

# **PUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**



**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY DR. NANGOLO MBUMBA,  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA AND COMMANDER-  
IN-CHIEF OF THE NAMIBIA DEFENCE FORCE, ON THE OCCASION  
OF THE COMMEMORATION OF HEROES' DAY**

**AUGUST 26, 2024**

**OMUTHIYA**

**OSHIKOTO REGION**

*Check against delivery*

**Director of Proceedings, Hon. Frans Kapofi, Minister of Defence and Veterans Affairs;**

**Her Excellency Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Vice President of the Republic of Namibia and Lieutenant General (Rtd) Epaphras Denga Ndaitwah;**

**Honourable John Mutorwa, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Works and Transport;**

**Honourable Prof. Peter Katjavivi, Speaker of the National Assembly;**

**His Lordship Peter Shivute, Chief Justice and Madame Judge Shivute;**

**Honourable Lukas Sinimbo-Muha, Chairperson of the National Council;**

**Madame Sustjie Mbumba, First Lady of the Republic of Namibia;**

**Honourable Ministers and Deputy Ministers;**

**Honourable Members of Parliament;**

**Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps;**

**Secretary General of the SWAPO Party, Comrade Sophia Shaningwa;**

**Leader of the Official Opposition in Parliament, Honourable McHenry Venaani and Madame Claudine Venaani;**

**Governor of the Oshikoto Region, Honourable Penda Ya Ndakolo;**

**All Regional Governors present;**

**Distinguished Service Chiefs;**

**Your Worship Cllr. Johannes Ndeutepo, Mayor of Omuthiya;**

**Honourable Regional and Local Authority Councilors;**

**Esteemed Veterans of the Liberation struggle;**

**Gaob Immanuel /Gaseb, Chairman of the Council of Traditional Leaders;**

**Omukwaniilwa Phillemon Shuumba Nangolo of the Ondonga Traditional Authority;**

**Rev. Linekela Shikulo of the ELCIN Parish-Omuthiya;**

**All our respected Religious, Traditional and Community leaders present;**

**Distinguished Invited Guests;**

**Members of the Media;**

**Fellow Namibians,**

**Good morning Omuthiya,**

**Good morning Oshikoto,**

**Good morning Namibia,**

- 1. Without struggle, there is no freedom. Without struggle there is no gain; there is no progress and there is no development.**
- 2. On this significant day, we have gathered here in this vibrant town of Omuthiya, to pay tribute to and salute those gallant sons and**

**daughters who fought in Namibia's struggle for independence. Their exploits in pursuit of freedom and independence, encapsulate valour, selflessness and sacrifice. These are the Heroes and Heroines of the Land of the Brave, who have eternally etched their names in the annals of our history. Their awe-inspiring narratives and legacies will stand the test of time, as beacons of hope, to be revered and celebrated by generations of Namibians, now and in the decades and centuries to come.**

- 3. We are here today to once again underline the significance of August 26. It is as much a celebration as it is a commemoration of the day when Namibian freedom fighters crossed the point of no return in the fight for independence and freedom.**

**Fellow Namibians,**

**4. The road that led to Namibia's self-determination was based on the principles of Pan-Africanism, Solidarity and Liberty. The origins of Pan-Africanism are rooted in the struggles of Africans against the scourges of slavery, racism and colonialism. It was this innate drive of the African people to fight for freedom and dignity that inspired the heroic people of Namibia to engage the enemy in armed struggle with the assistance and solidarity of likeminded comrades and people from the Frontline States, Cuba, Russia, China, Algeria, the Nordic countries, the United Nations and many others.**

**5. Indeed, the pivotal battle of Omugulugwombashe on August 26, 58 years ago, can be traced back to the early 20<sup>th</sup>**

**century struggles by heroic Namibians against colonial oppression. Brave leaders such as Kaptein Hendrik Witbooi, Iipumbu ya Tshilongo, Mandume ya Ndemufayo, Paramount Chief Samuel Maharero and others, laid the benchmark during our primary resistance against colonialism by confronting German colonial forces head-on in a brutal struggle which resulted in the horrific genocide of 1904-1908.**

- 6. The exploits of these great Namibian heroes were emulated nearly half a century later by Heroes and Heroines such as Comrades Sam Shafiishuna Nujoma, Andimba Toivo ya Toivo, Hifikepunye Pohamba, Peter Nanyemba, Hage Gottfried Geingob, Putuse Appolus, Moses //Garoeb, Mose Tjitendero, David Lyangurungunda Ausiku, Brendan Kongongolo Simbwaye, Peter Mweshihange,**

**Nathaniel Maxuilili, Kahumba Kandola, Tobias Hainyeko, Dimo Hamaambo, Otto Nankhudi, and Kakurukaze Mungunda, amongst many others. Together with thousands of their compatriots, they decided that, come what may, Namibians would have to become their own liberators by confronting the brutal Apartheid enemy in a long and bitter armed struggle.**

- 7. Thus, our patriotic duty, as free Namibians, is to remember those brave men and women who sacrificed greatly for our freedom. We should never forget those who ensured that we replaced colonial oppression with democracy, that we replaced forced labour with workers' rights, and racial hatred with reconciliation and nation-building.**



**8. It is our history and our fight for freedom in the face of adversity which makes us a proud nation built on the sacrosanct principles of Liberty, Unity and Justice.**

**Fellow Namibians,**

**9. Our country has been free for the past 34 years. Yes, there is still a lot of work to be done to ensure that each and every Namibian benefits from the worthy sacrifices of those who came before us but we should also recognise that we have made good progress in such a short period of time.**

**10. Our hard-won freedom has enabled us to establish a nation that is founded on the principles of democracy, the rule of law and justice for all. For the past 34 years, we have honoured the legacy of our Heroes and**

**Heroines by formulating an institutional framework necessary for representative democratic governance.**

**11. Our Unitary State is comprised of Central, Regional and Local Governments and is deemed to be inclusive as it brings Government closer to the people, thereby fostering unity, peace and stability. As an example, just a few weeks ago, I was in Khorixas in the Kunene Region where I held a meeting with the Leaders of Traditional Authorities which was also attended by members of all three government levels. This meeting lasted over four hours and was conducted in an amicable atmosphere. In all regions that I have visited so far, I have engaged in such meetings. This is the essence of participatory democracy in an independent and sovereign nation, where citizens live in**

**peace and harmony. This is the Namibia we have built together.**

**12. For this reason, we should treasure our stability and peace, and we should ensure that our resources are utilised in a sustainable manner for the benefit of all citizens. Together, as a united, peaceful and organized people we will successfully defend our territorial integrity and resources.**

**Fellow Namibians,**

**13. Government is well aware that there is an urgent need to create wealth and job opportunities for all Namibians, most specifically for the 70% of our population which is the Youth.**

**14. I have said several times that we should be in a hurry to develop and to grow our economy for each and every citizen to benefit. The citizens too, must proactively empower themselves through education and training to acquire skills to participate in the Second Struggle for Economic Freedom.**

**15. In recent years, we have made good progress to develop the green economy for the export of Green Hydrogen. Equally, the discovery of oil in the offshore Orange Basin and potential development of the Kudu Gas Fields, is set to propel Namibia to becoming a major oil and gas producer in Sub-Saharan Africa. This will unlock many business opportunities for our people.**

**16. The future holds much promise for Namibia. But there are also obstacles which we have to overcome for us to arrive at the gates of prosperity. At present, we are facing a devastating drought that is affecting every region across the entire country. We cannot ignore it, we cannot escape it. As a result, we must face it together. To this extent, Government has announced drought relief assistance and this has been rolled out countrywide. However, I have received disturbing reports of deaths related to malnutrition, specifically among children in various regions, and have subsequently assigned the Prime Minister to look into this matter and take whatever necessary measures required to address the drought and hunger situation in our country.**

**Fellow Namibians,**

**17. We have the important task of continuing with our democratic legacy. That in itself imposes responsibilities on all of us. In this vein, I thank those eligible voters that have registered to vote in the November Presidential and National Assembly Elections. It is the patriotic duty of all of us to do so. Please go and vote in a peaceful manner, without intimidation or fear. In so doing, you will contribute to the legacy of a peaceful and democratic Namibia which our founding fathers of the Namibian Constitution have bequeathed upon us.**

**18. On this August 26, let us commemorate our struggle for independence and celebrate our sovereignty, reminding ourselves that our**

**freedom did not come on a silver platter. We honour those who defended their motherland by choosing to fight, risking their lives and in many instances paying the ultimate price for our freedom.**

**19. We honour those who suffered imprisonment and torture on Robben Island and other prisons under the brutal Apartheid South African regime;**

**20. We honour those who had to leave their loved ones and homes to go into exile for better education and to fight for a free Namibia;**

**21. We honour the masses of our compatriots who remained on the home front and faced the brutality of Apartheid. This include our workers, students, teachers, nurses, doctors, church leaders and the wider community.**

**22. We thank the governments and people of Angola and Cuba. We honour their heroic fighters, who fought valiantly alongside our PLAN combatants culminating in victory during the great battle of Cuito Cuanavale. Many of them gave their lives so that Namibians could be free.**

**23. We will always remember them and we will always honour them. For they have crossed many rivers of blood and sacrificed their lives for our freedom, peace and democracy.**

**24. Finally, we honour our heroic national leaders, the Founding Father of the Namibian Nation, and Leader of the Namibian Revolution, His Excellency Sam Shafiishuna Nujoma; the second President of Namibia, His Excellency Hifikepunye Pohamba and my late brother and third President of Namibia His Excellency Dr. Hage G. Geingob, for their visionary**



**leadership both pre and post-independence. Their great wisdom and guidance has enabled Namibians to unite into one nation and set us on the course towards prosperity. We remain deeply grateful to them all and will diligently continue in their footsteps.**

**Long live the memory of Namibia's Heroes and Heroines.**

**Long live the Veterans of the Liberation Struggle.**

**Long live the Republic of Namibia.**

**I thank you.**