

**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY DR SAM NUJOMA, FOUNDING PRESIDENT
AND FATHER OF THE NAMIBIAN NATION, ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 83RD
BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION**

12 MAY 2012

SWAKOPMUND

ERONGO REGION

Director of Ceremonies;
Your Excellency, Comrade Dr. Hifikepunye Pohamba, President of the Republic of Namibia;
Honourable Ministers and Deputy Ministers;
Honourable Members of Parliament;
Honourable Governor of Erongo Region;
Your Worship, the Mayor of Swakopmund;
Comrades Members of the National Executive and Central Committee of the SWAPO Party Youth League (SPYL) and All Members of the SWAPO Pioneer Movement (SPM);
Distinguished Invited Guests;
Members of the Media;
Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is with immense joy and a distinct delight for me to be here in the midst of so many Comrades and friends to celebrate my 83rd Birthday.

Allow me, therefore, first of all to thank most profoundly the Secretary of the SPYL, Comrade Elijah Ngurare, the leadership and the entire Membership of the SPYL and all those who played an active role in organising and hosting my 83rd Birthday Celebration.

It is only when we know the past that we would be able to understand the present and chart the future destiny of our country. On this joyous occasion, allow me therefore to avail myself of this opportunity to reflect on the difficult journey we have travelled and on our collective contributions to the attainment of political freedom as well as recollect with great fondness, the sterling efforts of our forebears to defend the integrity and dignity of our country.

It is indeed with fond memories that we recall the sweet taste of independence on the 21st of March 1990, when on that solemn and historic occasion, I declared to the world that Namibia was forever free, sovereign and independent, as we became masters of our own future destiny.

Taking the destiny of our country in our own hands meant, among other things, making a great effort to forge a national identity based on a common resolve and unity of purpose and action as well as set for ourselves higher standards of equality, justice and opportunity for all our people irrespective of colour, race, ethnic or place of origin.

Today, we live in an independent Namibia and you will no doubt agree with me that despite some challenges, the SWAPO Party Government has made greater strides and achieved numerous successes over the past twenty two years.

We have put our country on an irreversible path of socio-economic development and have built infrastructure such as roads, schools, clinics, and expanded transport and communication networks in all thirteen regions of our country, including the deepening and expansion of our seaports at Walvis Bay and Luderitz.

We have also maintained peace and stability in our country which created a conducive environment for trade and investment with foreign countries and provided our people in rural areas with electricity and portable water.

Furthermore, we have expanded our trans-frontier road network which is now linked to land-locked countries in the SADC Region, through the Trans-Kalahari and Trans-Caprivi Highways, and have expanded the railway line from Tsumeb to Oshikango via Ondangwa to be linked to the railway system of the Republic of Angola.

Above all, we have promoted the Policy of National Reconciliation and adopted the motto: “One Namibia, One Nation!” and laid the foundation for democratic governance.

All these successes were made possible because of the visionary policies and programmes that the SWAPO Party Government has implemented during the past twenty two years.

We should therefore continue to walk along this path so that we can ensure that peace and stability is maintained, as a prerequisite for economic development and look forward to the future with confidence.

Director of Ceremonies;

The best way in which we can address social and economic inequalities in our country is by ensuring that all our people, especially the youth, are provided with quality education. Against this background, even during our National liberation struggle, we resolved to give high priority to education and the training of our youth. This dedication continued after the attainment of our freedom and independence when we established the University of Namibia (UNAM), the Polytechnic of Namibia and other technical institutions of high learning.

I therefore call on our youth, particularly, the SWAPO Party Youth League to make use of available opportunities and engage in genuine business ventures to contribute to economic development, through manufacturing and value addition to our natural resources to enhance the economic growth of our country, export ready products to foreign countries and create employment opportunities for our people.

Without any doubt, this is one of the best way in which we can achieve our national development goals and the implementation of Vision 2030.

I also urge our youth to reject tribalism and the social evils of alcohol and drug abuse, violence against women and children as well as to remain focussed on pursuits that are aimed at building a better future for themselves and our country.

Furthermore, the youth are the backbone and future leaders of our continent. They should therefore study hard and equip themselves with relevant skills and knowledge so that we can produce our own medical doctors, agriculturalists, engineers, geologists and other technical personnel who will play a meaningful role in the socio-economic development of our country in order for us to eradicate hunger, ignorance and diseases from the face of our continent.

Director of Ceremonies;

Having been briefed on the objectives of the “12 MAY MOVEMENT DAY”, it is clear to me that the youth, as future leaders of our country and our continent, are cognisant of the importance of preserving our cultural heritage and honour our leaders.

To this end, I urge our youth and pioneers to spare no energy and effort in ensuring that the planned 12 May Movement Day is also dedicated to remember and pay homage to our forefathers such as Kaptain Hendrik Witbooi, Jakob Marenga, Chief Samuel Maharero, Chief Kahimemua Nguvauva, Chief Nehale Ija Mpingana, Chief Mandume ja Ndemufayo, Chief Iipumbu ja Tshilongo, and many others whose heroism and bravery inspired us to continue with the struggle until the final victory was achieved.

In addition, we should pay homage to the victims of the extermination of 1904 and 1905 by the German *Schutztruppe* and all those who lost their lives at the battles of Vaalgras and Ohamakari, including the victims of the atrocities and heinous massacres committed against our people at the Windhoek Old Location, at Oshatotwa in Zambia and Cassinga in Angola.

A special homage goes to our gallant combatants of PLAN who were on their way to the assembly point and were attacked on the 1st of April 1989, in a diabolic scheme by the white minority South African Army in direct violation of the UN Security Council’s Resolution 435 cease-fire agreement, which provided, inter alia, that all forces should be confined to bases and that there should be cessation of hostilities by all parties involved in the conflict.

Similarly, I call on our youth to pay homage to the unwavering political leadership of our national liberation movement, SWAPO, and all our brave commanders and gallant combatants who engaged the enemy forces with vigour and determination, including the cadres of the South West Africa Liberation Army (SWALA), who launched the armed liberation struggle at Omugulu gwOmbashe on 26 August 1966.

Indeed, their blood waters our freedom and they will always be remembered by our present and future generations.

I will fail in my duty if I do not convey our heartfelt gratitude to the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the forerunner of the African Union (AU), and to all the Frontline States for providing SWAPO with rear-bases which enabled us to launch our armed liberation struggle against the enemy forces.

In addition, the people of Namibia will forever remain thankful to all friendly countries around the world and the Anti-apartheid movement for the solidarity and assistance they have rendered to SWAPO during the difficult years of our liberation struggle.

Furthermore, a special mention goes to the revolutionary people of Angola and Cuba, who rendered to our struggle all round political, moral and material support.

We remain indebted to the combined Angolan FAPLA who, together with the Cuban Internationalist forces and the combatants of the People’s Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), SWAPO’s Military Wing, launched the final assault and defeated the apartheid enemy troops at

the historic battle of Cuito Cuanavale, which forced the minority white South African regime to negotiate for the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 435.

It is against this background that I therefore call upon our youth to unite and strengthen the bonds of solidarity with the youth from the SADC countries, including the Pan African Youth Union, and to remain vigilant at all times, ready to defend the territorial integrity as well as the air space and territorial waters of the entire African continent against foreign aggressors.

That is my message to the youth and I have full confidence that they will live up to expectations and meet the challenges with vigour and determination.

In conclusion, allow me to say that I have walked a long journey and along the way, I have met and worked with many comrades and people who have impacted my life in many ways, especially my parents, and all those who provided me with their support. To all of them, including my family and the SWAPO Party Government under the revolutionary leadership of Comrade President Pohamba, the entire Namibian people, I wholeheartedly thank you.

Finally, allow me to once again express my heartfelt thanks and deep gratitude to the SWAPO Party Youth League for their initiative and to convey my sincere appreciation to all those who sent their congratulatory messages on this occasion, including those of you who found time to come and share this joyous moment with me and my family.

Last but not least, allow me to reiterate my call for us to remain united because as I always say;

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

Long Live The Republic of Namibia!

I thank you.