



**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
THE PRESIDENCY**

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY
HER EXCELLENCY DR. NETUMBO NANDI-NDAITWAH,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA,
ON THE OCCASION OF THE
GALA DINNER IN SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLE OF CUBA**

16 SEPTEMBER 2026

**NAMPOWER CONVENTION CENTRE
WINDHOEK**

Director of Ceremonies;

Dr. Elijah Tjitunga Ngurare, Right Honourable Prime Minister;

Hon. Dr. Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila, Speaker of the National Assembly;

Hon. Lukas Muha, Chairperson of the National Council;

Honourable Ministers and Deputy Ministers;

Ambassador Sergio Vigoa de la Uz, Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba to Namibia;

Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Distinguished Invited Guests;

Members of the Media;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

First and foremost, allow me to express my appreciation to the Prime Minister for hosting this fundraising dinner in solidarity with the people of Cuba.

As Namibians, we will always remain duty-bound to Cuba and her people. The enduring bond between our two nations was forged in the struggle for our liberation and sealed through sacrifice.

History forms the moral compass of nations. When we examine the moral compass of the Namibian nation, we find the generous imprint of the Cuban people woven deeply into our history.

The cordial bond between Namibia and Cuba is not the product of recent diplomatic convenience. Neither is it dictated by changing geopolitical interests. It is a friendship written in the shared sacrifices of our peoples, long before the dawn of Namibia's independence.

When the Namibian people, led by the South West Africa People's Organisation, SWAPO, rose up against the oppressive machinery of foreign occupation and apartheid, we did not stand alone.

Across thousands of kilometres of ocean, a small Caribbean island heard the cry for freedom from Namibia and answered the moral call of justice.

Cuba did not possess great material wealth. Its people were themselves facing immense economic hardship and external pressure. Yet, they chose to share what they had. They chose

to sacrifice for brothers and sisters they had never met, living thousands of kilometres away.

Where others hesitated, Cuba stood firm.

Where others offered words, Cuba offered action.

When we faced one of the darkest chapters in our history, the people of Cuba extended a hand to us. That hand helped us rise.

We remember with solemn respect the brave young Cuban men and women who left their families and homeland to come to Southern Africa. They fought battles that changed the course of history in our region, and shed their blood for the independence we enjoy today.

Their courage helped to break the myth of invincibility surrounding the apartheid regime. Their sacrifice contributed to the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 435, leading to the independence of Namibia and the eventual dismantling of apartheid in South Africa.

As our Founding Father, Dr Sam Nujoma, and our late President, Dr Hage G. Geingob, repeatedly reminded us, Cuba's contribution to Africa was unique.

That is why the story of Namibia and Cuba cannot be told merely as a story of relations between two governments. It is a story of blood, courage and sacrifice. It is a story of one people standing with another, not because it was easy or profitable, but because it was right.

Following our independence in 1990, when Namibia embarked upon the difficult task of nation-building, Cuba was once again among the first nations to extend a hand.

For more than three decades, Cuban doctors, nurses and healthcare professionals have served in our hospitals, clinics and rural health centres. Many served in remote parts of our country under demanding conditions. They treated our people and trained Namibian healthcare workers with humility, discipline and dedication.

In education, agriculture, engineering and sport, Cuban technical cooperation has touched thousands of Namibian

lives. Generations of young Namibians received higher education and professional training on Cuban soil. They returned home as doctors, engineers, scientists and other professionals who continue to contribute to the development of our Republic.

Cuba has been our friend in season and out of season. Cuba stood with us during the difficult winter of our struggle and remained beside us during the bright spring of our freedom.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,
Comrades and Friends,**

Today, the courageous people of Cuba face formidable economic and developmental challenges, not by their own making. For decades, Cuba has endured a restrictive commercial, economic and financial environment imposed by the US Government. This has limited Cuba's ability to realise its full economic potential, modernise its infrastructure and provide fully for the needs of its citizens.

The Cuban people have endured some of the most difficult circumstances imaginable. They have faced isolation,

pressure and scarcity. Yet, generation after generation, they have refused to surrender their dignity, sovereignty or revolutionary spirit.

The Cuban Revolution has taught the world that the strength of a nation is not measured only by the size of its economy or the abundance of its resources. It is also measured by the courage of its people, their unity in adversity and their determination to decide their own future.

The people of Cuba have fallen before, but they have always risen. They have faced darkness, but they have never allowed the flame of hope to be extinguished.

To the people of Cuba, Namibia says tonight: You are not alone.

You have not been forgotten.

You have not been abandoned by the people whose hands you held during their darkest hour.

The people of Namibia remembers you.

While navigating complex global dynamics requires diplomatic prudence and constructive international engagement, Namibia's principled position remains clear and unambiguous.

Consistent with the resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly, the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government, and the Non-Aligned Movement, Namibia continues to call for the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba.

We also reiterate the call for Cuba's removal from unilateral lists that restrict its access to international financial mechanisms and development assistance.

No nation should be denied the opportunity to pursue development and prosperity, because it has chosen an independent path.

Constructive dialogue, mutual respect and international cooperation, rather than isolation, must remain our instruments for advancing global peace, justice and shared prosperity.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Initiatives such as this Gala Dinner demonstrate Namibia's individual and collective continued commitment to stand with the people of Cuba during this moment of need.

Solidarity is not merely a feeling. It is an active principle. It requires us to stand together, to give what we can and to refuse to turn away when a friend is facing adversity.

What we are doing here is not paying back, we will never be able to pay back Cuba for what they have done to us as the price is unlimited.

What we are doing is a moral responsibility.

Therefore, I call upon everyone present this evening, as well as those who were unable to join us, to contribute generously to this noble cause.

Every contribution, regardless of its size, has a great impact on the people of Cuba. It tells the Cuban people that the friendship forged in struggle remains alive. It tells them that

Namibia remembers. It tells them that they do not walk this difficult road alone.

As I conclude, I recall the words of the late Commander-in-Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, who said that "a revolution is a struggle between the past and the future."

The Cuban people have demonstrated throughout history that even under the heaviest pressure, a determined people can protect their dignity, defend their sovereignty and continue marching towards a better future.

Cuba stood with us when freedom appeared distant. Today, as Cuba confronts its own difficult hour, Namibia must stand with Cuba.

May the historic fraternal bonds between Namibia and Cuba remain everlasting. May the revolutionary spirit of the Cuban people continue to inspire all who believe in freedom, justice and the dignity of humanity.

Long live the courageous people of Cuba!

Long live the everlasting friendship between Namibia and Cuba!

A luta continua, a vitória é certa!

I thank you.