



**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY DR SAM
NUJOMA, FOUNDING PRESIDENT AND FATHER OF THE
NAMIBIAN NATION, ON THE OCCASION OF THE REUNION
OF THE FORMER NAMIBIAN STUDENTS IN CUBA**

SATURDAY, 13 JULY 2019

AGRICULTURAL SHOWGROUND

GROOTFONTEIN

OTJOZONDJUPA REGION

***Check against Delivery**

Private Bag 13220, Windhoek, Namibia, Tel: +264 61 377700, Fax: +264 61 253098, Email: jnauta@iway.na, website: www.samnujomafoundation.org

Founder: H.E. Dr Sam Nujoma
Board of Trustees: Hon. Nahas Angula (Chairperson), Hon. Theo-Ben Gurirab, Hon. Pendukeni Iivula-Ithana,
Hon. Dr. Albert Kawana, Hon. Erkki Nghimtina, Ms. Febronia Nelago Shapaka
(Reg No 8208)

Director of Proceedings;
Honourable Tommy Nambahu, Deputy Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations and
Employment Creation;
Honourable Otto Ipinge, Governor of Otjozondjupa Region;
Lieutenant-General Sebastian Ndeitunga, Inspector General of the Namibian Police
Force;
Comrade Helmut Kangulohi Angula, Former Cabinet Minister and Former SWAPO's
Representative to the Republic of Cuba;
Retired Lieutenant-General Martin Shalli;
Your Excellency Sindano Acosta Aday, Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba to
Namibia;
Distinguished Former Namibian Students in Cuba;
Distinguished Invited Guests;
Members of the Media;
Ladies and Gentlemen:'

I am honoured to have been invited to this auspicious occasion of the Reunion of
Former Namibian students in Cuba, here at the Agricultural Showground in
Grootfontein.

In this regard, I am pleased to have been requested to deliver the keynote address
on the topic of Solidarity with Cuba and the importance of Pan-Africanism.

These are befitting topics which allow us a to have retrospective assessment, an
analysis of present circumstances and, above all, a call for perspective reflection of
the glorious bonds of comradeship and solidarity between the Republic of Cuba and
the African continent in general.

Indeed, it has been nearly six decades of solidarity of the revolutionary people of
Cuba with the struggles waged by our peoples for dignity and equal treatment on the
global stage.

Cuba's relationship with African liberation movements began as early as the 1960s,
shortly after their victory against the Batista dictatorship. Members of the Cuban
leadership travelled to Algiers to build formal relationship with the Algerian National
Liberation Front.

In addition, the journey of the legendary Revolutionary Ché Guevara around the
African continent in 1963 was a significant turning point in strengthening Cuba's
relationship with our liberation movements around the continent.

We remember Cuba's direct support to the sister Republic of Angola to defend its
independence and territorial integrity against military incursions and aggression by
the minority apartheid regime of South Africa.

In this regard, Cuba's role in Angola was central to its policy towards our liberation movement in Namibia, as Angola provided a strategic territorial base of support to SWAPO and the Combatants of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), SWAPO's Military Wing.

Most importantly, the 1989 Battle of Cuito Cuanavale in Angola was a watershed moment in Southern Africa when the Cuban Internationalist, the Angolan FAPLA's forces and the Combatants of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia, (PLAN) SWAPO's Military Wing, stood united and defeated the apartheid machinery of the minority regime of South Africa and led to the independence of Namibia on the 21st March 1990.

Against this background, we are extremely grateful and remain indebted to the revolutionary people of Cuba for their material, diplomatic and logistic support to SWAPO.

We particularly remember when numerous of our children were trained in Cuba in the aftermath of the Cassinga massacre on the 4th of May 1978 in Angola.

On that fateful day, about 800 toddlers, children of less than 16 years, expectant mothers and elderly people were cold-bloodedly and brutally killed by about 500 paratroopers of the apartheid regime of South Africa in an operation code named Reindeer. On that occasion, we were helped by the revolutionary people of Cuba who lost their lives in this process due to land mines planted by the enemies.

In the same year, by the invitation of El Comandante Fidel Castro Ruz, more than 3000 Namibian children, who survived the traumatic experience of the Cassinga massacre, were offered free education in Cuba on the Island of Youth at Hendrik Witbooi Senior Secondary School and later at the Hosea Kutako Junior Secondary School which was opened in 1982.

After Namibia gained its independence, the Cuban people continued to support us with medical doctors and other professionals for which they declined any monetary compensation.

Today, many of those children who were trained in Cuba occupy influential positions in all sectors of our society after as you can see them here today.

Thus, the international solidarity between the Republic of Cuba and the Republic of Namibia was forged in the crucible of the struggle and is cemented in blood.

Against this background, in solidarity with our Cuban brothers and sisters, we demand for the removal of the inhumane blockade imposed on Cuba.

Furthermore, In addition, we demand for non-interference in the internal affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and the removal of the arbitrary and unilateral sanctions imposed on the people of Venezuela.

Director of Ceremonies;

On the topic of Pan-Africanism; the formation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) on 25th May, 1963 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, came as a result of the legacy of slavery and colonialism which culminated in the scramble for Africa. This happened at the November 1884 to February 1885 Berlin Conference organized by Chancellor Bismarck of Germany and King Leopold of Belgium and other European countries who divided Africa among themselves.

For this reason, in 1958, at the All-African People's Conference in Accra-Ghana, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana signed an agreement with Sékou Touré of Guinea to unite Ghana and Guinea.

In 1961, Dr. Nkrumah extended the Ghana - Guinea union to include Mali under Modibo Keita for a united Africa for Africans at home and those in the diaspora.

These Founding leaders of the First African Union were later followed by other African Founding Fathers such as President Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, Ahmed Ben Bella of Algeria, Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere of Tanzania, Haile Selassie of Ethiopia and many other leaders of 32 sovereign States of Africa who founded the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) on 25th May, 1963 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

At this juncture, allow me to congratulate the leaders for this reason, I am glad that in April this year more than 20 African countries signed the African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA) which will provide 1, 2 billion Africans to trade among ourselves and speak with one voice at negotiations with foreign countries.

Besides, Africa has a GDP of 1,3 trillion dollars comparable to other developed countries. Africa is the only region in the world that agrees on many issues such as finance, climate change etc. and thus we are sitting on about 300 billion dollars of pension fund and have 30% of the world natural resources.

However, we import 6 billion tons worth of food yet we have 35 % of the most arable lands in the world. We now need one passport, one currency and one army.

I therefore urge our Youth in general and the Former Namibian Students in Cuba to remain vigilant and defend the territorial integrity of Africa and not allow themselves to be used against their own people by external forces.

In conclusion, may the revolutionary spirit of solidarity of Cuba continue to underwrite and inspire the progressive forces to continue demanding for economic justice and shared prosperity in an equitable world order.

Long Live the bonds of Solidarity Between Namibia and Cuba!

Hasta La Victoria Siempre!