

STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY DR SAM NUJOMA, FOUNDING
PRESIDENT AND FATHER OF THE NAMIBIAN NATION, ON THE OCCASION
OF THE 20TH INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

ONIIPA CONSTITUENCY

OSHIKOTO REGION

20TH MAY 2010

AND

OKATHIMA KAMWE

OKALONGO CONSTITUENCY

OMUSATI REGION

21ST MAY 2010

Director of Ceremonies;
Honourable Ministers;
Honourable Members of Parliament;
Honourable Governors;
Honourable Regional and Local Councillors;
Honourable Traditional and Community Leaders;
Comrade SWAPO Party Regional Coordinators;
Comrade Members of the SWAPO Party Regional Leadership;
Comrade Members of the SWAPO Party District Leadership;
Comrades:

This year, we are celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the attainment of our genuine Freedom and Independence, when we hoisted our flag of freedom on 21st March 1990. As we reflect on those 20 years of freedom, we must bear in mind that the freedom and independence that we enjoy today was not given to us on a silver platter.

As you may recall, SWAPO fought a bitter war of resistance against the illegal occupation of our country by the white minority apartheid regime of South Africa.

During the colonial period, the white minority apartheid regime of South Africa imposed racist policies of divide and rule, including the notorious policy of dividing our country into Bantustans. Our people were denied basic services such as education, health and other public amenities.

The colonial regime also imposed an inferior system of Bantu education which prepared our people to become second citizens in their own country. It was in response to apartheid and colonial oppression that SWAPO was formed on 19 April 1960 and decided to fight for our genuine Freedom and Independence.

SWAPO followed in the footsteps of our forefathers such as Hendrik Witbooi, Jacob Marenga, Samuel Witbooi, Nehale lja Mpingana, Mandume ja Ndemufayo, Iipumbu ja Shilongo and many other heroes and heroines of our country who fought against colonial invasion of our motherland.

The struggle for freedom and independence was long and bitter. Thousands of Namibian sons and daughters sacrificed their lives and shed their precious blood for the just cause of our freedom. Therefore, as we celebrate the 20th anniversary of statehood, we must always remember their selfless sacrifices, because their blood waters our freedom.

Comrades;

Immediately upon the attainment of our Freedom and Independence in 1990, the SWAPO Party Government embarked upon the second phase of the struggle for economic independence with the clear purpose of eradicating poverty, diseases and ignorance.

During the past twenty years, the SWAPO Party Government has implemented milestone development projects in all the thirteen regions of our country. These include the development of physical infrastructures such as the deepening of the ports of Walvis Bay and Luderitz, the construction of the Trans-Kalahari and Trans-Caprivi Highways, the Northern Railway Extension project from Tsumeb to Oshikango via Ondangwa as well as the rehabilitation of the railway line from Aus to Luderitz and the construction of the tarred road from Rosh Pinash to Aus.

During this 2010/2011 Financial Year, the improvement of the road from Rundu to Elundu will be completed. This important road forms part of the extension of the Caprivi High Way through Okongo-Eenhana-Onuno-Omafo-Okalongo-Outapi-Tsandi-Omakange-Opuwo to Agra Fria where a new harbor will be built.

We have also built hundreds of gravel roads in all the thirteen regions of our country in order to connect rural areas to urban centres to facilitate the movement of passengers, goods and services.

Comrades;

The development and improvement of agriculture remains one of the priorities of the SWAPO Party Government. Over the past twenty years, our Government has initiated programmes which are aimed at improving animal husbandry and crop farming, including the establishment of extension engineering services in rural areas.

We have also established aquaculture projects in various regions of our country. We have initiated the Green Scheme along the Kavango and Zambezi Rivers in order to improve food security in our country. We have also built silos in several parts of our country so that we can enhance food self-sufficiency.

I therefore appeal to the residents of this Constituency to establish aquaculture projects so that we can improve the livelihoods of our communities.

Our Government has initiated a pilot project on rice production which is co-managed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry and the University of Namibia, Ogongo Campus. I am therefore urging the residents of this Constituency to approach UNAM through Ogongo Campus so that they can assist you to start rice production.

Comrades;

Our country can only achieve meaningful socio-economic development when we have qualified personnel in critical areas of development. In this connection, education and training have received enormous attention since independence. Our Government has built new primary and secondary schools in all the thirteen regions of our country.

Today primary school enrolment is more than 80 percent. In addition, the SWAPO Party Government has expanded academic programmes at the University of Namibia, Polytechnic of Namibia as well as a teacher training and vocational training centres.

Last year, the University of Namibia has opened a Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology at Ongwediva and this year in February, the University of Namibia opened the new School of Medicine in Windhoek. These interventions have been made so that we can train our own engineers and medical doctors. I, therefore, call upon all parents to ensure that our children attend school and take their education seriously so that they can pursue technical careers at institutions of higher learning.

Comrades;

The SWAPO Party Government expanded the provision of electricity and potable water to the majority of our citizens in rural areas.

Today more than 70 per cent of our people in rural areas have access to electricity and potable water. The SWAPO Party Government will continue to expand these basic services to all our citizens in all the thirteen regions of our country.

Comrades;

A healthy nation is a productive nation. It is for these reasons that the SWAPO Party Government has expanded the provision of quality health services to all our citizens in all the thirteen regions. We have built new clinics and renovated old ones, while we have also built new hospitals and health centres to ensure that all our people have access to quality health services.

Comrades;

The development and growth of our SME sector is imperative so that we can accelerate economic growth and job creation in our country.

Against this background, we have established the Development Bank of Namibia in order to provide funding to development projects. I therefore appeal to Namibian entrepreneurs to initiate development projects in all the thirteen regions and approach the Development Bank of Namibia for funding. By so doing, we will be able to create employment opportunities for our people and enhance the growth of our national economy.

The SWAPO Party Government will continue to implement its Election Manifesto and all our development plans and programmes in order to realize Vision 2030. As we celebrate 20 years of nationhood, we should continue to work together and promote national unity so that we can maintain peace and stability in the country.

We must support and complement our Government's efforts by volunteering to work on the development projects which are implemented in our Constituencies.

We must also help to fight crime and other negative behaviours, including alcohol and drug abuse.

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

Long Live the Republic of Namibia.

I thank you.