



MEDIA RELEASE

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MESSAGE BY HIS EXCELLENCY NANGOLO MBUMBA, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA ON THE OCCASION OF THE 95TH BIRTHDAY OF THE FOUNDING FATHER AND FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA HIS EXCELLENCY DR. SAM SHAFIISHUNA NUJOMA, MAY 12, 2024

Fellow Namibians,

Today is a historic day. 95 years ago, at Etunda Village, a boy child was born that grew up to father a nation and be considered amongst the pantheon of all-time great African leaders and revolutionaries.

Indeed, celebrating 95 years of the life of the icon we know as Comrade Sam Shafiishuna Nujoma, is a moment that resonates far and wide across our country and beyond its borders. As Namibians, we gather as one, to serenade Comrade Nujoma, an indomitable lion and Pan-African luminary, who has established a legacy of leadership which will stand the test of time.

When I think of Comrade Sam Nujoma, the one word that immediately comes to mind is VISIONARY. A visionary is described as someone with an extraordinary level of foresight; a person who can envision a future and pave a path towards that envisioned future.

Comrade Nujoma's visionary leadership was evident from his youth when he resigned from his job at South African Railways to pursue a career in politics, with a goal to free the people of Namibia from the brutal Contract Labour and Pass Law Systems being administered by Apartheid South Africa which was occupying Namibia illegally, at that time.

The revolutionary path Comrade Nujoma pursued led him to become President of the Owamboland People's Organisation (OPO) which later transformed into the South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO). He persevered in the dangerous arena of struggle-era politics because he envisioned a future where Namibians could be free and exercise their collective right to govern themselves in an environment free from discrimination, violence and hatred based on race, gender or ethnicity.

Fellow Namibians,

As we celebrate the 95th year in the life of our beloved Founding Father, we express our utmost appreciation to the man who led us to independence. He was the one to believe when others doubted, he saw victory where others saw defeat, he encourage those around him when spirits were down and he remained resolute when others wavered.

His gallantry took him beyond Namibia to a number of foreign countries across the continent and further afield but like the fearless patriot he was, he stood strong and courageous wherever he was, establishing himself as the dean of Namibia's Struggle for Independence.

As a leader during the struggle, he could converse with anyone, from aspiring young freedom-fighters to extraordinary personalities such as

Gamal Abdel Nasser, Osagyefo Kwame Nkrumah, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta and Julius Kambarage Nyerere amongst others.

Comrade Nujoma facilitated the sending of many Namibian youth to receive their primary, secondary and above all, tertiary education. Many SWAPO cadres, fighters, commanders and commissars were able to obtain high level training due to his innate leadership and diplomatic skills.

He was an expert nurturer and groomer with an eye for talent, developing leaders such as the late Comrades Hage Geingob, Moses Garoëb, Theo-Ben Gurirab and Hidipo Hamutenya, amongst others. He also promoted women through the SWAPO ranks from the likes of Comrade Libertina Amathila to Comrade Pendukeni Iivula-Ithana and Comrade Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah.

It is no surprise that due to his impeccable leadership credentials, Comrade Nujoma was President of Namibia for 15 years and President of SWAPO from its inception until he handed over both leadership roles to Comrade Hifekepunye Pohamba.

Today, he is as loved and revered as ever, probably even more, given his endearing nature and status as Father of the Nation. To reach the age of 95 years is no mean feat. It is an honour reserved for those who are truly blessed with the gift of long-life and health.

On this day, we thank God for giving Comrade Nujoma the gift of long-life and health. On this day, we celebrate 95 years of a purposeful, courageous and extraordinary life. On this day, we celebrate the birthday of our National Leader, Commander-in-Chief, Supreme Patriarch and Father of Veteran Fighters.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FATHER OF THE NAMIBIAN NATION!

LONG LIVE COMRADE SAM NUJOMA!

LONG LIVE THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA!

ISSUED BY THE PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

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