



**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
THE PRESIDENCY**

STATEMENT BY

**HER EXCELLENCY DR. NETUMBO NANDI-NDAITWAH,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA,**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE
MASUBIA CULTURAL FESTIVAL**

*THEME: "PRESERVING OUR CULTURAL HERITAGE, CELEBRATING
OUR FUTURE"*

25 JULY 2026

BUKALO, ZAMBEZI REGION

Director of Ceremonies;

Munitenga Gilbert Muhongo Mutwe, Moraliswani III, Chief of the Masubia Traditional Authority;

Honourable Dr Saara Kuugongelwa Amadhila, Speaker of the National Assembly;

Honourable James Sankwasa, Minister of Urban and Rural Development;

Honourable Ministers and Deputy Ministers Present;

Honourable Dorothy Kabula, Governor of Zambezi Region, and other Governors Present;

Honourable Regional and Local Authorities Councilors;

Esteemed Religious, Traditional, and Community Leaders;

Members of the Masubia community;

Members of the Media;

Fellow Namibians.

First and foremost, on behalf of the government and the people of Namibia, I extend our congratulations to Munitenga Gilbert Muhongo Mutwe, Moraliswani III, Chief of the Masubia Traditional Authority, on his ascension to the highest office in the Masubia community. Hold the

trust and confidence of the Masubia community with honor and dignity.

In the same vein, I thank Moraliswani III for inviting me to join this significant event, the Masubia Cultural Festival, which celebrates cultural heritage.

Director of Ceremonies,

Today's event is held four days after the Masubia community commemorated the passing of the late Chief Kisco Liswani (III) five years ago. Chief Liswani led the Masubia community with honor and dedication, advancing the ideals of peace, unity, and nation-building.

To honour his memory and in remembrance of his legacy, let us stand and observe a moment of silence.

Director of Ceremonies,

At this point, let me express my gratitude for the presence of Litunga Mamili, Chief of the Mafwe Traditional

Authority; Joseph Tembwe Mayuni, Chief of the Mashi Traditional Authority; and Boniface Shufu, Chief of the Mayeyi Traditional Authority, who are gracing this occasion, thus demonstrating the unity of purpose of our nation.

I am also pleased to see visitors from other Traditional Authorities and other regions who have come to Bukalo to celebrate the Masubia Cultural Festival.

Furthermore, I acknowledge with great appreciation the fraternal co-existence with our neighboring countries. I therefore, welcome our esteemed traditional leaders and their delegations from the Republic of Botswana and the Republic of Zambia.

Director of Ceremonies,

A cultural festival embodies our collective identity, values, and traditions, enabling the transmission of stories and customs across generations. The Masubia Cultural Festival is crucial for both the Masubia community and Namibian

society, reconnecting people with their roots, showcasing rich traditions, and promoting mutual respect among diverse groups.

As the saying goes, a nation without culture, is not a nation. Against that background, our diverse cultures must be a source of our national identity, strength, and inspiration, and at no point should they be used to divide us. As a nation, our well-being and existence lie in our unity.

The Masubia Cultural Festival celebrates the cultural diversity of the Masubia community through traditional Chusubia dances, music, attire, food, and stories. By nature, cultural festivals promote the transfer of indigenous knowledge across generations and foster intergenerational awareness and appreciation of a rich and proud heritage.

The festival serves as a platform for children and youth to learn about and preserve their culture, ensuring the

continuation of customs and traditions for future generations.

I therefore, express my heartfelt appreciation to the Masubia community for reviving this festival after a six-year gap. This revival is not only a source of pride for the Zambezi Region but also a symbol of hope for all Namibians. It embodies our shared resolve to protect and honour our cultures.

This Cultural Festival aligns seamlessly with the Namibian Constitution, which enshrines the right to culture and encourages the preservation and development of our diverse heritage. It also resonates with the Eighth Administration's priority areas, including youth empowerment and creative industries. Cultures are not remainders of the past but vibrant pillars of our present and future.

Furthermore, it supports the goals of NDP 6 and our national long-term vision, Vision 2030, by fostering unity, promoting tourism, and creating opportunities for cultural

entrepreneurship. We must use our culture as a foundation for innovation and development. Cultural tourism can be well supported by our cultural diversity by developing cultural tourism routes based on our diverse cultures.

Director of Ceremonies,

Today's event is more than ceremonial; it also acknowledges the Masubia people who completed a major historical transition from Central Africa to present-day Namibia, under the leadership of King Itenge, who headed the Masubia Traditional Authority around 1570.

The Masubia Traditional Authority and its community have also supported our anti-colonial struggle and continue to uphold our constitutional democracy and unitary sovereignty.

As we mark this occasion, it is fitting to pay tribute to all the gallant sons and daughters of this great region who contributed to Namibia's independence and nation-building.

Freedom fighters like Bredan Simbwaye, Greenwell Matongo, Richard Kapelwa Kabajani, Fredrick Matongo, and many others sacrificed their lives to ensure Namibia's independence, so all citizens can live together in harmony and contribute to and benefit from our country's development. In other words, inclusivity is key to our democracy and sustainable development.

Owing to this revered generation of leaders, Namibians today enjoy freedom of movement locally and beyond. Citizens of Namibia and Botswana can now travel between the two countries using only their national identity documents rather than passports.

Director of Ceremonies,

Celebrated under the theme "Preserving our Cultural Heritage, Celebrating our Future," it clearly highlights the need to jealously guard against the diminishing of our cultural identity while adapting to new influences on our modern-day lives. It also underscores the importance of preserving our cultural heritage while meeting our future needs in an

era dominated by artificial intelligence and technological advancement.

I understand that the festival goes further to ensure that our young generation learns about farming and fishing practices as a means of sustaining a livelihood. This is to ensure that the next generation of leaders is equipped with the skills and knowledge to strengthen food security, not only at the household level but also nationally.

I therefore, call upon the Namibian youth to take such events seriously and to learn from the elders about the best practices for life, such as respecting themselves, their peers, and their elders, being productive and hardworking, and being there for fellow citizens.

I welcome the festival's efforts to equip young people with knowledge of conflict resolution. In times marked by rising conflict and geopolitical tensions, future leaders of our nation must be able to use their cultural orientation to maintain peace and order in the community.

We must unite as "One Namibia, One Nation" to firmly reject any violence rooted in our political, cultural, and ethnic diversity. Once again, our diverse cultures must be our inspiration, strength, and unity at all times.

I also encourage our Traditional Authorities to partner with universities, schools, historians, museums, and research institutions to document the language, customs, traditions, leadership history, indigenous knowledge, and cultural practices, and to preserve our heritage as a permanent contribution to Namibia's history and development.

This important undertaking will not only preserve a rich cultural legacy for future generations but also provide valuable educational resources that deepen our understanding of Namibia's diverse heritage and strengthen national unity and identity through mutual respect and appreciation of our cultures.

Director of Ceremonies,

As you may know, Youth Employment and the Creative Industry are among our seven priority areas of development. The Government is committed to strengthening those sectors. We recognize these sectors as engines of innovation, social cohesion, and sustainable development.

We continue to create an enabling environment through supportive policies and targeted investments, ensuring that artists and cultural practitioners thrive and contribute meaningfully to our national development agenda. Hence, the establishment and operationalization of the Youth Development Fund.

The Zambezi region plays a significant and strategic role in the development of our nation. The region continues to attract more tourists, thanks to internationally recognized tourist attractions within and around the region, such as the Bwabwata National Park, Nkasa Rupara National Park, and the Chobe and Zambezi Rivers, among others.

In addition, the region's abundant natural resources include strategic minerals, and it is also positioned as Namibia's food basket. Namibia's development journey will be incomplete without the Zambezi region, particularly in the agricultural sector.

To address the challenges we face, including unemployment, particularly among our youth, our government has adopted a deliberate policy of value addition to our natural resources, including agro-processing. For us to be successful, we must all buy into this policy and pay our part, no matter how small.

In this context, the Eighth Administration implores stakeholders in the agriculture sector to collaborate and ensure that every seed planted translates into food production.

I am happy to note that this year many farmers, including those in our Green Scheme, have worked hard and achieved a good harvest. However, the main challenge, particularly for grain producers, is milling. I encourage our

people to continue paying attention to agriculture. As a government, we are working to put in place mechanisms to prevent your produce from going to waste.

This region is surrounded by water, and most of the time it is underwater. This year, we have to use the floating bridges in Kahbe South and Kabbe North. The Zambezi Regional Council has removed them and stored them for future use in case of flooding.

However, some parts of the region are facing water problems for both human and animal consumption. The government is working hard to find solutions to this matter. We all know water is life.

Director of Ceremonies,

This festival embodies the spirit of “One Heart, One Mind” a nation united in purpose, progress, and pride.

As the Head of State and someone who places great value on our traditions and customs, I continue to urge all

Traditional Leaders to prioritize the welfare and development of their communities.

I implore our Traditional Authorities to explore meaningful and sustainable solutions to challenges such as land and chieftaincy disputes and misunderstandings confronting their communities.

I am concerned about the number of succession disputes being brought to civil courts instead of applying our customary laws. We must recognize that allowing our traditional succession to be determined by civil courts dilutes our cultural norms, if not throwing them out of our communities.

In this regard, I welcomed the recent coronation of Hompa Bartholomeus Aruita Kayoka, Chief of the VaGcriku Traditional Authority in the Kavango East Region, in accordance with the community's cultural norms. This is a testament to the strength of our culture and traditions and to the unity and prosperity of our people.

The Government continues to strengthen collaboration with Traditional Authorities to foster unity and to govern our country.

Our diversity must remain a source of strength and unity as we work together to transform our country into a prosperous, united nation.

Let us stand together as proud stewards of our past, active participants in the present, and visionary architects of our future.

As I conclude, I once again commend Munitenga Gilbert Muhongo Mutwe, Moraliswani III, and the Masubia Traditional Authority for reviving this festival, an action that will have a special place in the history of our country for current and future generations to appreciate.

I also applaud the organising committee for the hard work in ensuring that this festival is a success. In doing so, you have also provided an opportunity for the Masubia community to unite and meet their Chief.

**I wish you all a peaceful, enjoyable, and fruitful Festival.
Let us remain grounded in our pursuit of national
development, upholding the values of unity and peace.**

Long live the Masubia Cultural Festival!

Long live the Spirit of Unity!

Long live the Republic of Namibia!

I thank you.