



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

THE PRESIDENCY

STATEMENT BY

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

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE STATE FUNERAL OF
COMRADE HELAO JOSEPH SHITYUWETE**

**PIONEERS PARK CEMETERY
WINDHOEK**

13 SEPTEMBER 2026

Director of Ceremonies;

Madam Jane Shityuwete, the Widow, Children and the entire Shityuwete Family;

Your Excellency Lucia Witbooi, Vice President of the Republic of Namibia;

Right Honorable Elijah Tjitunga Ngurare, Prime Minister;

Hon Ministers and Deputy Ministers present;

Hon. Uahekua Herunga, Deputy Secretary General of the SWAPO Party;

Hon. Immanuel Nashinge, Leader of the Official Opposition;

Members of Parliament present;

Amb Emilia Mkusa, Secretary to the Cabinet;

Members of Diplomatic Corps;

Chiefs of the Service;

Hon. Sam Shafiishuna Nujoma, Governor of Khomas Region and other Governors present;

Leaders of various Political Parties

Your Worship Cllr. Sakaria Uunona, Mayor of the City of Windhoek;

Regional and Local Authority Councillors present;

Veterans of the Liberation Struggle;

Fellow mourners;

Members of the media;

Yesterday, we were at Parliament Gardens to remember and reflect on the life of Comrade Helao Joseph Shityuwete. We spoke about the man he was, his sacrifices, the contribution he made to the freedom of our country, and we heard from his loved ones whom he held dear to his heart.

Today, we have come together for the final and most difficult part of that journey: to lay him to rest. There is always something deeply final about this moment. At a memorial service, we remember, we speak, and we share our memories. At the graveside, however, we must say goodbye.

As we do so, we are reminded that we are not only saying goodbye to a beloved husband, father, comrade, and friend. We are bidding farewell to one of the men whose life became part of Namibia's long journey to freedom.

Comrade Shityuwete belonged to a generation that was asked to give much for Namibia. He gave up the comfort of home, he gave up years with his family and he gave up his youth and freedom for what he deeply believed in, the freedom of his country and its people.

Comrade Shityuwete and many of his generation were ordinary men and women confronted by extraordinary circumstances. They made difficult choices, not knowing whether they would live to see the country for which they were sacrificing so much for, free and independent. Thankfully, Comrade Shityuwete lived to see an independent Namibia.

Comrade Shityuwete's sacrifice and fight for an independent Namibia included sixteen years of imprisonment on Robben Island and two years of pre-trial detention. A total of eighteen years in prison, for standing against injustice and fighting for the freedom of his people. Comrade Shityuwete understood from an early age that freedom would not simply be handed to the Namibian people. It required courage, organisation and sacrifice.

From all material evidence and historical narration, Comrade Shityuwete's life reminds us that true heroes are not defined by the glorification of their achievements, but by the enduring impact of their service, sacrifice and character. His legacy will live on through the lives he touched and values he upheld.

One of the inspiring part of Comrade Shityuwete's life and the values he held is that He fought for freedom, but when freedom came, he understood that the work was not finished. He understood that Political independence had to be followed by the difficult work of building institutions, protecting workers and improving the lives of ordinary Namibians and truly he devoted his life to this.

The take away from the memorial service we held in honour of Comrade Shityuwete yesterday is that he lived a life of service and at the core of his heart was this love for the Namibian nation, it's people and his desire to see us all prosper.

Independent Namibia holds immense gratitude for the life and service of Comrade Shityuwete, and we will always remember the role he played, both in the long struggle before independence and in the equally demanding work of nation-building that followed. He gave his youth, his strength, and years of his life to a cause greater than himself, and our freedom today stands on the foundation he helped lay.

We will continue to honour his sacrifice, not through words alone, but through action. We will continue building a Namibia that embodies the future he fought for, a nation in which every Namibian has a fair chance to build a better life, where opportunity is not determined by where one was born or the circumstances into which one was born.

We commit to building a Namibia in which every citizen lives free of oppression, free of the racial oppression he took up arms against, and free of the economic oppression that can be just as confining, just as dehumanising, as the systems he fought to dismantle.

To Madam Jane Shityuwete, the children and the entire bereaved family, I extend, on behalf of the people and Government of the Republic of Namibia, and indeed on my own behalf, our deepest condolences.

Your loss is deeply personal. However, draw some comfort from knowing that the life of your husband, father, and loved one mattered beyond your family. His

life, his contribution, became part of the story of Namibia, the country he loved dearly.

Comrade Helao Joseph Shityuwete has completed his journey. His duty is done. It is now for us who remain to carry forward the Namibia for which he fought and helped liberate.

Today, we return him to the soil of the country for whose freedom he sacrificed for. He is returning home and join others who left before him

Goodbye, Comrade Helao Joseph Shityuwete; may your revolutionary soul rest in eternal peace.

We will remember you, Comrade!