



TRIBUTE BY H. E. DR. SAM NUJOMA, FOUNDING  
PRESIDENT AND FATHER OF THE NAMIBIAN NATION, ON  
THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL STATE FUNERAL IN  
HONOUR OF THE LATE COMRADE MATHEUS KRISTOF  
SHIKONGO

MONDAY, 24<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2021

PARLIAMENT GARDEN

KHOMAS REGION

\*Check Against Deliver

Director of Ceremonies; Honourable Hilma Nikanor, Deputy Minister of Defence and Veterans Affairs;  
The Widow, Meme Sara Shikongo and the Entire Bereaved Family;  
Your Excellency Dr. Hage Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia as represented here by His Excellency Dr. Nangolo Mbumba and Madam Mbumba, Vice President of the Republic of Namibia;  
Right Honourable Dr. Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila, Prime Minister;  
Honourable Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of International Relations and Cooperation;  
Honourable Professor Peter Katjavivi, Speaker of the National Assembly;  
Honourable Lukas Sinimbo Muha, Chairperson of National Council;  
Justice Petrus Damaseb, Deputy Chief Justice;  
Honourable Ministers and Deputy Ministers present;  
Comrade Sophia Nahango Shaningwa, Secretary General of the SWAPO Party and All Leaders of Political Parties present;  
Air Marshall Martin Kambulu Pinehas, Chief of the Namibian Defence Force;  
Chief Immanuel /Gaseb, Acting Chairperson of the Council of Traditional Leaders and All Traditional Leaders present;  
Honourable Laura McLeod-Katjirua, Governor of Khomas Region and other Governors present;  
Your Worship Dr. Job Amupanda, Mayor of the City of Windhoek;  
Your Excellency, Ambassador Anastas Kaboba Wa-Kimba, Dean of the Diplomatic Corps;  
Retired General Officer, Commissioner Ben Shikovelo Shikongo, President of the Namibia National Liberation Veterans Association (NNLVA) and All Veterans of our National Liberation Struggle;  
Reverend Lorenst Raonga Kuzatjike and All Spiritual Leaders present;  
Fellow Mourners;

It is with sadness that I have learnt about the passing of your beloved husband, father, uncle, grandfather and a Veteran of our National Liberation Struggle, Comrade Matheus Kristof Shikongo on Thursday, 13 May 2021, at Ongwediva Medipark Hospital.

Indeed, on this day, a great shadow has fallen and hangs heavy across the entire land as Comrade Matheus Kristof Shikongo is no more. For those who knew him, who worked alongside him, who counted and relied on him, who learned from him, who loved him, it is unbearable that we will never see him again.

The news struck a deep and solemn note as Comrade Shikongo succumbed to Covid-19. The coronavirus has caused so many sorrows in our country. Our society, like most around the world, has been plunged into turmoil. We have lost so many lives to this disease. There have been tears and grief in so many homes. We have had to endure so much that at times it has seemed too great to bear.

And now once again the stroke of death has taken one of the Veterans of our National Liberation Struggle who has been a citadel, a rock and a tower of strength at this dreadful moment in our country's history when amidst this great upheaval, when our people are so fearful of the future, they have looked to leaders like him for reassurance and for certainty.

Comrade Shikongo was a man who was greatly respected and loved. By his family, by his community, by his colleagues in the business fraternity, by his comrades in the SWAPO Party and by his friends with whom he had longstanding and cordial relations.

We have lost not just a dependable colleague and a comrade. We have lost a dear friend, who had many virtues. He was generous in spirit and had a charming personality.

He had the endearing ability to lift any mood and fortify our resolve in even the most difficult situations. He had a sense of humour and was humble.

He was principled and a man of great courage, in times of both calm and difficulty. He was an honest man who never hesitated to speak up for what he believed to be right. His life was full of meaning and accomplishment in the way he dedicated himself to serve the people of our country.

We will remember him for his kindness, his professional approach, but above all for his ever-present sense of calm, even in a crisis or when under extreme pressure. He was a voice of reason and a voice of wisdom.

To his movement, the SWAPO Party, he worked so hard on a daily basis to advance its cause. But his greatest loyalty was reserved for his country and its people. In this regard, we bid him farewell, but also commemorate and acknowledge his immense contributions to our country.

Comrade Shikongo grew up in the vicinity of Ondangwa, which served as the centre for colonial administration in the then Ovamboland. Indeed, Ondangwa also served as the recruiting station for the South-West Africa Native Labour Association

(SWANLA). It was precisely at Ondangwa where Comrade Shikongo got exposure to the political activities spearheaded by some of SWAPO leaders and National Heroes such as the Late Comrades Andimba Toivo yaToivo and Kaxumba kaNdola, who inspired him to contribute to the fight against apartheid colonialism.

His political consciousness grew whilst at Ongwediva College and intensified when he moved to Windhoek. Much of Comrade Matheus's participation in the liberation struggle is only known by himself and few people. He was trained by PLAN combatants inside Namibia as an Intelligence Operator.

His training included the handling of weapons and ammunition and their proper storage, collection of information about the enemy as well as protection and concealment of combatants.

He was trained by renowned combatants and Commanders of PLAN such as the Late Commander Isak Shikongo "Pondo", who was PLAN's Chief of Intelligence, Late Commander Philip Hainana "Shikoka" and now Retired Brigadier General Peter Heita "Progress" under instruction from Retired Lieutenant General Martin Shalli who was PLAN's Chief of Operations at that time.

His main activities included providing the necessary amenities such as food, clothing, shelter and transport to the combatants of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) and infiltrating combatants and war materials from the Northern Communal Area through Oshivelo Gate into the Commercial Area. In fact some combatants used to be disguised as employees in his businesses during the day and carried out their operations at night.

Notable events or incidents include when between 1976 and 1978, two PLAN Combatants, Nduuvu ya Nangolo and Canisius Ndilimani, were transported by Comrades Sackaria Nashandi, Risto Nakanyala, Naftali Indongo and the Late Eino Shikomba with Comrade Gerhald Kambonde's car from the then Owamboland to Grootfontein where they attacked the white minority regime's Military Base.

One evening, they loaded guns in a small car which was entrusted with Naftali Indongo and they drove along the Oshivelo tarred road. Somewhere in the thick bushes before they reached Oshivelo, they off-loaded the guns and instructed the two combatants to move along the bushes where there is now a mahangu field of the Late Mr. Nyungu.

The two combatants crossed the Oshivelo Cordon Fence in the Eastern direction of Oshivelo using their guerrilla tactics, when they reached a river, they followed it up to a tarred road where there is now the first bridge from Oshivelo to Tsumeb.

Meanwhile, the other four comrades had to deflate one of their tires, upon arrival at Oshivelo and they asked for help from the boers to assist them with a car jack in order to remove the wheel as a tactic to delay and allow our two combatants to reach their destination.

Their signal to the combatants was that upon reaching the valley of the river, they will dim the car lights for them to realize that it was their car. Upon arrival, the

combatants jumped in the car and then they proceeded with their journey to Grootfontein.

After the Grootfontein Base attack, the two PLAN combatants headed to Windhoek. When they reached Windhoek, they were accommodated by Comrade Matheus Kristof Shikongo and others such as Comrade Aira Shikwambi and the Late Comrade Namalambo in Ovambo Location.

The colonial administration was tipped off that Comrade Mathew Shikongo and others were accommodating PLAN Combatants in Ovambo Location. They raided the houses, and in the process, a fight broke out between the PLAN Combatants and the South West Africa Police (SWAPOL) whereby one white Police Officer was killed while another black SWAPOL Police Officer by the name of Nkoshi was shot in the stomach. After that incident Comrade Matheus Kristof Shikongo was detained and tortured.

In 1978, after the adoption of the United Nation Security Council Resolution 435, the SWAPO leadership in Namibia decided to prepare some individuals by imparting etiquettes and basic English Language Communication skills to be able to interact with the international community when they arrive in Namibia for the implementation of Resolution 435. Comrades Matheus Kristof Shikongo, Crispin Matongo, among others, were entrusted with that responsibility.

In 1982/83 Comrade Matheus Kristof Shikongo offered his car to transport PLAN combatants to attack the Rooikop Base in Walvis Bay. These combatants were later apprehended and held in captivity. This incident led to his detention by the white minority South African regime.

In 1983/84 many PLAN combatants were deployed into Central Namibia. When their presence was detected, a plan was devised to remove them as soon as possible. Comrade Matheus Kristof Shikongo bought some suits for these combatants and organized sedan cars to rescue them from the danger zone to the Northern Communal Area disguised as professionals.

At the apex of the liberation struggle in 1987/88, a decision was taken to infiltrate weapons and ammunitions into the then Commercial Area or Police Zone. Comrade Matheus Kristof Shikongo was amongst those who facilitated in this clandestine mission. His businesses became the caches or hiding place of small arms, B-10 and 82 mm mortars and ammunitions.

In fact, his houses and businesses became home to some of PLAN Combatants who were inside the country and entrusted with the security of the SWAPO leadership in the elections process.

Some of the combatants who facilitated in the covert transportation of weapons and ammunition from the North into Windhoek include Retired Lieutenant General John Mutwa, who was PLAN's Chief of Intelligence at that time, Retired Brigadier Shikololo, Comrade Peter Lindongo and the Late Comrade Edvin Tonchi Nyambe. Indeed, these were highly sensitive and top level operations that were not known by everybody but only a few people.

After independence, Comrade Shikongo made valuable contributions to the socio-economic development of Namibia as a businessman, as a president of the Namibia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NCCI) from 1997-2000. He also contributed as the first black Mayor of the City of Windhoek in 1993, and was later re-elected for consecutive terms from 2000 to 2010.

As we pay homage to him today, let us remember him for what he was, a servant leader who loved his people and put them above love of self. It is not enough to eulogise our departed comrade. We must complete what he was not able to finish in his lifetime, that is, building our nation and an ethical state led by selfless men and women of integrity and of conviction such as those who belonged to the glorious generation of freedom fighters who with a majestic sense of purpose and through their endurance and selfless sacrifices saw us through to final victory.

To his family, our hearts go out to you as you go through the grief of a loss so overwhelming. As you walk through this difficult times, it is our wish that you are consoled by the knowledge that the formidable legacy of your husband, father and brother lives on. His courage, his compassion and his service to the people of Namibia will remain a light that brightens our darkest day. May it be that others step forward to follow in his footsteps and take up his mantle.

To the Widow, Meme Sara Shikongo, I wish you and the children to find peace in your hearts, as you go through this very difficult time. I also wish that you remain with a memory that your husband, apart from being a loving husband and father, lived his life for you and the people of our country.

As he finds his final resting place, allow me to thank our government for honouring him with an Official State Funeral. This is a practical demonstration of the need to keep our history alive so that it is imparted to the younger generation.

Against this background, on behalf of the Veterans of our National Liberation Struggle, the Nujoma family and indeed on my own behalf, I extend our heartfelt condolences and deepest sympathies to the entire bereaved family members during these difficult times. May we all be granted fortitude during this trying times.

May His Soul Rest In Eternal Peace!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Sam Nujoma', written over a horizontal line.

**Sam Nujoma**  
**FOUNDING PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**