

# **REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**



**Statement by Dr. Hage G. Geingob, President of the  
Republic of Namibia, at the unveiling of the statue  
of Ohamba Mandume ya Ndemufayo**

**February 4, 2017**

**Omhedi Village, Ohangwena Region**

*Check against delivery*

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

**Comrade Sam Shafiishuna Nujoma, First  
President of the Republic and the Founding  
Father of the Namibian Nation;**

**Comrade Hifikepunye Pohamba, Former  
President of the Republic of Namibia;**

**Madam Monica Geingos, First Lady of the  
Republic of Namibia;**

**Madam Kovambo Nujoma, The initial First Lady  
of the Republic of Namibia;**

**Madam Penehupifo Pohamba, Former First  
Lady of the Republic of Namibia;**

**Honourable Members of Parliament Present;**

**Honourable Usko Nghaamwa, the Governor of  
the Ohangwena Region;**

**All other Governors present;**

**Members of the Diplomatic Corps;**  
**Distinguished Service Chiefs;**  
**Omukwaniilwa Immanuel Kauluma Elifas,**  
**Chairperson of the Council of Traditional Leaders;**  
**Meekulu Ohamba yOvakwanyama;**  
**Gaub Immanuel #Nu-Axa /Gaseb; Deputy**  
**Chairperson of the Council of Traditional Leaders;**  
**Esteemed other Traditional leaders present;**  
**Esteemed Religious and Community leaders;**  
**Distinguished invited guests;**  
**Ladies and gentlemen**

**We have declared this year as the year of rededication; first and foremost, rededication to the Almighty for creating this beautiful country of ours, in which we live as inhabitants. We also rededicated ourselves to our core national values which have sustained**

**our sovereignty and integrity for the past 26 years. Core values such as unity, peace and stability, rule of law, reconciliation and economic equality are the cornerstones of our democracy and we shall never compromise on them.**

**I am happy to be part of this inclusive gathering. It is pleasing to witness the presence of Namibians from all different ethnic groups who have travelled from far and wide to congregate right here in Omhedi. This is indicative of the fact that Namibia is a republic and not a grouping of Bantustans. Inclusivity spells peace and harmony, where our countrymen and countrywomen come together as one people to share and partake in each other's events. In so doing, these events are no longer regional but national. Exclusivity spells**

**conflict and dissonance. We should remember to bear in mind that there is nothing wrong with belonging to tribes and being proud of that fact, but we should avoid being tribal. If we encourage the practice of attending each other's gatherings and singing each other's songs, then soon we will be able to create a national dance, a national song and a national culture.**

**Our gathering today is taking place close to the border we share with our brothers and sisters from Angola, and I therefore want to highlight a very pertinent matter. As Africans, we all acknowledge the fact that Europe's arbitrary post-colonial borders have imposed some disadvantages on Africa. However, this does not mean that we should start to claim the territories of fellow African states by using**

**ancestral boundaries as justification. Therefore, there is no basis for Namibians to claim Angolan territory as their own. Whoever dreams of that notion must stop it today.**

**At the recently concluded 28<sup>th</sup> AU Assembly, this matter was discussed at length with regards to the Saharawi and Morocco issue, where it was reiterated once more that the AU respects the frontiers [of all member states] existing on their achievement of national independence. Therefore, I would like to state in the most emphatic of terms that Namibia respects Angola's territorial integrity. We have no intention whatsoever to extend our boundaries beyond our current border with Angola and we are pleased that we can share in this celebration together as peaceful and fraternal neighbours.**

**All around the world, nations are characterized by various monuments which reflect the history of their citizens. Upon attaining independence, we had no indigenous monuments. The only monuments in existence were German ones. It is for this reason that we decided to build our own monuments which would reflect our history and our victory in the battle for our independence. Monuments such as Heroe's Acre, the new State House, The Supreme Court, The Independence Memorial Museum and the Ongulumbashe Memorial are national structures that reflect the pride of an independent Namibia.**

**Monuments offer us the way in which we can tribute the past achievements and sacrifices of Namibians, specifically those who lost their lives during our fight against colonial**

**oppression. These monuments create awareness amongst our people, most notably our youth, about how our heroes and heroines helped forge the Namibia of today, which we refer to as the Land of the Brave. Monuments play a significant role in promoting patriotism and national unity and pride, while creating a legacy for our future generations. It is a special and sentimental way in which we can honour the memory of those whose blood waters our freedom, those who chose the path of sacrifice and struggle, and those who paid the ultimate price, to ensure that we have a home today; a home we know as the Namibian House.**

**Today, we are in Omhedi to pay tribute to the legendary icon of Namibia's struggle against colonial oppression, a visionary leader who exhibited the courage and valor of befitting of**

**royalty. The story of Ohamba Mandume Ya Ndemufayo's fearless spirit and unwavering determination to defend the territorial integrity of his people, is not only a testament to his bravery, but a testament to the spirit of the Namibian people and the African people as a whole who rejected foreign occupation.**

**Ohamba Mandume's reign took place in the early half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century in 1911. While he was at the youthful age of 17, he ascended to the throne of the Oukwanyama Kingdom. His reign lasted for 6 years, during a tumultuous time, when he had to fight two colonial powerhouses of Portugal and Britain, who were supported by South Africa. The impact his leadership and wisdom has had on the people of our country, continues to reverberate to this**

**day, as we immortalize the image of this iconic leader.**

**This icon and symbol of our nationhood has been memorialized in Namibia at Heroes Acre. Furthermore, a number of streets around the country are named after him, including the famous Mandume Ya Ndemufayo Avenue in Windhoek. In Angola, he is memorialized at Oihole and one of the streets in Luanda is named after him, including a university in Lubango.**

**As we commemorate Mandume, we should bear in mind that although it is always meritorious to honour our national heroes through monuments, statues and street names, the best way we, as Namibians can honour these heroes is by emulating their**

**outstanding qualities, such as their moral fortitude, valor, patriotism, wisdom and commitment to justice, even at the expense of them loosing their lives. These are qualities that help buttress the foundations of peace, unity and security, on which the Namibian House is built.**

**In conclusion, I would like to share with you a quote by Anton Muziwakhe Lebembe who once said, "One who wants to create a future must not forget the past." As we continue plotting our way towards a future of prosperity for all Namibians, let us not forget our past and its heroes and heroines for in remembering those who gave up their lives for our liberation, we recommit ourselves to continue where they left off.**

**We unite in commemorating the memory of Namibia's heroes and heroines, we unite in commemorating the memory of Ohamba Mandume Ya Ndemufayo and we unite as one people, as we narrate our own narrative, the Namibian narrative.**

**Long live Namibia's heroes and heroines, long live Ohamba Mandume Ya Ndemufayo, and long live the Land of the Brave. I thank you.**