

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



STATEMENT BY H.E DR. NANGOLO MBUMBA, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA, ON THE OCCASION OF HIS FAREWELL STATE BANQUET

MARCH 20, 2025

STATE HOUSE

WINDHOEK

- **Director of ceremonies;**
- **Your Excellency Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Vice President and President Elect of the Republic of Namibia, and Lt General (Rtd) Ndaitwah;**
- **Honourable Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila, Speaker of the National Assembly and Mr. Amadhila;**
- **Honourable Professor Peter Katjavivi, Former Speaker of the National Assembly;**
- **Your Lordship Peter Shivute, Chief Justice;**
- **Honourable Lukas Sinimbo Muha; Chairperson of the National Council;**
- **Honourable John Mutorwa, Former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Works and Transport;**

- **Comrade Sophia Shaningwa, Secretary General of the SWAPO Party;**
- **All Leaders of Political Parties;**
- **Honourable Members of Parliament;**
- **Madam Sustjie Mbumba, First Lady;**
- **Your Excellency Ambassador Jovelina Imperial e Costa, Ambassador of the Republic of Angola and Dean of Diplomatic Corps,**
- **Honourable Laura Mcleod Katjirua, Governor of the Khomas Region and all other Regional Governors present;**
- **Her Worship Ndeshafela Larandja, Mayor of the City of Windhoek;**
- **Distinguished Service Chiefs;**
- **Gaob Immanuel /Gâseb, Chairperson of the Council of Traditional Leaders;**

- **Religious and Traditional Leaders;**
 - **Captains of Industry;**
 - **Distinguished Guests;**
 - **Members of the Media;**
 - **Ladies and gentlemen**
- 1. It is my distinct honour to welcome you all to this State Banquet – the last one that Madame Mbumba and I will host in State House.**
 - 2. Tonight is no ordinary night. We stand at the crossroads of our national destiny, on the eve of history because when the sun rises tomorrow not only will we celebrate 35 years of independence but we shall also mark a significant moment in our history of democratic leadership.**
 - 3. Over the past 3 decades, Namibia has made tangible inroads in pursuit of gender-equality.**

In recent years, we have seen the results of these efforts reflected in one of the most valued institutions of our democracy, Parliament, which has close to a 50/50 representation between men and women. Tomorrow will symbolize the pinnacle of our nation's efforts to ensure that Namibian women are empowered. Tomorrow, our Namibian women and the girl-child will break the glass ceiling by ascending to the highest echelons of state power.

- 4. But before we reach that epoch-making moment, there is this small matter of saying farewell.**
- 5. Political life can be tough, brutal and unforgiving. Very few politicians in the world have an opportunity to reach the highest levels of leadership and at the conclusion of their term, receive a dignified and civil valediction. How fortunate we are that we live**

in a country where Presidents can transition peacefully into retirement, still respected and held in high esteem by their peers and society at large. Let us cherish this gift of peace that we have in Namibia and ensure that we maintain it at all cost.

Distinguished guests,

- 6. As I stand here, reflecting on the past year, it truly feels like I have served a full five-year term. What I have experienced over twelve months is something that can only be described as a monumental episode.**

- 7. I ascended to the Presidency under extraordinary circumstances. I always tell people that if you take a close look at my Presidential portrait, the austere appearance that I have, reveals a man who was overcome by a tumult of emotions. It was not easy to accept the responsibility of leading this**

country while simultaneously having to come to terms with the realization that my dear comrade and brother, President Hage G. Geingob, was no more.

8. When I think back to that eventful moment in time, I wrestle with many thoughts, however, I take solace in the words of French poet Jean de La Fontaine who said, "A person often meets his destiny on the road he took to avoid it."

9. I was always happy to serve as Vice-President under my brother, who treated me so well, as a friend and as an equal. I always thought we would leave State House together as President and Vice-President and go into our retirement. Most regrettably, I am the only one who can say my goodbye today and I accept that it is my destiny to say goodbye to State House, not only on my behalf but also on behalf of President Geingob.

Distinguished guests,

10. Emotions aside, I would like to state that it has been an honour to lead this great country and its people, as President. We have been through much together over the past year. We have lost two iconic leaders, we have faced economic headwinds and endured an unrelenting drought. We have peacefully navigated another Presidential and National Assembly campaign and election last November.

11. At present, the future looks bright and things are greener, both literally and figuratively speaking. The good rains that we have had over the past several weeks symbolize the positive atmosphere in our country as we look forward to a new leadership that is arriving against the backdrop of economic green-shoots on the horizon.

12. There has been much to do in a short space of time. Primarily, the important task was and has always been to complete the work and legacy of President Geingob, which I believe, we have done justice to, with the support of all Namibians. One can always think that there was more that could have been done but as the author Ashleigh Brilliant once said, "Not being able to do everything is no excuse for not doing everything you can."

13. Therefore, in this time that I was given to serve this country as President, I have endeavoured to do everything I could together with my Cabinet colleagues and the civil servants, to ensure that Namibia continues its march down the road towards prosperity as per the National Economic Emancipation Vision of our late Founding President H.E. Sam Nujoma, our second President H.E. Hifikepunye Pohamba and our late third

President H.E. Hage Geingob.

14. I have already thanked the Cabinet and Parliament earlier in the week, so today, allow me to thank all the civil servants of the Republic of Namibia, including those in the Presidency with whom I have worked closely for the past year. As civil servants, continue to render professional, objective and timely service not only to the incoming President and new cabinet but importantly, to all the Namibian citizens and visitors.

15. I also would like to express my gratitude Your Excellencies the Heads of Diplomatic Missions and the Leaders of your respective nations for the support which you have rendered to Namibia, especially when we endured a difficult period of drought. In the same vein, let me extend my appreciation to Their Excellencies, the Heads of State and Government and distinguished guests for

joining us as we celebrate the 35th Independence Anniversary of Namibia.

16. Most importantly, without the love of my life, Madame Sustjie Nashili Mbumba, I could not have done this. Without her support, encouragement and good food, I could not have been able to work this hard and not spent one single day in hospital or a day off duty. Thank you my dearest "sousmaid." My children and grandchildren, made me happy but they cannot claim my survival.

17. As the outgoing Commander in Chief, I give my special salute to the members of the Namibian Defence Force and the Namibian Police Force including the City Police, especially what they were able to accomplish during the memorial and funeral services of our late Leaders, Drs. Geingob and Nujoma.

18. Finally, thank you to the sovereigns, the

people of the Republic of Namibia. You did not vote me in office as President, yet you accepted me with open arms, supporting me through some of our most difficult days as a nation. You were my source of strength, my source of comfort and my source of inspiration. I take my hat off for you.

Distinguished Guests, may I now invite you all to rise and join me in proposing a toast.

- **To the continued peace, unity, and stability of the Republic of Namibia.**
- **To global peace and harmony, and**
- **To the good-health, strength and wisdom of our President-Elect, Her Excellency Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah.**

END