

**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY
DR SAM NUJOMA, FOUNDING PRESIDENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA AND FATHER OF THE NAMIBIAN
NATION,
ON THE OCCASION OF A MEETING WITH PAN AFRIKAN
DELEGATES ATTENDING DR. KWAME NKRUMAH'S MEMORIAL**

24 FEBRUARY 2012

OFFICE OF THE FOUNDING PRESIDENT

WINDHOEK

My fellow Pan Africanists attending the Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's memorial, it is always a personal and inspirational journey and great pleasure for me to pay homage to the source of the movement for the total liberation of Africa.

I went to Ghana in April 1960 as a freedom fighter, 51 years ago, on my way to the United Nations to petition for the independence of Namibia. The Government and people of Ghana, under the leadership of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, assured SWAPO of their full support and solidarity which continued throughout the struggle until we attained our freedom and genuine Independence.

Indeed, the Government and people of Ghana have provided all round political, diplomatic and material support to the just cause of our freedom. For this reason, the people of Namibia will forever be grateful to the Government and the people of Ghana.

When Ghana attained her independence in 1957, she did not consider the achievement of her freedom and independence as a victory for her own people only. Ghana saw that independence as a vital stepping stone towards the total liberation of Africa.

We recall Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's famous dictum, "*The independence of Ghana is meaningless unless it is linked to the total liberation of Africa.*" In a true sense, Ghana felt that her independence was not assured if she was an island hemmed in by colonial territories. And so Dr. Kwame Nkrumah committed his energies and financial resources and those of his people to the total liberation of our continent.

Indeed, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah was a firm believer in African liberation and pursued a genuine Pan-African policy, playing a key role in the formation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

For this reason, I would like to pay tribute to Dr. Nkrumah who not only contributed immensely to the development of Ghana but also to the entire African continent. Dr. Nkrumah is no more with us, but his pioneering work towards the total emancipation of our continent will be remembered by current and future generations. The entire continent should be proud that his vision of a free and Independent Africa is now realized and today, his legacy and dream of a "United States of Africa" is nearly achieved and still remains relevant.

My fellow Pan Africanists;

When the Founding Fathers were calling for African Unity, they were calling for economic emancipation, co-operation and integration of the entire African continent; because they fully understood that political freedom would remain insufficient and meaningless unless it was accompanied by genuine economic independence.

In this regard, we similarly remember when Dr. Nkrumah crafted a philosophy that later became a leading liberation ideological trade-mark which says “*seek first the political independence and all else shall be added unto you.*”

Now that we have attained our political freedom, we should embark upon the second phase of the struggle for economic independence.

On the 9th of September 1999, the Heads of State and Government of the then Organization of African Unity (OAU), issued the Sirte Declaration, calling for the establishment of the African Union (AU), with a view, inter alia, towards accelerating the process of integration of the continent, to enable it to play its rightful role in the global economy, while addressing multifaceted social, economic and political challenges on the continent.

The creation of the AU has also the ultimate objective of enhancing unity, strengthening cooperation and co-ordination, as well as equipping the African continent with a legal and institutional framework, which would enable it to gain its rightful place in the community of nations. The cardinal motivation behind the establishment of the African Union was the desire to deepen and strengthen the cohesion, solidarity and integration of the countries and peoples of Africa.

It is well known that Africa is one of the richest regions of the world. For example, the Southern Africa region contains a variety of resources, including natural gas, coal, uranium, diamonds, gold, platinum, perennial rivers etc. These resources must be harnessed to improve the standards of living of all our people. For that to happen, we should embark upon strategies which promote manufacturing and add value to our natural resources.

In that manner we will not only be able to create wealth but will also be able to enhance economic growth and improve the competitiveness of our economies in the international markets. We should now imbue the sense of urgency in the consolidation of all the structures of the AU so that we can build a united Africa with one Defence Force, an African Central Bank, a single African currency and a single passport.

My fellow Pan Africanists;

As you are all aware, the achievement of freedom and independence of our continent was only a critical point of departure but not the destination. For this reason, our youth should become active participants in the socio-economic development of our continent in order to take it to the advanced level of development.

We should therefore continue to educate our youth and equip them with relevant technical skills, knowledge, cultural norms and values. In this way, we will be able to achieve our strategic objectives, namely the eradication of poverty, disease, ignorance and under-development.

Although the enemy was defeated politically, he has not given up. History has taught us how the enemies of peace, freedom and social progress have caused division, political instability and economic sabotage in some sisterly countries on the African continent and embarked upon maneuvers and machinations in order to mislead and converts some of our fellow African compatriots and turns them against their own people with the view to reverse the gains of our freedom and independence.

We have now seen what happened in Libya last year (2011), when Western Imperial Forces, using the UN Security Council, and regardless of the opinion of African leaders, removed a sitting Head of State and government by force and thus effected regime change in their interest.

These deceptive attempts are also the main cause of political instabilities in the Middle-East. Our youth must therefore be on the full alert and remain vigilant against deceptive attempts by the enemy to divide them. As the future leaders of our continent, our youth should act with dedication and commitment to always promote the interests of Africa before their own, otherwise the Western Imperialists will re-colonize our Continent wherever and whenever they believe this is necessary and to the extent that this will serve their interests.

What is at stake right now is neither who the chairman of the AU is nor which country heads the AU. At stake right now is whether, as Africans, we are able to unite and speak with one voice- whether we can respond without equivocation to the challenges before us and whether the current generation can keep the legacy of our founding fathers, including that of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah.

I believe they can and I have confidence that they will live up to the expectations and meet the challenges with vigour and determination, including defending the air space and the territorial integrity of the entire African continent.

Last but not least, I commend the organizers of the Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's memorial event for their initiative. Your efforts will go a long way to preserve his memory and legacy. I would also like to commend the main speakers and indeed all the participants for sparing time to take part in this worthy cause. May all your endeavours be met with success.

Remember, a united people, striving to achieve a common good for all members in the society, will always emerge victorious, if we hold fast to that truth and the ideals of Dr. Nkrumah, there is no obstacle too insurmountable; no challenge too great, as long as we are united in common action and purpose.

Long Live the Spirit of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah!

Long Live the Spirit of Pan-Africanism!

I thank you.