



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 COLONEL (Rtd) NEKWAYA HANGO

SUNDAY, 19TH JULY 2020

EPANGU (OKATHITU KA KASHOKOLO) VILLAGE

OGONGO CONSTITUENCY

OMUSATI REGION

***Check Against Delivery**

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(Reg No 8208)

Program Directors;
The Widow, Meme Ester Hambeleleni Hango, the children and the entire bereaved Hango family;
Honourable Rear Admiral Peter Hafeni Vilho, Minister of Defence and Veterans Affairs;
Honourable Ministers and Deputy Ministers present;
Honourable Members of Parliament present;
Honourable Erginus Endjala, Governor of Omusati Region;
Distinguished Service Chiefs present;
Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps present;
Comrade Veterans of the National Liberation Struggle;
Omusimanekwa Tatekulu Johannes Mupiya, Omukwaniilwa gwaNgandjera;
Distinguished Reverend Dr. Tshapaka sha Kapolo;
Esteemed Traditional, Community and Spiritual Leaders present;
Members of the Media;
Fellow Mourners:

I have learnt with profound grief and deep sorrow of the passing on of a relentless freedom fighter and a Veteran of our National Liberation Struggle, the Late Comrade Colonel (Retired) Nekwaya Hango, on the 08th of July 2020, at his homestead, at Epangu (Okathitu ka Kashokolo) Village, Ogongo Constituency, in Omusati Region.

I therefore join my fellow mourners to bid farewell and pay tribute to a gallant and unwavering freedom fighter, a steadfast and celebrated ex-Plan Detachment Commander who persevered under all circumstances and never wavered until the attainment of our freedom and genuine independence on 21st March 1990.

The Late Colonel Nekwaya Hango's obituary bares testimony to the fact that the history of our armed liberation struggle is filled with his valuable contributions.

It is therefore worth recalling here that in the aftermath of the Portuguese coup of 1974 and the violence after the boycotted Ovamboland Bantustan elections of 1973, a large number of young Namibians joined us in exile.

A significant proportion of these young militants were SWAPO Youth League (SYL) activists who were instrumental in the operations of the internal wing of SWAPO.

It is young people who have consistently been the powerhouse of radical ideas, the most courageous and outspoken activists and the pioneers of new forms of struggle against oppression because of their clear understanding of the workings of the system of exploitation and their readiness to act as catalysts in other forms of the struggle.

Against this background, the Late Colonel Nekwaya Hango formed part of this militant youth as he was unflinching in his determination to end apartheid colonialism in all its forms and manifestations and became a disciplined and brave combatant of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), SWAPO's Military Wing, which he joined in 1974.

He received his first military training at Oshatotwa No.1 in Zambia under Commander Mac Namara and together with his fellow PLAN Combatants like Commander Lucas Hangula “Fogu” and Commander Darius Shikongo “Mbolondondo” as well as Commander Niilo Taapopi “Kambwa kaShilongo” and others, they were the first group of 100 PLAN Combatants Volunteers to leave Zambia and go to Kassappa in Angola at a Reception Centre for newly arrivals from Namibia.

The Late Colonel Hango was later deployed and operated at the Northern Front under Regional Commander Mbulunganga between 1975 and 1976 and was the first PLAN Combatant to destroy enemy target in the area of Ruacana.

Indeed, at its Meeting of January 1977 at Efitu in Angola, the Military Council decided to restructure PLAN and demarcate its operational areas. At that meeting, it was decided to have Military Regions with the Late Comrade Matias Ndakolo (Mbulunganga) as the Commander of the North Eastern Front, Comrade Phillipus Hamutenya Nandenga (Zulu) as the Commander of the Northern Front, while the Late Comrade Wilbard Tashiya (Nakada) was appointed as the Commander of the North Western Front and Comrade Hamunyela wa Shalali took over the Eastern Front.

In this regard, in 1977, the Late Colonel Hango was deployed to the Northern Western Front under the Late Commander Wilbard Vayakohambo Tashiya Nacada Chikololo and later under Commander Kanaan Uno Shaanika and finally under Commander Erastus Negonga and rose through the ranks to become a Platoon Commander in the Plan Detachment of the Ground Force led by the Late Comrade Israel Nehemia “Hamala”.

Thus, in 1979, when the Late Detachment Commander Israel Nehemia “Hamala” sacrificed, the Late Colonel Nekwaya Hango took over as Plan Detachment Commander of the Ground Force and has produced ex-Plan combatants who have reached the rank of General in the Namibian Defence Force in the likes of Brigadier General Progress Heita, Brigadier Peter Kambwela and Brigadier General David Shivute Nevonga, among others.

Under the leadership of the Late Colonel Nekwaya Hango, as a Plan Detachment Commander of the Ground Force, Plan Combatants carried out successful and countless attacks on the enemy forces some of which were noted and remembered, such as the battle repelling enemy troops who were invading Southern Angola in the area of Xangongo; when he forced the enemy to abandon using cavalry troops against Plan Combatants and captured several enemy war materials, equipment and horses used by cavalry troops.

Indeed, the Late Colonel Nekwaya Hango was recognized for his outstanding military exploits and underwent another military training in Ghana in the 1980s together with the Late Comrade Dimo Hamambo, Commander Phillipus Nandenga “Zulu”, Comrade Bathlomeus Shomeya and lastly underwent further military training

in the former Union of the Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) together with the Late Retired Major General Peter Nambundunga.

After independence, one ex-SWATF soldier was asking who Commander Nekwaya Hango was and if he was still alive not knowing that he was talking to the Late Colonel Nekwaya Hango. When the ex-SWATF soldier was asked why he was looking for Commander Nekwaya Hango, he said because that is one fearless PLAN Detachment Commander that they were looking for and wanted to capture but they could not.

Thus, the Late Colonel Hango was one of the greatest military strategists and political commissar who was instrumental in motivational singing, planning and commissioning of numerous successful Plan military operations.

Through his life journey we are able to see the road we have traversed to freedom and are able to let future generations to learn and stand tall on the shoulders of the gallant and heroic sons and daughters of the land of the brave.

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.

This is the glorious legacy by the gallant and heroic sons and daughters of Namibia that we must preserve for future generations. I therefore extol our people to persevere in the struggle and to march forward in unity.

As the Late Colonel Hango takes a befitting seat amongst our heroes and heroines, allow me on behalf of the 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 Widow, Meme Ester Hambeleleni Hango, the children, the entire bereaved family and Comrades for his loss.

May his revolutionary spirit continue to guide us as we chart the future destiny of our country and may we all be granted fortitude during this difficult time of bereavement and sorrow.

May His Soul Rest In Eternal Peace!