

STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY DR. SAM NUJOMA, FOUNDING PRESIDENT AND
FATHER OF THE NAMIBIAN NATION, ON THE OCCASION OF THE 40TH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF THE LATE CHIEF HOSEA KUTAKO

TOASIS VILLAGE

AMINIUS CONSTITUENCY
OMAHEKE REGION

18 JULY 2010

Director of Ceremonies;
Honourable Ministers;
Honourable Members of Parliament;
Honourable Governors;
Honourable Regional and Local Councillors;
Honourable Traditional and Community Leaders;
Distinguished Invited Guests;
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I feel deeply honoured for the invitation extended to me to come and attend this memorable event of commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the passing away of one of Namibian Heroes, the Late Chief Komombumbi Hosea Kutako Katjukururume.

Chief Hosea Komombumbi Kutako, also fondly know as Katjukururume was born at Okahurimehi in the Okahandja District in 1870. His birth coincided with the further arrival of foreign colonial invaders, in the form of missionaries, traders and eventually German colonial invaders.

As early as 1885, the first German Commissioner in the country at that time, Heinrich Göring requested Chief Maharero, father of Chief Samuel Maharero to be given mining concessions and land to settle in the country.

However, Chief Maharero refused telling the German colonial Commissioner that the land belonged to the entire indigenous people and cannot be given to foreigners. This response irked the German colonial invaders who started to devise a strategy for formal colonization of our country.

Therefore, because of the agreement between the European powers at the 1884 Berlin Conference, Namibia became a German colony in a guise of a protectorate. The Germans embarked upon systematic colonization of our people with land dispossession of the indigenous people, as the primary objective of their colonial strategy. As a result, our people lost land, livestock and other resources. By 1904, the injustice of German colonialism reached a critical point which was aggravated by more land dispossession and unscrupulous colonial traders who embarked upon robbery of our people of their possessions, including cattle.

The cruelty of German colonialism became evident with the execution of Chiefs Kahimemua Nguvauva and Nicodemus Kavikunua of the Gobabis District for refusing to recognize German colonial administration in the country.

With a clear purpose of restoring their dignity, Namibian indigenous peoples, including the Herero, Nama and Ovambo communities decided to take up arms and resist colonial occupation. Therefore, on 12 January 1904, Chief Samuel Maharero of the Hereros mobilized his people to respond to the dispossession of their land and systematic killing of innocent people by the German colonialists. The resistance by the Herero people came as a surprise to the Germans colonialists who suffered heavy casualties. Several battles were fought at Ovikokorero, Okandjira, Oviombo, Ondjombombapa. The decisive battle was fought at Ohamakari on 11 August 1904.

Chief Hosea Kutako Katjikirurume took active part in the Herero war of resistance against German colonialism. He joined the war in 1904 as a young man. He was a brave and tough fighter rising through the ranks and became a major. One of the notable battles he participated in was the battle of Ondjombombapa, where the German troops under the German Commander, Von Baden Hausen suffered heavy casualties. At this battle, Chief Hosea Kutako Katjikirurume was wounded on the leg but he survived and was not captured by the enemy. Chief Hosea Kutako Katjikirurume participated in the Battle of Ohamakari and was wounded on the cheek. He went together with Chief Samuel Maharero to the then Betswanaland, but Chief Hosea Kutako was sent back to lead the Herero people in the country. Chief Hosea Kutako did not surrender to the Germans but was only taken prisoner after the war and kept in a camp at Omaruru for three years.

He later settled at Otjituezu from where he mobilized his people to prepare for the next phase of the struggle. Chief Samuel Maharero then recommended Chief Hosea Kutako to lead the Herero community in the country, the role that he assumed in 1915. Fredrick Maharero, the son of Chief Samuel Maharero who was by that time in Betswanaland was sent over to the then South West Africa to come and formalize Hosea Kutako Katjikirurume's appointment in 1918.

Chief Samuel Maharero died in Betswanaland in 1923 and his remains were returned to Namibia and was laid to rest in Okahandja on 26 August 1923. Chief Hosea Kutako Katjikirurume built the grave of Samuel Maharero in 1927.

Director of Ceremonies;

The Herero war of resistance of 1904 demonstrated the unity of the Namibian communities who fought shoulder to shoulder to defeat foreign invaders. When the war commenced in 1904, Chief Samuel Maharero wrote a letter to Kaptein Hendrik Witbooi of the Nama to attack the Germans in the south. He agreed in earnest and started to fight the German troops in the south of the country defeating the Germans at Hoorkrans and other places until he died in Battle at Vaalgras in October 1905.

After the Battle of Ohamakari in 1904, Chief Samuel Maharero also sent a special envoy to the Ondonga King Nehale Ija Mpingana that the country is attacked by foreigners and requested him to send reinforcements. Without hesitation, King Nehale attacked Fort Namutoni. The Ondonga troops under the leadership of Generals Namupala gua Amoomo, Shivute sha Ndjongolo and others defeated the German colonial troops at Onamutuni. Many armaments and war materials were also captured. A German woman was captured and brought to the Palace of King Nehale and became one of King Nehale's wives. Her descendants are still found today in Ondonga.

Indeed, the strong bonds of co-operation between King Nehale of Ondonga and Chief Maharero of the Herero started earlier. In the late 1880s, the Boer trekkers from the then Transvaal attempted to establish a Boer Republic of Upingtonia in the area of Otavi and Grootfontein. The Boers used a coloured colonial agent known as William Jordaan, who was born in Cape Town of an English father and mixed race mother, but was identified with the interests of the Boers and colonial Government. The Boers used him as a broker for the establishment of this ill-conceived so-called Republic of Upingtonia. King Nehale in agreement with Chief Maharero, Manasse Tjiseseta and Kambazembi defeated these Boers who went and settle in the area of Humpata in Angola.

Director of Ceremonies;

Chief Hosea Kutako Katjukurume became the father of modern Namibian nationalism. He rejected the South African proposals that Namibia should be incorporated as the fifth province of the Union of South Africa and appealed to the United Nations to place Southwest Africa under the UN Trusteeship System and assist to develop towards Freedom and Independence.

In order to frustrate Chief Hosea Kutako Katjukurume's efforts, the South African Government refused to issue passports to Chief Hosea Kutako and his delegation or any of the other Namibian leaders to take the Namibian case to the UN. In 1947, Chief Kutako delegated a sympathetic English clergyman, Reverend Michael Scott, to go and petition the UN on behalf of the Namibian people. Reverend Michael Scott was later joined by Mburumba Kerina in petitioning the UN.

In the following years, Chief Hosea Kutako was joined by Chief Samuel Witbooi of the Nama people, demanding that Southwest Africa be placed under the UN Trusteeship System. He also continued to strongly oppose the minority white apartheid regime of South Africa's policy of Bantustans and to forcefully move the Herero people to Omaheke. He died on 18 July 1970.

From 1960, myself as President of SWAPO and other Namibian petitioners such as the Late Adv. Fanuel Kozonguizi and Comrade Zedekia Ngavirue continued to petition the United Nations. As the youth of yesterday, we were inspired by Chief Hosea Kutako Katjukurume's revolutionary and heroic deeds to fight for our genuine Freedom and Independence, resulting in the launching of the armed liberation struggle on 26th August 1966 by the People's Liberation

Army of Namibia (PLAN), SWAPO's Military Wing at Omugulugwombashe that eventually led to the attainment of our genuine Freedom and Independence on 21st March 1990.

As we commemorate his death 40 years ago, we shall always remember Chief Hosea Kutako Katjukurume as a non-compromising freedom fighter who resisted colonialism, annexation of Namibia as a fifth Province of South Africa, the colonial policy of Bantustans and continued fighting for Freedom and Independence. He lived for a 100 years as a uniting leader of all the people of Namibia. To him, Namibia was greater than the Ovaherero people and consistently, continuously and persistently stretched out a Hand of Friendship to other Traditional leaders from all other Namibian communities.

I remember vividly when I went in exile in March 1960, Chief Hosea Kutako Katjukurume extended support and assistance to me. He sent a message to the Herero community in the then British Betswanaland to assist me to travel through to the UN in New York. Comrade Stanley who possessed a farm in Betswanaland came to Gobabis to purchase goods offered me a hike up to the border near Okamaingo border post.

I went through the fence and went to Mamuno and Omakunda where I was assisted by the Herero community members who took me to Osehitua and the late Daniel Munamava who had a British passport then assisted me to pass through Betswanaland and the then Southern Rhodesia up to Bulawayo.

The Herero communities in Botswana contributed immensely to the attainment of our genuine Freedom and Independence. Some of the Herero youth born in Botswana joined the liberation struggle under the leadership of SWAPO and trained as Combatants of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), SWAPO's Military Wing. I remember the late Commander Hanganee Katjipuka, the toughest and brave commander who sacrificed his life in battle at the Eastern Front in the area of Singalamwe in the Caprivi Region.

As we commemorate the death of Chief Hosea Kutako Katjukurume, we should respect his revolutionary and uncompromising spirit against the enemy, which inspired many of the youth of our present generation and to his visionary memory, we humbly offer our honour and respect. As Namibians, we are called upon to work together and promote national unity so that we can maintain peace, stability and development in the country.

This commemoration should in the same vein imbue us with courage to defend the territorial integrity, territorial waters and airspace above our land as well as the sovereignty and independence of our Motherland.

Remember, a united people, striving to achieve common good for all the members of the society will always emerge victorious.

I thank you.