community through the UN, Organization of African Unity (OAU) the forerunner of AU, the Frontline States and Nigeria as well as the Non-Aligned Movement to isolate the apartheid regime. In 1971, UN General Assembly recognized SWAPO as the sole and authentic representative of the Namibian people and declared the presence of South Africa in Namibia illegal.

SWAPO gained friends and allies from all over the world who rendered political, diplomatic and material support to SWAPO.

As Namibians, we will remain forever indebted to the selfless support and solidarity from friendly organizations such as the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), the Polisario Front and progressive nations such as Tanzania, Zambia, Angola, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Egypt, Algeria, Congo Brazaville, the then Soviet Union, Cuba, China, India and the rest of the international community that supported SWAPO during the difficult years of our national liberation struggle.

We, thus, have a duty to extend the same support to various nations battling to establish peace and stability in their countries. We should therefore continue to work together with all peace loving nations of the world through the UN and other multilateral agencies to promote the maintenance of world peace and security and ensure that human kind will live in peace without the threat of war.

On the military front, brave and heroic combatants of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) carried out successful military operations against the enemy forces inside Namibia, inflicting heavy casualties to the South African colonial troops. The racist troops of South Africa were finally and decisively defeated at the historic Battle of Cuito Cuanavale by the combined forces of Angolan national army-FAPLA, Cuban Internationalist Forces and SWAPO PLAN Combatants, leading to the South African apartheid regime signing the ceasefire agreement with SWAPO and accepting the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 435 that paved the way for the genuine independence of Namibia.

As the youth of Namibia, you should always continue to pay tribute and respect the tested and outstanding PLAN commanders, political commissars and combatants who fought for the freedom and independence that you enjoy today in Namibia. Some died during the Old Location Massacre in 1959, while others died in the Battle of Omugulu-Gwombashe and at other battles with the enemy forces or in foreign lands.

Among them are Commanders Tobias Hainyeko, Peter Eneas Nanyemba, Jason Hamutenya Ndadi Wanehepo, Greenwell Matongo, Hanganee Katjipuka Kavezeri, Helao Nafidi, Wilbard Tashiya Nakada, David Mbango, Isack Shikongo Pondo, John Hamukoto, Augustus Nghaamwa McNamara, Jonas Haiduwa, Penny Hashoongo, Peter Manyuka Mbereshu, Brendan Simbwaye and others. Their exemplary deeds will continue to serve, as a permanent source of inspiration in our second phase of the struggle for economic independence. Their blood waters our freedom.

Equally, you must continue to pay homage to our national leaders and Comrades who contributed immensely to our country's freedom, independence and nation building. They are: Anton Libowski, Immanuel Shifidi, Moses Garoeb, Peter Mweshihange, Patric Iyambo Lungada, Axel Johannes, Johnny ya Otto, Eliaser Tuhadeleni Kaxumba ka Ndola, Dimo Hamaambo, David Meroro, Getrude Kandanga Hilukilua, Maxton Joseph Mutongolome, Mose Tjitendero, David Uushona, Richard Kapelwa Kabajani, John Pandeni, Rev. Hendrik Witbooi to mention but a few.

2. NATION BUILDING

As you are all aware, the achievement of freedom and independence of our country was only a critical point of departure but not the destination. Political freedom will remain meaningless unless it is accompanied by genuine economic independence. Therefore, the youth should become active participants in the socio-economic development of our country in order to take our country to the advanced level of development.

The first task among the youth is to unite into a cohesive force that complements our Government's efforts to eradicate poverty, diseases, ignorance and under-development.

Indeed, the SWAPO Party Government has made notable successes over the past twenty years by implementing various projects such as the development of physical and communication

infrastructures, building of roads, hospitals and clinics, schools, provision of potable water, rural electrification and many others in all the thirteen regions of our country who have been long denied these basic services by the colonial white South African apartheid regime.

We have made good progress with the road construction projects forming part of the Trans-Caprivi and Trans-Kalahari Highways which are important routes between the Walvis Bay Harbour and Namibia's neighbouring landlocked countries such as Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Eastern DRC through the Ndola-Lumbumbashe-Walvis Bay Corridor.

We have embarked upon the construction of the Northern Railway Extension Project from Tsumeb via Ondangwa to Oshikango to join the Angolan the railway system in order to increase commercial trade between Namibia and Angola and the wider SADC region. I would like to express my profound thanks and gratitude to all Namibians from all corners of the country and all walks of life for volunteering to work on the railway and wish to urge all our people to continue to volunteer ourselves to work on projects that are being implemented in all the regions of our country and in so doing, complement our Government's development efforts.

Comrades,

The development and growth of Small and Medium Enterprises has the potential to enhance economic growth and development. We must continue to promote programmes which are aimed at building capacities and create conducive environment for the development of our Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) as a means to create employment opportunities for our people. Efforts must be made to expand the existing opportunities created by the local financial institutions, including the Development Bank of Namibia to fund productive SME ventures. We must remove all bottlenecks and enhance efficiency in order to strengthen the growth of this important economic sector.

The manufacturing and adding-value to our natural resources must remain a priority in order to improve the competitiveness of our national economy globally.

As you are all aware, our country is blessed with abundant natural resources, namely: copper, diamonds, zinc, gold, precious and semi-precious stones. In addition, our country is endowed with varieties of agricultural produce. I would like to call upon the youth to embark upon ventures that are aimed at economic diversification so that we can produce finished goods for local consumption and export them to other countries.

3. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Education and training remain critical to our youth who are the future leaders of our country. I therefore would like to encourage you to study mathematics and science subjects so that you can become agriculturalists, medical doctors, engineers, geologists, architects, marine biologists, economists, mathematicians and scientists who can implement Vision 2030.

Over the years; the SWAPO Party Government has prioritize education and trainings. We have expanded educational programmes at our institutions of higher learning, including our vocational training centres and teacher training colleges.

Last year the University of Namibia opened a new Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology at Ongwediva with a clear purpose of training our own engineers in all engineering fields. This year, a new School of Medicine was opened in Windhoek to train our own Medical Doctors. Our Government has laid a strong foundation for our youth. Therefore, you must now study hard and take your education seriously. It is the only way in which you will become future leaders of our country.

Our youth are increasingly losing focus on the future. They engage in negative behaviors and alcohol and drug abuse that destroy their lives. You must lead productive lives and contribute to the socio-economic development of our country.

4. AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

As you all know, a nation can only be truly independent when it can produce its own food. Therefore, with the view to enhance food security and self-sufficiency in our country, the SWAPO Party Government prioritized the development of agriculture. We have initiated several projects under the Green Scheme along the Orange, Kunene, Okavango and Zambezi Rivers for crop production.

The Ministry of Agriculture Water and Forestry is working together with the University of Namibia to develop and improve rice production in the country. Last year; the two institutions established the rice project at Kalimbeza in the Caprivi Region which was declared by His Excellency Hifikepunye Pohamba, President of the Republic of Namibia, as a national project. I therefore would like to encourage the youth to volunteer themselves to work on this important national project.

In addition, our Government has implemented aquaculture projects and research centres in various regions of our country to improve the livelihood of our people. I would like to encourage our youth to embark upon aquaculture projects to create employment for themselves and employ fellow unemployed Namibians.

5. DEFENCE OF OUR HARD WON FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE

We still face many challenges in our nation building efforts. We must therefore remain united and focus our energies on the application of scientific research and appropriate technology for development, proper planning and timely implementation of our development plans and programmes. In this way, we will be able to achieve our strategic objectives, namely the eradication of poverty, disease, ignorance and under-development.

In order to succeed as a nation, we must mobilize all the Namibian youth, especially members of the SWAPO Party Youth League, to promote national unity, solidarity and patriotism. We should eradicate all negative tendencies of individualism, regionalism and tribalism. Experience has taught us that these negative vices had destroyed nations. They derail social progress and economic development.

The hallmark of our national liberation struggle was to fight against racial discrimination, tribalism and apartheid. Our youth must never and never again allow themselves to be divided on the basis of regionalism, tribalism and ethnicity.

Equally, we should support efforts that are being made to accelerate the socio-economic integration of the SADC region and the wider African continent through the African Union. We should promote commercial trade and investments among all African countries in order to accelerate economic development and reduction of poverty, diseases and ignorance. As the youth, you should ally yourselves with progressive youth organizations on the African continent and other continents so that you can create a better and progressive world.

As members of the SWAPO Party Youth League, you must re-dedicate yourselves to the ideals of national unity and patriotism so that you can defend our hard-won Freedom and Independence. Although the enemy was defeated politically, he has not given up. History has taught us how the enemies of peace, freedom and social progress have caused division, political instability and economic sabotage in some sisterly countries on the African continent.

The enemy embarks upon maneuvers and machinations in order to mislead and converts some of our fellow African compatriots and turns them against their own people in order to reverse the gains of our freedom and independence. These deceptive attempts are the main causes of chronic marginalization and under-development on the African continent.

As Namibian youth, and as Africans, you must therefore be on the full alert and remain vigilant against deceptive attempts by opportunists and unpatriotic elements that attempt to divide you. As the future leaders of our country, you should act with dedication and commitment; to always promote the interests of the SWAPO Party and the national interests before your own. It is only through that manner that the SWAPO Party will grow from strength to strength and continues to rule Namibia for the next ONE THOUSAND YEARS.

Remember, a united people, striving to achieve common good for all members in the society, will always emerge victorious.

I thank you.