



ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY DR SAM NUJOMA,  
FOUNDING PRESIDENT AND FATHER OF THE NAMIBIAN  
NATION, ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF  
THE ANNUAL OMAGONGO CULTURAL FESTIVAL

SATURDAY, 26 MAY 2018

UUKWALUUDHI TRADITIONAL AUTHORITY HOMESTEAD,  
ONALUSHWA, TSANDI  
OMUSATI REGION

UNDER THE THEME:

*“PROMOTING DEVELOPMENT THROUGH INTANGIBLE CULTURAL  
HERITAGE” “EHUMOKOMEHO TASHI PITILE  
MOMUTHIGULULWAKALO”*

**\*Check Against Delivery**

Director of Ceremonies;  
Your Excellency Dr. Hifikepunye Pohamba, Former President of the Republic of Namibia;  
Your Excellency Nangolo Mbumba, Vice-President of the Republic of Namibia and Madam Sustji Mbumba;  
Right Honourable Dr. Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila, Prime Minister of the Republic of Namibia and Comrade Amadhila;  
Honourable Margaret Mensah-Williams, Chairperson of the National Council and Mr Williams;  
Honourable Katrina Hanse-Himarwa, Minister of Education, Arts and Culture;  
Honourable Deputy Ministers present;  
Honourable Members of Parliament present;  
Honourable Governor of Omusati Region and other Governors present;  
Honourable Councillor of Tsandi Constituency and other Local and Regional Authorities Councillors present;  
Esteemed Representative of UNESCO, Dr. Jean-Pierre Ilboundo;  
Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps;  
Esteemed Deputy Chairperson of the Council of Traditional Leaders, Immanuel /Gâseb;  
Omusimanekwa Tatekulu Josia Shikongo Taapopi, Omukwaniilwa gwe lelo lyoshilongo shUukwaluudhi;  
OmusimanekwaTatekulu Johannes Mupiya, Omukwaniilwa gwaNgandjera;  
Omusimanekwa Meekulu Martha Mwadinomho Kristiana Nelumbu, Ohamba yaUkwanyama;  
Omusimanekwa Mario Shatipamba, Omukwaniilwa gwaMbandja, Ombala ya Naluheke moAngola;  
Omusimanekwa Tatekulu Herman Ndilimani Iipumbu, gwe lelo lyopamuthigululwakalo lyotshilongo shUukwambi;  
Omusimanekwa Tatekulu Matias Walaula, Elenga Ekuluntu lyelelo lyaMbandja moKalongo, moNamibia;  
Omusimanekwa Tatekulu Oswin Mukulu, Elenga Enene lyelelo lyoshilongo shaMbalantu;

Omusimanekwa Tatekulu Daniel Shooya, Elenga Enene Iyelelo  
lyoshilongo shUukolonkadhi;  
Omusimanekwa Tatekulu Tjimbuare Tom, Chief of Vita Thom  
Royal House;  
Omusimanekwa Tatekulu Paulus Tjavara, Chief of Otjikaoko  
Traditional Authority;  
Omalenga Omakuluntu gelelo lyoshilongo shaNdonga;  
Ootatekulu Oomalenga omanene nomalenga omashona  
gwopamuthigululwakalo;  
Aakwashigwana amuhe mwe ya koshituthi shOmagongo;  
Esteemed Reverend Hosea Emuno Iyambo and all distinguished  
Members of the Clergy present;  
Distinguished Invited Guests;  
Members of the Media;  
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am greatly honoured to have been invited to this auspicious occasion of Oshituthi shOmagongo or Marula Fruit Festival, here at Onalushwa, pombala yoshilongo sh' Uukwaluudhi.

Indeed, Omagongo Annual Festival has been inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity during the Tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) Session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage that was held in Windhoek, in 2015.

With this in mind, I have been asked to say a few words on the topic: “Ehumo Komeho Okupitila Momuthigululwakalo”, in other words, promoting development through our Intangible Cultural Heritage.

In reflecting on this topic, the first key question that I would like to address is: What is culture and how can culture serve to assist accelerate development of any given society?

As we are all aware, culture consists of the beliefs, behaviours, objects and other characteristics common to the members of a particular group or society.

In addition, culture is considered a central concept in the study of human societies, encompassing the range of phenomena that are transmitted through social learning and practices. These include art, music, dance, ritual, religion, and technologies such as tool usage, cooking, shelter, and clothing.

Against this background, through culture, people and groups define themselves, conform to society's shared values and contribute to societies in general.

The concept of material culture covers the physical expressions of culture, such as technology, architecture and art, whereas the immaterial aspects of culture such as mythology, philosophy, literature (both written and oral), and science comprise the intangible cultural heritage of a society.

The second part of the key question is how culture relates to or can accelerate development. In this regard, development is defined and explained through many concepts such as evolution, growth, expansion or enlargement, which all conveys a sense of progress and forging ahead.

Thus the theme “promoting development through our Intangible Cultural Heritage” requires us to explore ways and means that incorporate all the elements highlighted above in our developmental agenda. These include the individual, villages, local and regional authorities as well as at national level in the context of our National Developmental Plans.

It must be stressed therefore, that our cultural heritage does not and must not end at monuments and mere collections of objects exhibited in museums. It also includes traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants.

In this regard, cultural heritage is an important factor in driving development in the face of globalization. An understanding of the Cultural Heritage of different communities therefore helps with intercultural dialogue, and encourages mutual respect for others ways of life.

Director Ceremonies;

Given the above, we need to appreciate Cultural Heritage that defines our contribution to the intercultural dialogue, and sustenance of our ways of life.

This is where this festival celebrating omagongo comes in, because, from the Marula tree, Aawambo get shade, the fruits (ongongo), the juice (oshiwa), the fermented beer (omagongo), the oil (odjove) and the kernels as soup.

Similarly, with the wet branches this tree can be used to treat a cough, making the livelihood of the Aawambo people to be revolved around the Marula tree in many respects.

It is therefore not surprising that when the eight (8) tribes of the Aawambo people tried finding the one thing they have in common in order to celebrate their cultural heritage, they picked the marula beer season, and the marula beer as a festival that rotates amongst them.

Director Ceremonies;

Ohungi was an important and meaningful instrument in the life of communities to bequeath values and traditional norms to the younger generation. I am pleased to note you had ohungi last night, and that our social scientists had passed on some knowledge to the youth.

However, it is a pity that nowadays parents do not spend time with their children but rather utilize most of their time abusing alcohol at cuca shops and bars, especially the fathers.

For this reason, the younger generation is forgetting and ignoring the significance of embracing our culture because of lack of proper cultural guidance to know who they are, where they come from and where they are going.

Instead, they are engaged in social media, where they are speaking with very often total strangers, and some destructive behaviour.

It is equally disturbing that there are some people who despise their own traditional food such as Omboga, Oshigali, oshikwiila, Omagungu, Omwayi, oshikundu, etc., and opt for imported food.

This modern food is not even organic, but genetically modified, thus resulting in health complications. Our forbearers were so healthy and strong, owing to their chosen diets, comprising mostly of the traditional food grown organically.

Our cultural traditional housing architect responded to the environmental natural endowment and climatic conditions. It is not difficult to imagine the serene living condition such a traditional house provided. It was cool during hot summer days and warm during harsh winter colds.

Let us therefore continue to incorporate such architectural mechanisms in the contemporary architectural designs. This will not only improve our living conditions, but also help in cutting costs, and sourcing building input within our reach.

I am delighted that there are initiatives to revive our cultural heritage and this Omagongo Cultural Festival and other such as the Totem Expo, Olufuko Cultural Festival and many others serve to practically appreciate that historic national collective objective.

Allow me therefore to register my sincere appreciations and commend the Uukwaluudhii Traditional Authority and in particular Omusimanekwa Tatekulu Josia Shikongo Taapopi, Omukwaniilwa gwe lelo lyoshilongo shUukwaluudhi for hosting this Omagongo Cultural Festival with the aim of promoting development through culture and intangible heritage.

Similarly, allow me to commend the Organizing Committee chaired by Honourable Leevi Katoma for the meticulous preparations and for making today's occasion a resounding success.

As I have stated on numerous occasions, a nation without culture is like a tree without roots.

I would therefore like to encourage our traditional leaders to continue promoting our cultural heritage and instil these norms and values in our youth so that we can create a strong nation.

Long Live Our Culture!

Long Live the Omagongo Annual Festival!

I thank you.