



**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY
DR. SAM NUJOMA, FOUNDING PRESIDENT AND FATHER
OF
THE NAMIBIAN NATION, ON THE OCCASION OF THE
OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE CUBAN FIVE TO NAMIBIA**

**ETUNDA FARM, NEAR OTAVI
OTJOZONDJUPA REGION
05 JULY 2015**

***Check Against Delivery**

Director of Ceremonies;
Your Excellency, Comrade Dr. Hage Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia and Madam Monica Geingos, the First Lady;
Honourable Utoni Nujoma; Minister of Land Reform;
Honourable Peya Mushelenga, Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation;
Your Excellency, Comrade Giraldo Mazola, Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba to Namibia, Madam Mazola and the Entire Cuban Delegation;
Honourable Steve Biko Booyis, Chairperson of Otjozondjupa Regional Council;
Your Worship the Mayors of Otavi and Otjiwarongo Town Councils;
Honourable Regional and Local Authorities Councillors;
Comrade Dr. Elijah Ngurare, Secretary of the SWAPO Party Youth League (SPYL);
Major-General Tomas Nopoudjuu Hamunyela, Army Commander of the Namibia Defence Force;
Commissioner Onesmus Uupindi, of the National Youth Service;
Distinguished Veterans of the Liberation Struggle;
Distinguished Invited Guests;
Members of the Media;
Comrades and Friends:

I am honoured and humbled that we have gathered here at Etunda farm in order to receive our Cuban brothers, well known as the Cuban Five, who have travelled all the way from Cuba to show, in person, their appreciation to the Namibian Government and its people, for championing their release from the inhumane detention by the government of the United States of America.

Allow me therefore on behalf of the Nujoma Family and indeed on my own behalf, to express my heartfelt gratitude and sincere appreciation to Compañeros Gérardo Hernández, Antonio Guerrero, Ramon Labañino, Fernando González, and René González and indeed to the Government of the Republic of Cuba and its people for such a historic visit.

I also wish to take this opportunity to thank the Namibian Government, represented here by our Head of State, His Excellency, Comrade Dr. Hage Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia for organizing this visit of our Cuban brothers to pay a courtesy call on me, here at Etunda Trust Farm.

Similarly, I wish to thank all the Comrades and friends who came to attend this welcoming event, including the Army Commander Major-General Tomas Nopoudjuu Hamunyela accompanied by the Veterans of the Liberation Struggle, particularly those who participated in the decisive Battle of Cuito Cuanavale. I am also grateful that the Commissioner of the National Youth Service is here and all those present at this event in order to express our solidarity with our Cuban revolutionary brothers.

Director of Ceremonies;

Namibia and Cuba share a long history of friendship and enjoy strong bonds of solidarity which date back since the early sixties (1960s) when we were waging our Liberation Struggle to free ourselves from the yoke of colonial occupation and foreign subjugation.

We salute the selfless contribution of the Cuban people to self-determination, National Liberation and International Solidarity. Indeed, the revolutionary people of Cuba had been the source of immense inspiration to the people of Namibia during our difficult years of the struggle for national liberation under the leadership of SWAPO.

It was through the wise and able leadership of Commandanté Fidel Castro Ruz that the revolutionary people of Cuba rendered all round political, diplomatic and material support to the struggling peoples of Latin America, Africa and Asia to attain their freedom and genuine independence.

Lest we forget, Cuba's foreign policy was voicing its strong stance against the apartheid white minority regime of South Africa at International fora. Most significantly, the Cuban role in Angola remains an unshakable memory in the lives of our people when the combined Angolan FAPLA Forces with the Cuban Internationalist Forces and the Combatants of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), SWAPO's Military Wing, in one of the decisive turning points in Southern African history, brought the white minority regime of South Africa to its knees, when it suffered heavy military defeat at the battle of Cuito Cuanavale.

Indeed, the enemy war machinery was broken and its soldiers demoralized. As a result, in February 1989, P.W. Botha suffered a stroke as his political demise was inevitable with the Independence of Namibia on the 21st March 1990 and the relinquish of power to the majority government of the ANC in South Africa in April 1994.

Against this background, the entire Southern African Region and the people of Namibia, in particular, will forever remain indebted to the revolutionary people of Cuba for the unparalleled role they played in the total liberation of the African continent.

The Cuban people not only shared the same trenches with us but also sacrificed their lives for the just cause of our freedom and genuine independence. As you are aware, after the barbaric attack on Cassinga Refugee Camp, on the 4th of May 1978, in which more than 1,000 Namibians lost their lives, it was the Cuban Internationalist forces that repelled the colonial South African troops of occupation and managed to take hundreds of our people to safety.

The children who survived the Cassinga massacre were taken to Cuba. Two schools were established at the Island of Youth where thousands of young Namibians were educated at the Hendrik Witbooi and Hosea Kutako high schools as well as other institutions of high learning in the Republic of Cuba.

In this regard, the Cuban revolution has contributed immensely to building the capacity of our human capital especially in the fields of health, education, agriculture, sports, among others and remains an exemplary school and an inexhaustible source of inspiration to progressive forces the world over.

We will continue to pay our humble respect to the Cuban Internationalists who laid their precious lives for the just cause of our freedom and genuine independence and will never forget their sacrifices.

Director of Ceremonies;

It is my hope and expectation that the release of the Cuban Five will be the first step towards the long awaited end of the economic blockade against the Republic of Cuba and the normalisation of the relations between the two countries.

In conclusion, consistent with the extraordinary Cuban tradition of international solidarity, we will continue to render our support and solidarity to the revolutionary people of the Republic of Cuba.

Long Live the Revolutionary People of Cuba!
Long Live the Republic of Namibia!

I Thank You.