



09 August 2022

Honourable Professor Peter Katjavivi,
Speaker of the National Assembly,
the Children and the Entire Bereaved Family
Windhoek
KHOMAS REGION

Comrade Professor Peter Katjavivi, the Children Perivi and Isabel, as well as the extended families, loved ones, and friends.

It is with profound sadness that I have learned of the passing of your beloved wife, mother and grandmother, the Late Comrade Jane Rosemary Katjavivi, on Tuesday, 09 August 2022.

There are no words that can bring comfort at this time, but may your pain be relieved. May your hearts be eased; may your tears be wiped dry. We are with you. We mourn with you.

The passing of Comrade Jane Katjavivi is a great loss not only to the family, but also to the SWAPO Party and the country as a whole. Indeed, in Comrade Jane Katjavivi, the SWAPO Party has lost a dependable anti-apartheid activist and freedom fighter who went beyond the call of duty to ensure that SWAPO was recognized as the sole authentic representative of the Namibian people and that Namibia was free and independent.

As a writer, editor and former publisher, with an academic background in African Studies, she will not only be mourned by Namibia, but by colleagues and comrades on the African continent and in the international progressive movement.

A committed gender activist, she relentlessly championed the emancipation and empowerment of women. Her life and work reflected a consistent commitment to advancing literature and the development of a culture of reading to enhance people's broader educational achievements as well as enrich us all culturally.

Comrade Jane Katjavivi, in her recently published book, "Undisciplined Heart" reflects on her life story and her connection with Namibia, friendship and family, the importance of books and challenges for women.

Indeed, born in Leeds in northern England, Comrade Jane became involved through the church in support of projects in the Third World, and then studied Literature and African Studies at the University of Sussex. This brought her into direct contact with students from Southern Africa and led to her involvement in student campaigns against apartheid.

Later doing an MA at the University of Birmingham, her first job in the mid-1970s was as a scholarship officer to raise funds for students from Southern Africa who had been denied education on the basis of race or politics.

This is how she met Comrade Peter Katjavivi, then SWAPO Representative to the UK and Western Europe and worked with him as an Information Officer, writing press statements and booklets about the Namibian liberation struggle.

They fell in love and moved to Oxford where Comrade Peter Katjavivi studied for his doctorate in Namibian history. They married in 1981 and had a son, Perivi, in 1984 and a daughter, Isabel, in 1988 and moved to the United States where Comrade Peter Katjavivi was a Visiting Fellow at Yale University at the time when talks about Namibian independence restarted.

In 1990, Comrade Jane set up New Namibia Books which focused on Namibian writing and published 65 books over 10 years, mainly on – literature, life stories, history, politics, traditional folktales, autobiography, academic books, school textbooks and children's books but also helped various book development associations in Namibia and continent-wide.

In 1995 she opened a bookshop in Post Street Mall believing passionately that books can liberate our minds and potential, particularly after the cultural isolation under South African rule.

In 2003, when Comrade Peter Katjavivi was posted to the European Union and Belgium and later to Germany as the Ambassador for Namibia, Comrade Jane became a wife of a diplomat working on specific programmes of cultural exchange and fund-raising to assist in disaster relief in developing countries.

She was both a tower of strength and pillar of her family. Therefore in times like this, it is a great comfort that we come together to stand with the bereaved family and give them our support.

It is common cause that her family will be poorer without the indispensable wisdom and guidance of this paragon of the belief that the family is the cradle that nurtures our next generation. We remain committed to her legacy of serving our people and taking the country forward.

As you carry her to her final resting place, please allow me, on behalf of the Veterans of our National Liberation Struggle, the Nujoma family and indeed on my own behalf, to extend our heartfelt condolences and deepest sympathies to Professor Peter Katjavivi, the Children Perivi and Isabel, as well as the extended families, loved ones, and friends for this untimely 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 Jane Katjavivi live on and may you find solace in knowing that your loss is the nation's loss. We wish you strength under this dark cloud and may you be granted fortitude during this time of bereavement.

May the revolutionary spirit of the Late Comrade Jane Rosemary Katjavivi continue to guide us as we chart the future destiny of our country!

May Her Soul Rest In Eternal Peace!



Sam Nujoma
FOUNDING PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA