



03 August 2022

The Widow, Meekulu Rakel Erastus Negonga, the Children
and the Entire Bereaved Family
Okamule Village
Oshakati-West Constituency
OSHANA REGION

The Widow, Meekulu Rakel Erastus Negonga, the Children and the Entire
Bereaved Family

It is with profound sadness that I have learned of the passing of your beloved
husband, father, grandfather, uncle and a Veteran of our National Liberation
Struggle, Comrade Jacob Netumbo IyaVilho ya Tshilongo, on Wednesday, 20th
July 2022, at Oshakati Intermediate State Hospital in Oshana Region.

The Late Comrade Jacob Vilho ya Tshilongo was part of the group of business
people who were the pillars of the Liberation Struggle inside Namibia. These
included Comrade Eliakim Namundjebo, Comrade Sem Shivute, Comrade
Willard Nangolo, Comrade Kauna Nashandi, Comrade Helvi Nangolo, Comrade
Willard Imanya Kalili, Comrade Gerhard Kambonde, Comrade Melekisedeck
Nkandi, Comrade Sylvanus Vatuva, Comrade John Nakawa, among others.

Comrade Jacob Vilho was a highly principled businessman who joined OPO,
the forerunner of SWAPO, in 1958 and SWAPO in 1960 at the Consolidated
Diamond Mines (CDM) in Oranjemund.

In this regard, allow me to join the nation in bidding farewell to a Pioneer
Veteran of the Namibian Liberation Struggle and pay tribute to his bravery and
unwavering commitment to the liberation of Namibia.

In the 1970s, he was trained by PLAN combatants inside Namibia as an
Intelligence Operator. His training included the handling of weapons and
ammunitions and their proper storage, collection of information about the
enemy as well as protection and concealment of combatants.

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(Reg No. 8208)

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 1972, the Racist Regime of South Africa in Namibia, under Commissioner Jan de Wet, invited him to Windhoek together with other SWAPO Stalwarts such as Comrade Skinny Hilundwa, Comrade John Nakawa, Comrade Shali Kamati, among others, in order to convince them to join them. But this they vehemently rejected.

Due to his political activities and unwavering support to SWAPO, the notorious South African Army arrested him in 1985 and transferred him to Osire Military Base where he endured hardship and was tortured but he never wavered until Namibia gained her freedom and genuine independence on the 21st March 1990.

In 1987, Comrade Jacob Vilho, together with twelve other businessmen and Reverends Efraim Angula and John Sindano, formed part of the delegation that went to Finland where they met the Late Comrade Andimba Toivo Ya Toivo as the Secretary General of SWAPO.

They also went to West Germany, Spain and Israel under the Council of Churches in Namibia like Bishop Kleopas Dumeni, who headed the Namibian delegation that took part in the World Council of Churches' Lusaka Consultation in 1987, to formulate a response to the dilemma of dealing with the overt and covert violence of the white minority regime of South Africa.

Indeed, the Churches in Namibia played an important role in gaining us the lasting support of the World Council of Churches in Geneva, as well as the Lutheran World Federation and other International Church Bodies.

This is how the churches in Namibia supported the liberation struggle waged by SWAPO and unflinchingly expounded a searing indictment of apartheid and re-affirmed their commitment to the independence of our country.

At the apex of the liberation struggle in 1987/88, the Late Comrade Vilho's businesses became the caches or hiding place of small arms and ammunitions. Thus, he sacrificed a lot of his personal and family wealth for the liberation of his mother land.

As the family comes to terms with this tragic moment, allow me on behalf of the Veterans of our National Liberation Struggle, the Nujoma family and indeed on my own behalf, to convey our deepest condolences and heartfelt sympathies to the family and all Comrades for this loss.

Our hearts go out to you as you go through the grief of a loss so overwhelming. It is our wish that you are consoled by the knowledge that the formidable legacy of the Late Comrade Jacob Vilho live on and may you find solace in knowing that your loss is the nation's loss.

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

May the revolutionary spirit of the Late Comrade Jacob Vilho continue to guide us as we chart the future destiny of our country!

May His Soul Rest In Eternal Peace!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Sam Nujoma', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Sam Nujoma
FOUNDING PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA