



STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY
DR. SAM NUJOMA, FOUNDING PRESIDENT AND FATHER OF
THE NAMIBIAN NATION, AT HIS 86TH BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY ON
THE OCCASION OF THE FOURTH CELEBRATIONS OF THE “12 MAY
MOVEMENT”

HELD UNDER THE THEME: *THE LEGACY OF HARD WORK, UNITY,
SELF RELIANCE AND COMMITMENT TO SERVICE*

OTJIWARONGO
OTJOZONDJUPA REGION
16 MAY 2015

*Check Against Delivery

Director of Ceremonies;
Right Honourable Prime Minister, Comrade Saara Kuugongelwa Amadhila,
Honourable Secretary General of the SWAPO Party, Comrade Nangolo Mbumba;
Honourable Ministers and Deputy Ministers;
Honourable Members of Parliament;
Honourable Governor of Otjozondjupa Region, Comrade Otto Ipinge, and other
Regional Governors present;
Your Worship the Mayor of Otjiwarongo Town Council and other Mayors present;
Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps;
Distinguished Regional and Local Authorities Councillors;
Secretary of the SWAPO Party Youth League, Comrade Dr. Elijah Ngurare, and all
Members of the National Executive and Central Committee of the SWAPO Party
Youth League (SPYL);
Esteemed Traditional and Community Leaders;
Distinguished Members of the SWAPO Party Pioneers' Movement;
Distinguished Veterans of the Liberation struggle;
Distinguished Invited Guests;
Members of the Media;
Comrades and Friends:

Once again, I am honoured and humbled that Namibians from all walks of life have gathered here today to celebrate my 86th birthday anniversary, at this occasion of the fourth edition of the 12 May Movement Celebrations held under the theme: *"The legacy of hard work, unity, self-reliance and commitment to service"*

Allow me therefore on behalf of the Nujoma Family and indeed on my own behalf, to express my heartfelt gratitude and sincere appreciation to the SWAPO Party Youth League and indeed the rank and file of our mighty SWAPO Party for the Birthday Party that is hosted in my honour and for organizing this platform annually.

I also wish to take this opportunity to thank all those Comrades and friends who have travelled long distances from all corners of our country to attend this celebration and express my appreciation to all those who have been attending the 12 May Movement Celebrations since its inception on 12 May 2012 in Swakopmund, Erongo Region.

Allow me also to take this opportunity to acknowledge the presence and extend a cordial warm welcome to all the distinguished guests, friends and comrades who are among us to celebrate with us today.

Director of Ceremonies;

As we have indicated during the launch of the 12 May Movement in May 2012, this Movement is beyond Sam Nujoma as an individual. It is a platform that showcases the contribution of many sons and daughters of Namibia both inside and outside the country.

It is true that some of us, due to a particular moment in our country's history, have been at the forefront of the struggle for freedom and genuine independence of our country from the minority South African apartheid regime, as we had during our lifetime, dedicated ourselves to the struggle of the Namibian people and, by extension, that of the African people from colonial oppression.

However, I am always conscious that despite our tireless and time tested work towards reconciliation, unity of action and purpose, national reconciliation as well as peace and stability that shaped Namibia into the democratic, peaceful and stable country it has become, the accolades bestowed upon some of us belong to our collective national efforts.

On an occasion such as this, we must therefore forever pay tribute and homage to our forbearers in the struggle against colonialism such as Kaptein Hendrik Witbooi, Chief Samuel Maharero, Chief Kahimemwa Nguvauva, Kaptein Jacob Marenga, Chief Nehale IyaMpingana, Chief Mandume yaNdemufayo, Chief Ipumbu yaTshilongo and many other heroes and heroines who shed their precious blood and sacrificed their lives for our freedom and independence.

Director of Ceremonies;

We live during an important new era, whose form and content is different from the previous one that was defined by the struggle against imperialism, colonialism and apartheid.

I refer here to a new era because when we transformed the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) into the African Union (AU), we also transformed the terms of engagement among ourselves as we moved from concentrating our resources towards the defeat of colonialism and apartheid to the struggle against hunger, disease, ignorance, poverty and underdevelopment.

Indeed, our common destiny, as Africans, is defined by peace, security, development and prosperity; free from poverty, disease, underdevelopment and conflicts.

We want a continent whose citizens occupy a pride of place among the people of the world. We want a continent that has reclaimed its pre-eminence as a centre of technological innovation, scientific excellence and cultural advancement.

These, as we are all aware, constitute the objectives of an African agenda as enunciated in the Constitutive Act of the African Union.

Furthermore, I firmly believe that without the broad mobilisation of all our people on the continent and those in the Diaspora, as well as the harnessing of our own resources, the regeneration of Africa will remain a dream deferred.

Against this background, I appreciate the theme of this year's celebrations, titled "*The legacy of hard work, unity, self-reliance and commitment to service*" and call on all Namibians, young and old, especially my contemporaries, to look at these celebrations of 12 May Movement as an opportunity for each and every Namibian to reflect on their lives and the positive impact they have had on another individual's life.

Indeed, we must endeavor to make the 12 May Celebrations as an opportunity for all to draw inspiration from and focus on guiding the young generation, especially the SWAPO Party Pioneers' Movement, to emulate the virtues of hard work, humility, patriotism and respect for our cultural values and Traditional norms. Therefore, take the message of self-reliance, of hard work and of commitment to education to all corners of Africa.

In our country, we are blessed with the wealth of our vast resources, the power of our talents and the potentialities of our people. Let us therefore make the welfare and wellbeing of our people our number one priority.

In addition, we must prioritise the transformation of the rural areas, industrialization and beneficiation of our raw materials by embarking upon the manufacturing and value addition to our natural resources, develop our infrastructure relating to transport, energy, communication technology as well as protect our environment and endangered species, among many other challenges.

For this to happen, it is the duty of every African country and every person of African descent to ensure that we unite and never ever turn on each other in hatred of xenophobia. The underlying values that bind us together as Africans are human compassion and solidarity. In this regard, I commend President Comrade Dr. Hage Geingob, who recently said that “every African is welcome in Namibia”.

Indeed, as Namibians we take pride as the only country singing the African Union anthem alongside our national anthem and flying our National flag alongside the African Union's flag. Our youth must therefore be taught the absolute necessity and requirement for the unity of the African people here and in the Diaspora and take this message to all corners of Africa: *“One Africa, One People” and “Africa for Africans, those at home and those abroad.”*

Furthermore, the legacy of 12 May Movement must be measured in the education of our present and future generation. Our primary resource is our people because knowledgeable citizens are able to invent new products and skilled workers are competent to produce quality products.

It is for this reason that, as a country, we must continue to train adequate doctors, engineers, marine biologists, geologists, lawyers, agriculturalists and Information Communication Technology specialists. to ensure that we have an army of patriotic experts to guarantee Africa's self-determination and prosperity.

Against this background, I call on all Namibian youth to study very hard in order to ensure economic development and empowerment of all our people.

Director of Ceremonies;

The maintenance of peace and stability in the country is imperative for socio-economic development. Where there is no peace and stability, surely, there will be no meaningful development. Therefore, we must ensure the smooth transition, from generation to generation, to build on past successes, and progress to new generation.

It is today's youth that needs to embrace and take forward the legacy of freedom, democracy, sovereignty and independence earned through the long and bitter struggle for national liberation.

Having said that; I urge all of us to exercise discipline and respect each other in order to ensure that as leaders we continue to win the trust and confidence of all Namibians. We should therefore be of exemplary conduct and act with dedication and commitment in the interest of our country and in the spirit of comradeship and national unity.

We should also continue to promote unity. It is only in this manner that we will be able to build a strong, united and prosperous nation. I therefore call on our youth to give their full support to our new President, Dr. Hage Geingob, and the government, in order to find lasting solutions and eradicate the challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality including the distribution of land and other amenities to our all people.

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

Long Live the Republic of Namibia!