



STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY, DR SAM NUJOMA, THE
FOUNDING PRESIDENT AND FATHER OF THE NAMIBIAN
NATION, ON THE OCCASION OF THE 122ND
COMMEMORATIONS OF THE BATTLE OF OTJUNDA THAT
CULMINATED IN THE EXECUTION OF THE LATE CHIEF
KAHIMEMUA NGUVAUVA BY THE GERMAN SCHUTTSTRUPPE
AT OKAHANDJA ON JUNE 12, 1896

OKAHANDJA

OTJOZONDJUPA REGION

17 JUNE 2018

*Check Against Delivery

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(Reg No 8208)

Directors of Ceremonies;

Representative of the Honorable Minister of Urban and Rural Development;
Honourable Ministers and Deputy Ministers present;
Honourable Members of Parliament present;
Your Worship the Mayor of Okahandja Town Council and other Mayors present;
Honourable Regional and Local Authorities Councilors present;
Honourable Kilus Munjuku III Nguvauva, Chief of the OvaMbanderu Traditional Authority;
Mr. Gerson Katjirua, Acting Chief of the OvaMbanderu Traditional Authority;
Your Royal Highness, Chief Maharero of the Maharero Royal Traditional Authority;
Your Royal Highness, Chief Zeraeua of the Zeraeua Traditional Authority;
Your Royal Highness, Mr. Nguvauva Nguvauva from the district of Bodipeng, Republic of Botswana;
Your Royal Highness, Mr. Kungairi Nguvauva from Sehitwa, Republic of Botswana;
All other Royal Highnesses present;
Honourable Dr. Zed Ngavirue, Namibia's Special Envoy on Genocide, Apology and Reparation;
Your Excellencies Members of the Diplomatic Corps;
Distinguished Invited Guests;
Members of the Media;
Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is a profound honour for me to have been invited to the hundred and twenty second (122nd) commemoration of the Battle of Otjunda in order to remember and honour the contribution made by one of the bravest sons of the Land of the Brave, the late Chief Kahimemua Nguvauva of the OvaMbanderu community.

Indeed, the Late Chief Kahimemua Nguvauva was officially declared a National Hero and his grave declared a national monument here at Okahandja. In this regard, another ceremonial grave was erected at the Heroes Acre for his name to be among the brave sons and daughters of Namibia to always be remembered by generations to come.

Chief Killus Karaerua Munjuku III Nguvauva, son of the Late Chief Munjuku II Nguvauva and Acting Chief Gerson Katjirua as well as the entire OvaMbanderu community allow me, before I address the theme of this important day, to congratulate you for the peaceful manner in which the OvaMbanderu community has handled its internal disputes of a few years back. That is indeed remarkable and exemplary.

I can only urge you to continue to extend the hand of reconciliation towards the rest of the OvaMbanderu community. I also invite and encourage the OvaMbanderu community under your able leadership to join the Namibian Government in its developmental efforts in order to uplift all our people.

Director of Ceremonies;

I am told the theme for this year's commemorative event is: "*Custom/tradition based on past experiences for a better and prosperous future*". This will form the basis of my speech today.

During the first anti-colonial struggle waged by our people, the Late Chief Kahimemua Nguvauva was the first person to pay the highest sacrifice by the brutal forces of imperial German who converged upon Africa in general and Namibia in particular when they decided to divide Africa amongst themselves on a silver platter at Potsdam near Berlin in 1884.

In this regard, the Germans started off by creating illegal boundary lines that prohibited cattle belonging to the indigenous communities to cross in search of grazing and water resources. This has brought a turning point in the history of Chief Kahimemua and the OvaMbanderu people.

Against this background, the German Imperial administration demanded for land from Chief Kahimemua at the meeting held at Otjihaenena, which he flatly refused. After this refusal by the Late Chief Kahimemua to voluntarily give land to the Germans, General Leutwein came up with a tactic of playing the divide and rule game of our people against each other.

When this also failed and upon realizing that the Late Chief Kahimemua refused to give land voluntarily, Lieutenant Edward Lampe built forts and garrisons with troops at Gobabis and Seeis during July 1895 without permission from Chief Kahimemua.

The Germans continued to impound the cattle of the OvaMbanderu, Nama and OvaHerero communities that crossed the boundary.

Against this background, pockets of resistance and violent confrontations ensued between the Germans on the one side and the OvaMbanderu, OvaHerero and Nama people on the other and reached its climax on Sunday, 5th April 1896 at the Battle at Gobabis where Lieutenant Lampe was killed.

As such, the Battle at Gobabis was the precursor of the later fierce battle that took place on May 6, 1896 at Otjunda (Sturmfeld) where the Nguvauva clan was almost extinct by the German colonial troops.

The Late Chief Kahimemua was wounded and left the battle unnoticed by the German colonial troops, but was later arrested and disarmed.

I am reliably informed that Gustav Voigts was the soldier who was tasked to disarm the Late Chief Kahimemua and he took off from him a “sacred traditional belt” of historical significance, which he presented to one of the museums in Germany for safekeeping, but later went back to collect it.

I would like to appeal to the Voigts family, who might be in possession of this belt of historical and cultural significance, to hand it over to the Chief of the OvaMbanderu people, Honourable Kilus Munjuku III Nguvauva, as a token of reconciliation and goodwill gesture.

Director of Ceremonies;

The OvaMbanderu people have historically played a pivotal role in the liberation of Namibia and later in her development.

I therefore applaud the active and decisive role this community and other traditional authorities play in advancing the genocide negotiations alongside the government and urge you to continue to constructively interrogate the process with a view to advance a final and positive solution to the affected communities.

As per the theme of this year's event, I would like to appeal to the OvaMbanderu community, who had to go through a protracted leadership dispute to put your differences aside and concentrate on building your rich culture and tradition for the benefit of your members and Namibia in general. As I always say, a nation without culture is like a tree without roots.

Similarly, I should remind you that the Late Chief Munjuku II Nguvauva fought tirelessly for years towards the unification of the OvaMbanderu people. I therefore appeal to the Acting Chief and the substantive Chief to work tirelessly towards uniting the OvaMbanderu community and invest in the education of the OvaMbanderu *and other Namibian* children.

In conclusion, I appeal to this community to stay united as I always say, a people united, striving to achieve a common good for all members of the society, will always emerge victorious!

Long Live the Ovambanderu People!
Long Live the Republic of Namibia!

I thank you.