



TRIBUTE BY HIS EXCELLENCY, DR. SAM NUJOMA,
FOUNDING PRESIDENT AND FATHER OF THE NAMIBIAN
NATION, ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL
FUNERAL IN HONOUR OF THE LATE COMRADE NANGOLO
LEONARD MUKWILONGO

2nd JUNE 2017

ELIM, Omutunda Gwa Mbala,

OMUSATI REGION

*Check Against Delivery

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The day of 24 May 2017 will be remembered as having robbed us of one of Namibia's Liberation Struggle pioneering veteran, the Late Comrade Nangolo Leonard Mukwiilongo, who passed on at the age of 92, at Ongwediva Medipark Hospital.

Therefore, we are gathered here to bid farewell to a Comrade; a father, grandfather and great grandfather as well as an unwavering Namibian patriot who has served his country and people with dedication and commitment.

Many things were already said in the eulogy and by the previous speakers. On my part, I simply wish to recognize the unparalleled contribution of the Late Comrade Mukwiilongo to Namibia's freedom and independence.

Indeed, the Late Comrade Nangolo Mukwiilongo was an unwavering personal friend of mine who served as the best man at my wedding.

Allow me therefore to pay tribute to the son of Tatekulu Alfred Mwaningi Mukwiilongo gw'Iiyambo y'Iileka, gwezimo lyAakwaniilwa yomogandjera.

Tandi tanga Omwana gwa kuku Martha gAsino y'Iimbili, Omvatelele yomOmapale mOndonga. Tandi tanga Omwana mati gwa Kuku Aina Namupala gwaShiimi shaMela, omungandjera omupika gwAakwaniilwa yaNdonga, avalwa ku kuku Nuukongo wa Nangolo dhaAmutenya moElim, Omtunda gwaMbala, mOnashiku mu 23 gaOctober 1924.

The Late Comrade Mukwiilongo was not only a pillar of strength and a fountain of wisdom to his family but also to the entire rank and file of the SWAPO Party.

Thus, in him we have lost the embodiment of a fearless and gallant freedom fighter as one of the founding members of the Ovamboland People's Organisation (OPO), the forerunner of SWAPO.

In this regard, we particularly remember when in March 1972, the then UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim came to Namibia and came to the North accompanied by the Administrator General of the minority white apartheid colonial regime of South Africa in Namibia, Janie De Wet.

On that occasion, De Wet wanted the Late Tatekulu Mukwiilongo and other businessmen such as the Late Comrade David Sheehama and Silvanus Vatuva to form part of the Council of Traditional Authorities to meet the UN Secretary General Waldheim.

The Late Comrade Mukwiilongo told De wet in no uncertain terms that only the Senior Traditional Authority and Omukwaniilwa are authorised to select those who will form part of the delegation of the Council of Traditional Authorities and not De Wet.

From that incidence, the Late Comrade Mukwiilongo was marked as one of the top SWAPO leaders together with the Late Comrade John Ya Otto and many others such as Comrades Marco Hausiku, Joshua Hoabeb, the Late Comrade Axel Johannes, to mention but a few, who suffered persecution and constant harassments by the minority white apartheid colonial regime of South Africa.

Due to these harassments, on the 3rd of May 1980 he escaped the country into exile through the Council of Churches in Namibia (CCN) which arranged that he goes to Finland. In this regard, I remember calling him through our SWAPO Representative Office in East Germany.

While in exile, The Late Comrade Mukwiilongo became the Deputy Secretary of SWAPO's Elders Council (SEC) and was tasked with running the SWAPO warehouse as he successfully completed a course in logistics and administration in England in 1984.

After our country Namibia attained its freedom and genuine independence on the 21st March 1990, the Late Comrade Mukwiilongo became the first Councillor of the Elim Constituency from 1992 to 2004 and the First Governor of Omusati Region from 1992 to 1998.

Against this background, we have lost a fearless veteran and gallant freedom fighter who never wavered. His death is a hard blow, to his family, the SWAPO Party, his friends and Comrades. Without any doubt it deprived us of a fountain of wisdom and a pillar of strength as well as a deep rooted family tree whose shade is no more.

Indeed, death has robbed us of a dedicated cadre but we shall keep his legacy alive and emulate his exemplary and noble deeds as we continue to chart the future destiny of our country.

Nevertheless, we are consoled by the fact that he lived a long and fulfilled life which was taken out untimely and was able to witness the birth of our nation and our country's freedom and genuine independence for which he dedicated his entire adult life with unshakable and uncompromising stand.

I am grateful that our government has decided to honour our gallant freedom fighter with an Official Funeral. For this reason, allow me to express my gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Namibia and His Excellency Dr. Hage Geingob for this honour conferred to the Late Comrade Mukwiilongo.

As we prepare to lay him to rest, allow me therefore, on behalf of the Veterans of the Liberation Struggle and indeed on my own behalf, to express our deepest sympathy and heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family, the Elim community and the entire rank and file of the SWAPO Party for the irreparable loss of the Late Comrade Mukwiilongo.

It is my wish that we may all be consoled and granted fortitude during this difficult time of mourning.

Farewell Comrade.

May Your Soul Rest In Eternal Peace!

I thank you.