



**Keynote Address By His Excellency
Dr. Sam Nujoma, Founding President And
Father Of The Namibian Nation And Patron Of Olufuko Festival On The Occasion Of The Official
Opening Of The 6th Edition Of Olufuko Festival**

Outapi Town

Omusati Region

1st September 2017

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Director of Ceremonies Comrade Sacky Kayone;
Honourable Ministers and Deputy Ministers present;
Honourable Governor of Omusati Region and other Governors present;
Your Worship the Mayor of Outapi Town Council and other Mayors present;
Honourable Regional and Local Authority Councillors;
Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps;
Omusimanekwa Tatekulu Oswin Mukulu, Elenga Enene Iyelelo lyoshilongo shaMbalantu;
Omusimanekwa Tatekulu Johannes Mupiya, Omukwaniilwa gwaNgandjera;
Omusimanekwa Tatekulu Josia Shikongo, Omukwaniilwa gwUukwaluudhi;
Omusimanekwa Tatekulu Herman Iipumbu, gwElelo lyUukwambi;
Omusimanekwa Tatekulu Mathias Walaula, gwElelo lyOmbandja;
Omusimanekwa Tatekulu Tjimbuare Tom, Chief of Vita Thom Royal House;
Omusimanekwa Tatekulu Paulus Tjavara, Chief of Otjikaoko Traditional Authority;
Distinguished Captains of Industry, Participants and Exhibitors;
Distinguished Spiritual Leaders present;
Distinguished Members of the Olufuko Preparatory Committee;
Distinguished Invited Guests;
Members of the Media;
Ladies and Gentlemen:

It gives me great pleasure to be officiating at the opening of the sixth edition of Olufuko Annual Festival.

I must mention here that it has now become a tradition that we gather at this venue around this month of the year to participate in the most important traditional event on the Namibia cultural calendar.

I also wish to acknowledge all the leaders of the different Traditional Authorities present here, who are the custodian of our cultural values, traditional norms and heritage. I express my gratitude for their continuing support and contributions to the remarkable development of their respective communities.

Indeed, I always say a people without culture is comparable to people without identity because a people's culture gives them the reason to exist hence, a nation without culture is like a tree without roots.

We must therefore ensure that the promotion of culture should become one of the most important engines of development. Over the past few years, the Arts and Cultural Industries have emerged as one of the major sources of foreign currency, employment creation and a tool to assert the people's national identity. These industries also contribute immensely in attracting tourists and visitors and thereby bolstering our country's economic development.

The need to promote and preserve our cultural heritage has become more important in the face of the factors that endanger our cultural heritage. Therefore, concerted efforts should be put in place to preserve Olufuko cultural festival for posterity and to maintain it as a unique part of world cultural heritage.

Director of Ceremonies;

Once again, allow me to inform you that Outapi Town Council, with the assistance of UNAM Multi-disciplinary Research Center (MRC), is busy carrying out a comprehensive socio-cultural study of Olufuko before and after the advent of colonialism in our country.

This is done with specific reference to the historical, religious, legal (formalization) of family relations including comparative case analyses of the impact of Christianity in Ombalantu and similar practices among other traditional communities in Namibia and across Africa.

The study will also analyze Olufuko in line with the Namibian Constitution and lessons learnt elsewhere. For this reason, I would like to commend UNAM for this endeavor done by Namibians for Namibians.

This is unlike before when our history was written by European Missionaries who wanted to assert the Eurocentric view that whatever is called history in this country or Africa as a whole, began with the arrival of Europeans, thus denying our people a culture and history of their own.

Also, at this juncture, allow me to encourage the Small and Medium Enterprises to become actively involved in this endeavour either by assisting with funds and to showcase their products and services, as they are the backbone of our national economy.

In the same vein, I would like to urge the Olufuko Preparatory Committee to stay focused and not divert from the original objective of the Olufuko Festival.

The objective is to inform and educate the nation about the Olufuko rite of passage and other norms and practices which sustained our previous generations.

In this regard, I am happy that this year we have about 79 girls who are taking part in this important rite of passage. This is a good indication that the nation understands the value of culture and particularly Olufuko.

I would like to commend these young brides for taking part in this Olufuko Cultural process and urge them to continue with their studies until they become proud engineers, doctors, teachers, scientists and fully fledged adults.

Against this background, I am happy to note that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture is represented here today by the Hon. Anna Nghipondoka. This is very encouraging because her Ministry is the custodian of our arts and culture.

In the same vein, I wish to thank all the parents who allowed their daughters to go through this rite of passage and urge them to teach our children cultural values and norms as well as our languages which transmit our culture. Similarly, we should teach our children to respect the elders as well as themselves as it has been the case with our ancestors.

Indeed, concerted efforts should be made to revitalize our culture, both as a unifying factor and for nation building. We should continue to celebrate and embrace our cultural diversity and hold one another under; One Namibia! One Nation!

In conclusion, I wish to thank all those who made this event possible and urge you to continue working together as I always say:

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

Long Live the Olufuko Cultural Festival!

Long Live the Republic of Namibia!

I thank you!