



TRIBUTE BY H. E. DR. SAM NUJOMA, FOUNDING PRESIDENT AND FATHER OF  
THE NAMIBIAN NATION, ON THE OCCASION OF THE STATE FUNERAL IN  
HONOUR OF THE LATE COLONEL MATIAS "MBULUNGANGA" NDAKOLO

14-15 DECEMBER 2018

EENHANA MEMORIAL SHRINE

OHANGWENA REGION

\*Check Against Delivery

Directors of Proceedings;

The Widow, Meekulu Haili Amalwa Mukwanekamba, the two surviving sisters Meme Rauna Fuudeni and Meme Eveline Ngeshapu Ndakolo, the Children and the Entire Bereaved Family of the Late Colonel Matias Kodi “Mbulunganga” Ndakolo;

Your Excellency Dr. Hage Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia and Madam Monica Geingos, First Lady;

Your Excellency Dr. Hifikepunye Pohamba, Former President of the Republic of Namibia and Madam Penexupifo Pohamba, Former First Lady;

Your Excellency Dr. Nangolo Mbumba, Vice President of the Republic of Namibia and Madam Mbumba;

Right Honourable, Dr. Saara Kuugongelwa –Amadhila, Prime Minister of the Republic of Namibia and Comrade Amadhila;

Honourable Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of International Relations and Cooperation and Retired Lieutenant General Ndaitwah;

Honourable Professor Peter Katjavivi, Speaker of the National Assembly and Madam Katjavivi;

Honourable Peter Shivute, Chief Justice and Judge Shivute;

Distinguished Veterans of the National Liberation Struggle;

Fellow Mourners, allow me to stand by the protocol as established.

It is with profound sorrow that we are gathered here today to pay our last respects and bid farewell to one of the pioneering veterans and heroes of our National Liberation struggle, the Late Colonel Matias Kodi Ndakolo, affectionately known by his combat name as “Mbulunganga”.

Allow me therefore to pay tribute to one of the gallant freedom fighters and one of the finest field Commanders SWAPO has ever produced.

The Late Colonel Mbulunganga’s obituary bares testimony to the fact that the history of our armed liberation struggle is filled with his valuable contributions. He came into an unjust and unequal world which required his early activism and like others of his generation he was shaped both by the epoch through which he lived but also had a willingness to sacrifice his own well-being for the good of others.

It is against this background that he joined OPO in 1959 and subsequently became a member of SWAPO in 1960. Having witnessed the brutal oppression of our people by the minority regime of apartheid South Africa and armed with the belief that as Namibians we were the sole liberators of our country, this conviction informed not only his ideological outlook and political activism but it also shaped his character.

He was unflinching in his determination to end apartheid colonialism in all its forms and manifestations and became a disciplined and humble combatant of the then South West Africa Liberation Army (SWALA), later renamed the People’s Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), SWAPO’s Military Wing, whose rank and file he joined in 1964 in Lusaka, Zambia after he underwent military training in the Soviet Union in 1963.

He was later deployed to Kongwa in Tanzania where he served as an instructor of our Combatants and continued training new recruits with the opening of the Eastern front in 1972.

In December 1973, the Late Colonel Mbulunganga was assigned on a mission to Angola to set up operational bases inside Namibia and mobilize our people to join the liberation struggle.

On this Mission he was together with other fearless PLAN Combatants such as Phillipus Hamutenya Nandenga (Zulu) who served as his Political Commissar, Elise Hauliyondjamba who was the Special Military Advisor, Aron Embashu (Shongambe) a Veteran of the Second World War (II WW), Wilbard Tashiya (Nakada), Isaac Shikongo (Pondo), Ismael Kamati ka Shimuna (Ngiringiri), John Hamukoto (Kalola), Erickson Hauwanga (Kapanya), Jonas Katalaonga (katengela), Linus Hamwele (Mawila), Sakeus Kapulwa (Kapuleko), John Kalahari, Uno Shaanika (Kanana), Nangonya, Kaumbeko, to mention just a few.

The following year, Commander Dimo Hamaambo took over as Commander deputized by the late Colonel Mbulunganga.

One of the memorable military operations in which the late Commander Mbulunganga participated at the Eastern Front was the battle in 1973 together with some of our best PLAN fighters such as Comrades Haiduwa, Wanahepo Ndadi, Richard Kapelwa, Augustus Nghaamwa (McNamara), Elise Hauliyondjamba, Nambahu ya Nambili, Nande Shafombambi, Aron Embashu (Shongambe), Hamunyela wa Shalali, Shikongo sha Anghala, Jonas Ndeimana, Limoto, Lucas Kurundata "Situation", Ismael Kamati ka Shimuna (Ngiringiri), Lufimile Mwanawina, Canisius Andreas, among others.

These fearless Combatants of PLAN attacked and destroyed an enemy military base at Kamenga and successfully engaged the enemy forces at other places such as Luyana and Xamavera in the Cuando Cubango Province of Angola, as well as in the areas of Bwabwata in Namibia.

Another outstanding military operation engineered by Commander Mbulunganga together with other leaders such as Hanghome and Haiduwa, was the battle that took place on April the 20<sup>th</sup>, 1973.

Our combatants, under the command of the late Comrade Peter Sheehama, laid a perfect ambush on the platoon of about 37 enemy soldiers inflicting heavy casualties and capturing the weapons and ammunitions including heavy machine guns, military radios, medicaments, military maps and many other items which were later showcased to the then Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations (UN).

As a matter of fact, there is a popular song in SWAPO about this specific battle.

*(Struggle song) "Hatutange Ongudu yetu ya longa iilonga nghondo..."*

That time I was out in the plains of the Cuando River where I used to drive a Land Rover in the deep marsh, in the war zone visiting our combatants and delivering supplies to them.

The Late Colonel Mbulunganga together with Commander Dimo Hamaambo and other gallant Combatants of PLAN, including those previously mentioned were also fighting against the Portuguese regime in 1974, as Angola was not yet free. They faced all kinds of difficulties but never ever wavered!

The Independence of Angola on the 11th of November 1975 opened up new opportunities for our combatants to intensify their actions and widen the scope of their operations.

As a result, the Late Commander Mbulunganga and other senior leaders of PLAN successfully carried concerted operations at the battle front and scored many victories against the enemy forces.

The enemy having realized the danger they were in, they formed an Alliance of FNLA, UNITA and the apartheid regime of South Africa, led by imperialist forces but in the end our combined forces won the war at Cuito Cuanavale.

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 and Comrade Matias Ndakolo (Mbulunganga) was appointed as the Commander of the North Eastern Front, with Comrade Phillipus Hamutenya Nandenga (Zulu) as the Commander of the Northern Front.

Similarly, Comrade Wilbard Tashiya (Nakada) was appointed as the Commander of the North Western Front while Comrade Hamunyela wa Shalali took over the Eastern Front.

Indeed, the majority of PLAN Combatants and senior PLAN Commanders went under the mentorship of the Late Colonel Mbulunganga, people such as Retired Lieutenant General Martin Shalli who served as the then Regional Chief of Air Defence and later became the Regional Chief of Staff before he was assigned as PLAN Chief of Operations, Retired Major General Charles Ndaxu Namoloh (Ho Chi Min) who was the Regional Chief of Staff and Comrade Nabot Helao Nafidi who was the Regional Political Commissar under Commander Mbulunganga.

In the same vein, Comrade Martin Nashandi was the Chief of Engineering while Danger Ashipala served as Chief of Reconnaissance, among others.

There was also the first crop of detachments Commanders such as Comrades Marcus Nekongo, Niilo Tapopi (Kambwa kaShilongo), Kalunga koNdjafa, Masipa, Samuel Mushelenga, Retired Lieutenant General Ndenga Ndaitwah, among others.

Indeed, the Late Colonel Mbulunganga together with all the Commanders of PLAN I have mentioned before consolidated our Armed Liberation Struggle following in the

footsteps of the pioneering veterans who engaged the enemy for the first time at Omugulu gwo Mbashe on the 26 of August 1966.

Comrade Mbulunganga had been a member of PLAN Military Council since 1977 and remained at the Front until 1982.

*(Struggle song) Nakada, Mbulunganga, Haulondjamba komaanda ovakwaita...*

Fellow Mourners;

Through the life journey of Commander Mbulunganga 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 heroic sons and daughters of the land of the brave.

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 sacrifices of many brave sons and daughters of Namibia under the umbrella of our National Liberation Movement SWAPO of Namibia.

As Comrade Mbulunganga takes a befitting seat amongst our heroes and heroines, allow me on behalf of the Pioneering 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 entire bereaved family and all his comrades for this loss.

May his revolutionary spirit continue to guide us as we chart the future destiny of our country!

May His Soul Rest In Eternal Peace!