



KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY H.E. DR SAM NUJOMA,
FOUNDING FATHER OF THE NAMIBIAN NATION AND
FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA, ON
THE OCCASION OF THE INAUGURATION OF THE
WINDHOEK CITY MUSEUM, REFLECTING ON;
"Life and times in the Old Location"

WEDNESDAY, 4th NOVEMBER 2020,

CNR ROBERT MUGABE AND SCHWERINZBURG STREET

WINDHOEK

KHOMAS REGION

*Check Against Delivery

Director of Ceremonies;
Honourable Faustina Caley, Deputy Minister of Education, Arts and Culture;
Honourable Members of Parliament present;
Her Worship Councilor Fransina Kahungu, Mayor of the City of Windhoek;
Honourable Regional and Local Authorities Councillors present;
Distinguished Captains of the Heritage Industry;
Distinguished Members of the Business Fraternity;
Esteemed Bishop Petrus Tjijombo;
Distinguished Invited Guests;
Members of the Media;
Ladies and Gentlemen:

Good morning;

I am pleased to join you here today, on this special occasion of the Official Inauguration of the Windhoek City Museum, reflecting on; *"Life and times in the Old Location"*.

Allow me therefore, to express my thoughtful gratitude to Her Worship Councilor Fransina Kahungu, the Mayor of the City of Windhoek, for availing this platform for us to acknowledge and remember the history of our City of Windhoek.

In this regard, today, we are here to take stock of the strides we have made as a Nation to achieve the goals we have set for ourselves with regards to the Independence of our country, Namibia.

Against this background, I am honored to be part of this important event where the City's aspiration to establish a City Museum and document her history is being realised.

I believe that the City Council's intent in creating this museum is for it to preserve the City's rich cultural heritage which is of utmost importance.

I am told the City Museum was designed with the aim of sharing the history of Windhoek in the context of Namibia's history, with the people of Namibia and visitors alike.

Director of Ceremonies;

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am asked to reflect on the life and times in the old Location and I am deeply honoured to deliver a keynote address at this important and memorable occasion.

Before I proceed further, let me ask you to observe a minute of silence in remembrance of those heroes and heroines who sacrificed their lives for the freedom we enjoy today.

Let me also take this opportunity to express my gratitude to each and every one who is present here today for your commitment to upholding the memories of our fallen heroes and heroines.

Director of Ceremonies,

It is important for me to once again remind the Namibian people that the 10th December, which is the Namibia Women's Day/Human Rights Day is commemorated to honour the event that took place in 1959.

That event is called the Windhoek Old Location Massacre that brought the struggle against the removal of Africans from the Old Location to the new ethnically segregated township of Katutura.

Indeed, for sometimes, the Windhoek City Council had been preparing to remove the entire black population of the 'Old Location' to a new apartheid-style township named Katutura – as a social engineering in which residence was to be ethnically zoned and every aspect of life subject to rigid control.

The residents of the Old Location, already on the borderlines of poverty, faced crippling increases in rents and transport costs. Finally, the people's patience ran out. The decision was taken to boycott municipal services, including the buses and the beer hall, a prime source of municipal profits. Women in the Location took the initiative in mobilising the inhabitants.

On 9 December, a procession of women marched from the Old Location and, defying police tear-gas, demonstrated in front of the residence of the Administrator, the colonial regime's top official in Namibia.

On the morning of the 10 December, pickets were out in force – from the start the boycott was completely effective. The location Superintendent responded by calling in the white minority South African Police and military units with armoured cars.

With supreme arrogance, municipal officials and police refused to negotiate and demanded that the boycott end by the following day and provocatively arrested three demonstrators.

Angry crowds gathered in the streets. Then, without warning, a police unit opened fire. The people defended themselves, but 11 Namibians were killed that night and more than 54 wounded, two of whom later died.

Among those who sacrificed their lives was Meme Kakurukaze Mungunda who took five litres of petrol and poured it over the Windhoek Major Jaap Synman's car and set it alight. She was shot instantly on the spot.

Notwithstanding this brutal repression, it was not until August 1968 that the last element of resistance was broken and the remaining inhabitants compelled to move to Katutura.

It is thus important for Namibian citizens to remember that while we are enjoying our peace and freedom today, there were women and men who sacrificed their lives for us to live in peace.

Having said this very touching memory of our past, it is also important that we acknowledge the important role of preserving history.

I am told that as part of the ongoing collection and documentation process for the City Museum, this platform plays an important role in the understanding of the history of the City of Windhoek and the development of the City from the past to the future.

Director of Ceremonies;

It is becoming more widely accepted that museums can be powerful engines of social change through their educational power. Over time, and in partnership with others, local museums can help transform communities.

Your Worship the Mayor, it is gratifying, that the City of Windhoek has recognized this power, especially in your commitment which is shared with determination by the Management and staff of the City.

The prime benefit of historical restoration is always education. It also includes both public and private benefits such as safeguarding a community's heritage and making it available to the future generations.

Indeed, our people should have a platform to tell their stories and give their own account of history. This will promote cultural and societal cohesion as well as broaden historical appreciation of the residents of the City of Windhoek to build its identity and a sense of belonging.

As I always say; *"A people united, striving to achieve a common good for all members of the society, will always emerge victorious!"*

With these few words, it is now my pleasure to declare the City of Windhoek Museum officially launched.

I thank you!