



TRIBUTE BY H. E. DR. SAM NUJOMA, FOUNDING
PRESIDENT AND FATHER OF THE NAMIBIAN NATION, ON
THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL FUNERAL IN HONOUR
OF THE LATE COL (RTD) JONAS NAWA SHIWEDA

28-29 FEBRUARY 2020

EENHANA MEMORIAL SHRINE

OHANGWENA REGION

*Check Against Delivery

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(Reg No 8208)

Directors of Proceedings;
Meekulu Anna Shiweda, the Children and the Entire Bereaved Family of the Late Retired Colonel Jonas Nawa Shiweda;
Your Excellency Dr Nangolo Mbumba, Vice President of the Republic of Namibia and Madam Mbumba;
Your Excellency Dr. Hifikepunye Pohamba, Former President of the Republic of Namibia and Madam Penexupifo Pohamba, Former First Lady;
Honourable Ministers and Deputy Ministers present;
Honourable Usko Nghaamwa, Governor of Ohangwena Region and other Governors present;
Comrade Hafeni Hatutale, SWAPO Party's Coordinator for Ohangwena Region;
Retired Commissioner Else Haulondjaba;
Esteemed Former Ambassador Hadino Hishongwa;
Esteemed Headman of Olunghono Village, Comrade George Namudjebo and all Senior Headmen and Leaders of Traditional Authorities present;
Distinguished Veterans of the National Liberation Struggle;
Esteemed Reverend Festus Shiimi and all Members of the Clergy present;
Fellow Mourners, allow me to stand by the protocol as established.

We are gathered here with profound grief and sorrow to mourn the passing on of a relentless freedom fighter and a Veteran of our National Liberation Struggle, Retired Colonel Jonas Nawa Shiweda.

I was indeed saddened to learn, through His Excellency Dr. Hifikepunye Pohamba, about the passing away of Retired Colonel Jonas Nawa Shiweda at Engela Hospital, on Monday 18 February 2020.

Last time I met Retired Colonel Jonas Nawa Shiweda was on the 15th of December 2019 while attending the Annual Early Christmas Lunch for the elderly hosted by Dr. Martha Namundjebo-Tilahun at the Late Comrade Eliakim Namundjebo's Homestead at Olunghono Village here in Ohangwena Region.

H.E. Dr. Hifikepunye Pohamba and other Veterans of our National Liberation Struggle such as Comrades Ben Amadhila, Ngarikutuke Tjiriange, Helao Vinia ya Ndadi and many others can attest to the fact that Retired Colonel Nawa was indeed a veteran of our National Liberation Struggle. He joined SWAPO in 1960 and was one of those who first received military training at Kongwa, Tanzania in 1964, specialising in Infantry.

I recall that in March 1961 in Cairo, during the Third All-African People's Conference, I requested President Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt to offer the opportunity of military training to SWAPO cadres and he assured me of such help.

In July 1962, we sent seven cadres to Egypt for Military training. These were Tobias Hainyeko, John Otto Nankudhu, Vilho Haitembu, Titus Muailepeni Shitilifa, Patrick Israel Iyambo better known as Lungada, Petrus Hambiya and Lazarus Sackaria.

These cadres were trained in guerrilla warfare tactics as well as marine training, parachuting, hand-to-hand combat and military topography.

In January 1963, Comrades Hainyeko and Muailepeni were joined by four other cadres, among them, Comrade Eliader Muatale, while others proceeded to the Nanjing Military Academy in the People's Republic of China, where they were trained until April 1964.

On 27 May 1963, we opened our military camp at Kongwa in Tanzania with those Comrades who had received their military training in Egypt, Algeria, Ghana, China, the Soviet Union, and North Korea.

Two months after, in June 1963, Comrade Dimo Hamambo also arrived from Algeria to join them and Comrade Hainyeko was appointed as the First Commander of the South West Africa Liberation Army (SWALA), the forerunner of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), SWAPO's Military Wing.

It is against this background that the Late Comrade Nawa was sent for further military training in Cairo, Egypt in 1965 after he had received his training in 1964 at Kongwa, near Dodoma in Tanzania.

Our Combatants received training at Kongwa together with other Comrades from FRELIMO of Mozambique, MPLA of Angola, ZANU and ZAPU of Zimbabwe as well as the ANC and PAC of South Africa.

We were all under the umbrella of the Pan-African Freedom Movement of East, Central and Southern Africa (PAFMECSA) which was led by Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, who provided us with logistics and the military training camp at Kongwa.

As you have heard from his eulogy, upon Comrade Nawa's return from Cairo, Egypt, he was deployed to the Eastern Front in 1967 and later served as Chief of Logistics in Angola from 1968 to 1978 until he was sent for further military training in Ukraine as a Battalion Commander from 1979 to 1980.

The Late Comrade Nawa was then appointed as PLAN Deputy Chief of Logistics and from 1972 to 1989, he served as a member of the Military Council, which I had the privilege to chair as the Commander-in-Chief of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), SWAPO's Military Wing.

In this regard, the Late Comrade Nawa served our Liberation Movement SWAPO with distinction and provided strategic leadership to PLAN during trying times. Thus, with his passing on, Namibia has lost a liberation struggle stalwart whose immense contribution to the Independence of our country will remain engraved in the annals of our history.

I therefore join my fellow mourners to bid farewell and pay tribute to a gallant and unwavering freedom fighter, who performed outstanding deeds in the service of our country and its people.

Fellow Mourners;

Through the life journey of the Late Comrade Nawa Shiweda we are able to let future generations to learn about the heroic deeds of the sons and daughters of the land of the brave.

All of us should be motivated only to do and seek what is best for our country, without regard for personal gain or public acclaim. This is the kind of servant leadership we need in our country as we engage in nation building and pursue inclusive and sustainable growth.

Indeed, our people should know that the independence we are enjoying today was not handed over to us on a silver platter but came through the sweat and blood of many brave sons and daughters of Namibia under the umbrella of our National Liberation Movement, SWAPO.

Our path to independence has crossed rivers of blood. Many sacrifices have been made inside the country and outside the country (in exile). Today, the blood of these sons and daughters of Namibia waters our freedom. It will thus be a betrayal to their sacrifices if we are consumed by divisions instead of unity of purpose and action.

Let us ensure that their legacy lives on. In this regard, I am delighted that the Late Retired Colonel Nawa Shiweda was conferred with the military rank of Colonel and a Liberation Medal in 2007. Thus, I thank H.E. Dr Hage Geingob for conferring on him an Official Funeral.

In conclusion, I wish to urge my fellow compatriots to continue combating the evils of tribalism, sexism, corruption and violence against women and children which aim to subvert our national development agenda. We should continue with our Policy of National Reconciliation and maintain the peace we enjoy in our country because without peace there can be no development.

As the Late Comrade Nawa Shiweda takes a befitting seat amongst our heroes and heroines, allow me on behalf of the Pioneering Veterans of our National Liberation Struggle, the Nujoma family and indeed on my own behalf, to convey our deepest condolences and heartfelt sympathy to the entire bereaved family and all his comrades and friends for this irreplaceable loss. May we all be consoled and granted fortitude during this time of bereavement and sorrow.

May His Soul Rest In Eternal Peace!