



**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY  
DR. SAM NUJOMA, FOUNDING PRESIDENT AND FATHER OF  
THE NAMIBIAN NATION, ON THE OCCASION OF THE KICKING  
HEPATITIS E OUT OF NAMIBIA'S CAMPAIGN**

**SATURDAY, 31 AUGUST 2019**

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**ONHELEIWA VILLAGE, ETAYI CONSTITUENCY**

**OMUSATI REGION**

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Director of Proceedings; Comrade Amon Haimbangu;  
Honourable Erastus Uutoni, Minister of Sport, Youth and  
National Services;  
Honourable Dr. Bernard Haufiku, Special Advisor to the  
Presidency on Health Matters;  
Honourable Erginus Endjala, Governor of Omusati Region;  
Honourable Modestus Amutse, Chairperson of the Regional  
Council and Management Committee of Omusati Region;  
Honourable John Elisa, Councilor for Etayi Constituency  
and other Regional and Local Authority Councilors present;  
Distinguished Captains of Industry;  
Esteemed Major General Naboth Nekongo and other  
Religious Leaders present;  
Omusimanekwa Elenga Samuel Mateus Shilongo  
nooTatekulu Omalenga goMalelo gopathigululwakalo mwa  
holoka mpaka;  
Omusimanekwa Mwene wOmukunda Onheleiwa, Tatekulu  
Mateus Hailonga;  
Miss Selma Kamanya, former Miss Namibia 2018;  
All Sport men & women at Onheleiwa and in the Region;  
Distinguished Invited Guests;  
Members of the Media;  
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am pleased to have been invited as a guest of honour at this important youth event at Onheleiwa village, an event which, I am informed has been taking place annually for the last consecutive 8 years.

It is further pleasing to note that the organisers are using Sport and entertainment platforms not just for the sake of entertainment but to promote Health and Wellbeing for the people of Omusati in particular and Namibia at large, especially the youth.

I therefore commend the organisers for these novel ideas. Let me particularly single out Dr. Bernard Haufiku who heads the national health emergency management committee for this novel idea of using sport to fight diseases such as Hepatitis E in Namibia.

Indeed, urgent and fresh interventions are needed to help curb Namibia's drawn-out hepatitis E out-break, which is approaching its two-year milestone next month and shows no signs of abating.

Just recently, 19 hepatitis E cases were reported in Otjozondjupa, with 9 cases from Okahandja District. There are also 64 cases of hepatitis E confirmed in the two Kavango Regions, contracted by people travelling to out-break affected regions.

So far the out-break has killed 53 Namibians, and infected almost 6 000 of Namibia's poorest since September 2017 because 77% of those infected are unemployed and live in informal settlements. Hence this event is held under the befitting Theme: *Kicking Hepatitis E Out of Namibia through Sport*.

This is what innovations is all about and I therefore wish to encourage others across Namibia to emulate this good example of the people of Onheleiwa in general and Dr. Haufiku in particular.

Indeed, sport is a powerful tool to attract not only young people but everyone who loves the game and there are many in Omusati and in Namibia as can be seen by the size of the crowd gathered here today.

Sport in all its various codes must therefore be encouraged, supported and fully utilized to address social issues such as health and wellbeing, youth unemployment, crime prevention and promotion of social order among all Namibians. This is more so when it comes to the youth.

Director of Ceremonies;

As we are all aware, Omusati Region is one of the three regions in Namibia that are severely affected by Hepatitis E with many people infected by this virus. The other two regions being Khomas Region, mainly in the informal settlement of Havana, Samora Machel, Moses Garoeb and Goreangab Dam. There is also a high rate of infection in Erongo Region where the disease is concentrated in the DRC Informal Settlement.

Officials from the Ministry of Health and Social Services inform us that so far more than 5000 people have been infected or affected by Hepatitis E in Namibia, with 53 people reported dead due to this disease. Among them are 21 pregnant mothers.

This is a very sad and unacceptable state of affairs in our Republic! No one should die from preventable illnesses such as Hepatitis E, TB, or Malaria including HIV.

We can all protect ourselves, our families and our communities against these diseases. It is even more crucial to protect the vulnerable, those at high risk of contracting Hepatitis E and those who are likely to die from it such as pregnant women and mothers who just delivered their newborn babies.

It is therefore required from all of us to wake up now before it is too late and join hands everywhere in Namibia and put our efforts together across all sectors of our society, to fight the scourge of Hepatitis E in our country, especially in regions such as Omusati, Erongo and Khomas where it is rampage.

Against this background, I urge all our people to listen to what our health officials are telling us and not those who are spreading rumours such as the many false healers and false prophets who are misleading our people in Namibia today.

It is only Health officials who are best equipped with knowledge and skills to tell us how to protect ourselves and our families against Hepatitis E in Namibia.

In fact, Experts on Hepatitis E give us three simple ways to protect ourselves against Hepatitis E anywhere and anytime.

These are: 1. Provisions of clean water to everyone  
2. Sanitation  
3. Personal hygiene

Water is life!

Every Namibian therefore must be provided with access to clean water at an affordable price. With this severe drought Namibia is experiencing, the water need becomes even more imperative for everyone.

For this reason, those of us with access to clean water must take good care of this important resource and share with others who do not have access to clean water.

Secondly, lack of proper sanitation and poor personal hygiene have been identified as two main reasons why Hepatitis E has spread in the three regions of Omusati, Erongo and Khomas.

Let us listen to health experts and work with them to Kick Hepatitis E out of Namibia! The communities must take leadership and full responsibility for their health and personal hygiene.

This is the reason why communities are advised and supported to build their own toilets under a concept known as Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS). In this regard, I am reliably informed that Onheleiwa is leading the way in Omusati as you have already started building your community-owned toilets.

I therefore congratulate the community of Onheleiwa and their leaders, especially their headman, Tatekulu Hailonga and the members of the community entrusted to oversee the construction of these toilets.

I also commend the leadership of Omusati Health Directorate under Mr. Amoomo and the business community in Namibia for their support to the people affected by Hepatitis E in Namibia. Keep up the good work! Let others learn from your good example!

In conclusion, let us kick Hepatitis E out of Namibia! As I always say: *A people united, striving to achieve common good for all members of society, will always emerge victorious!*

I thank you