



MESSAGE OF SOLIDARITY BY H.E. DR. SAM NUJOMA, FOUNDING PRESIDENT AND FATHER OF THE NAMIBIAN NATION, ON THE OCCASION OF THE COMMEMORATION OF THE CENTENARY OF DR. ANTÓNIO AGOSTINHO NETO, THE FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA AND FOUNDER OF THE ANGOLAN NATION

THURSDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER 2022

SAFARI HOTEL CONFERENCE CENTRE

WINDHOEK

I am delighted and very much appreciate the invitation extended to me to attend a lecture on the “Life and Works of President Agostinho Neto”.

Indeed, I knew President Agostinho Neto well and had the honour and privilege to work with him when I first met him in Luanda on the 26 March 1976, attending the Afro-Asian People’s Solidarity Conference.

In May 1976, President Agostinho Neto invited me to accompany him on a tour of the South of Angola and we travelled together to Menongue (formerly Silva Porto), Lubango and Namibe where we met the local people who are ethnically related to our people in Northern Namibia.

I recall that President Agostinho Neto was very determined that Angola will not rest until the whole of Southern Africa was free. As we commemorate the centenary of his birth, we wish to recall his prophetic words when he assured Africa and the world that, “Angola shall be on its own will, a revolutionary trench in Africa to Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa in the continuation of our struggle.”

The independence of Namibia, Zimbabwe and the end of the white minority rule in South Africa was a practical reaffirmation of that undertaking.

We recall that Luanda was the headquarters of SWAPO for many years. Many of the strategies and tactics that finally freed our country were shaped there. In fact, Angola became a second home for thousands of Namibian freedom fighters during the very difficult times of our struggle for national independence.

More importantly, President Agostinho Neto allowed SWAPO to establish its Military Headquarters at Lubango, from where our combatants of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), SWAPO's Military Wing, heroically waged the armed struggle against the apartheid colonial regime of South Africa.

Our armed struggle culminated in 1988 when the combined troops of the Angolan Armed Forces of FAPLA, the Cuban Internationalists and the Combatants of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), dealt a resounding defeat to the invading South African apartheid army at the historic battle of Cuito Cuanavale.

The defeat of the South African troops forced the apartheid regime to the negotiating table, resulting in the independence of Namibia and the end of the white minority rule in South Africa.

The people of Angola demonstrated their kindness, humanity, and we will therefore always remember and cherish the selfless contribution that they made to the liberation of Namibia. Indeed, Namibia and Angola have much in common. The two countries are neighbours with a common border that extends from the Atlantic Ocean in the west to the Zambezi River in the east.

Furthermore, Angola and Namibia have deep-rooted cultural, political, economic, social and historical ties dating back many years. Thus, the relationship between Angola and Namibia has grown from the liberation struggle assistance and comradeship to bilateral cooperation, touching on several domains, which are important to both countries and show our willingness to address matters of common interest and manage our shared resources.

However, the relationship has a lot to improve on if the two countries are to build robust economic and social networks and systems that will lead to the achievement of Angola's Vision 2025 and Namibia's Vision 2030 and beyond.

There could never be enough time to share our warm and fraternal experiences we have shared together during our common struggle against colonialism and apartheid. Suffice to say, the legacy that Dr. António Agostinho Neto has left to us continues to translate into stronger solidarity and relentless commitment toward a shared future of prosperity for our region and people.

As I always say, a people united, striving to achieve common good for all the members of the society, will always emerge victorious!

I thank you!