

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA



**SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY DR. HAGE G. GEINGOB,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA, AT THE
HEROES FUNERAL OF THE LATE COMRADE HERMAN
ANDIMBA TOIVO YA TOIVO**

JUNE 24, 2017

HEROES ACRE

WINDHOEK

Check against delivery

Madam Vicky Erenstein Ya Toivo, Nashikoto and
Mutaleni Ya Toivo and the entire bereaved family;

The Father of the Nation and First President of the
Republic of Namibia, Comrade Dr. Sam
Shaafishuna Nujoma;

The Second President of the Republic of Namibia,
Comrade Dr. Hifikepunye Pohamba;

The Right Honourable Dr. Saara Kuugongelwa
Amadhila, Prime Minister of the Republic of
Namibia;

Honourable Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of
International Relations and Cooperation, Netumbo
Nandi-Ndaitwah and Lieutenant General (Rtd)
Epaphras Denga Ndaitwah;

Honourable Speaker of the National Assembly,
Prof. Peter Katjavivi and Madam Rosemary Jane
Katjavivi;

Honourable Chairperson of the National Council,
Margaret Mensah-Williams and Mr. Williams;

Your Honour, Chief Justice Peter Shivute;

Honourable Ministers and Deputy Ministers;

Honourable Members of Parliament;

Honourable Governors present;

Comrade Nangolo Mbumba, Secretary General of
the SWAPO Party;

Members of the SWAPO Party Political Bureau and
Central Committee;

Veterans of the Liberation Struggle;

McHenry Venaani, leader of the official opposition
and leaders of other political parties;

Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic
Corps;

Distinguished Service Chiefs;

Former Robben Island Prisoners;

Esteemed Religious, Traditional and Community
Leaders;

Fellow mourners;

“The struggle was long and bitter, but our brothers
and sisters never gave up...we should always
remember and respect their blood that waters our
freedom”...

As we are gathered here, in the final resting place of those who sacrificed their lives for our freedom, we pay respect to their blood that waters our freedom and ask them to welcome this Son of the Soil, this revolutionary icon and torch bearer of our freedom, justice and equality – Comrade Herman Andimba Toivo Ya Toivo.

In 2011, while being interviewed by Kazambire Zemburuka for NBC, Comrade Ya Toivo, true to his nature and in his usual frank and straight talking fashion, spoke about the rising scourge of tribalism in Namibia. He expressed the fact that tribalism will take Namibia down a road to nowhere. He spoke about how he was prepared to die for Namibia, risking physical, emotional and psychological torment in order to free Namibians

from the chains of oppression, hatred and intolerance.

In his own words he said, "I am now done with my mission and very frail. I'm at the airport with my ticket now, waiting for the plane to come so that I go home to meet my friends, Tobias Hainyeko and others."

Comrade Ya Toivo, for the past several years, we have been with you at the airport in the waiting room, keeping you company while you wait for your plane to arrive. That plane has arrived, and we are escorting you to the plane, tears in our eyes as you walk up the stairs with your one way ticket, ready to begin your non-stop flight to a destination where there will be no more hatred, no

more fighting, no more incarceration and no more pain.

The restlessness and toiling of the living world is no longer a concern for this brave comrade, for he has fought the good fight, he has finished the race, he has kept the faith. Today he can return home to meet his friends, Tobias Hainyeko, Peter Mwashihange, Maxton Joseph Mutongulume, Dimo Hamaambo, John Ya Otto Nankhudu, Frederick Matongo, Peter Tsheehama, Peter Nanyemba, Mose Tjitendero, Richard Kabajani, John Pandeni, Andrew Intamba, Anton Lubowski, Gerson Veii, Moses //Garoëb and so many other heroes and heroines of Namibia's liberation struggle. He will also peep into the room, where his fellow Robben Island prisoners are: Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Steve Tshwete, Govan Mbeki, Ahmed

Kathrada and others – icons who suffered for the freedom of their people.

Heroes like Comrade Ya Toivo and his peers, should not be honoured with words but with actions. For it was through action that this brave son from Omangundu scaled the heights of the school of life, to become a symbol of defiance against tyranny and oppression.

So as the plane disappears into the sky, beyond our sight, each one of us must ask the following questions - How will we honour the memory of Herman Andimba Toivo Ya Toivo? Will it be through words or action? Will we make a commitment to work towards the healing of wounds? Will we develop an intolerance to tribalism and racism? Will we help the poor by

committing to fight poverty and corruption? Will we hold hands and pull in one direction in the spirit of Harambee? Will we commit to building the Namibian House together as one people or will we splinter and go down the road to nowhere? Let us ponder these questions, because the answers thereto, will reveal to us whether we are sincere in honouring this gallant son.

Finally, although our hearts are still heavy and our spirits burdened by the fact that Comrade Ya Toivo has departed to the final destination, let us take comfort in these words from Mathew 11:28, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest".

Comrade Ya Toivo is no longer weary and no longer burdened. He has left the worries of this world to us, and has gone to receive his rest.

Therefore, may the soul of Comrade Herman Andimba Toivo Ya Toivo rest in eternal peace.